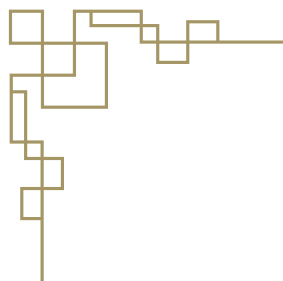




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# GERMAN AMERICAN RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

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# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



**Ela Ziv and Tina L. Heafner**

## **“ChatGPT's Math Instruction: A Substantial Shift from Model 3.5 to Model o1”**

ChatGPT's math instruction capability changes over time. A comparative analysis of ChatGPT 3.5 and o1 indicates significant improvements in model o1's ability to provide adaptive, student-centered, gradual math instruction and accurate, relevant real-world applications. This highlights AI tools' potential as effective math tutors while emphasizing continued limitations necessitating human oversight.

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**Daniel Maxwell**

## **“Investigating University Supervisors' Approach to Generative Artificial Intelligence Adoption”**

This qualitative research study investigated the decision-making process of student teaching supervisors when considering the adoption of GenAI technologies in their teaching and supervision. The findings provide a detailed picture of individual considerations, such as perceived benefits, cost, and long-term consequences, influencing GenAI adoption amongst university supervisors.

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**Carolyn Angermayr & Felix Koch**

## **“Digitality in School and Education (DigiSE)”**

The project examines the integration of digital technologies in Biology, English, and Mathematics education to enhance system thinking, language acquisition, and mathematical understanding. It examines digital school development capacity, subject-specific innovations, and teacher training needs. Findings will shape targeted professional development and foster a culture of digitality through collaborative learning communities.

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**Pariss Coleman**

## **“Understanding Online Faculty Perceptions and Design Considerations Regarding the Principles of Universal Design for Learning in Online Courses”**

This qualitative study aimed to explore faculty perceptions and design considerations on applying UDL principles to support diverse learning needs. Themes include training requirements, delivery, course structure and usability, engagement, and UDL knowledge. Findings align with UDL guidelines and the research questions and have implications for online faculty and designers.

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**Jule Roßkopf**

## **“Ways to Professionalize Teachers for the Design of Digital Learning Tasks in Geography Lessons”**

The project aims to professionalize teachers in the use of digital learning environments for geography and sustainable development. Teachers are to develop and successfully use digital learning tasks through a blended learning program. The project follows a design-based research approach with iterative development and empirical monitoring through interviews and group discussions.

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**Jue Wang & Dr. Kristin Davin**

**“Navigating Generative AI in Second Language Education: Teachers' Perspectives on Usage, Challenges and Professional Development Needs”**

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has the potential to transform second language (L2) education. This research explores the types of tasks for which L2 teachers in the United States report using GenAI and the challenges they face with integration. Additionally, the study identifies teachers' self-reported professional development needs for GenAI integration.

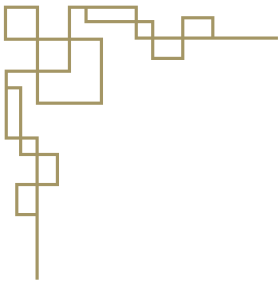
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**Illie Isso, Prof Anselm Böhmer, Ilayda Özcan, & Dilara Orhan**

**“The Bot & I - Innovation Coaching through AI-Supported Digital Teaching”**

This study evaluated a web-based instructional package for students with ASD/IDD, improving SOP task accuracy (0-35% to 90-100%) and generalizing skills to PCP meetings. Social validity data revealed increased confidence and self-advocacy. Findings highlight the effectiveness of technology-enhanced tools in promoting self-determination and successful transitions to postsecondary environments.

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# EDUCATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS



**Thai Ray Williams, Dr. Fred Spooner, & Hannah Douglass**

**“A Writing Intervention Package and Small Group Instruction for Students with IDD”**

Researchers evaluated the effect of an intervention package (i.e., constant time delay, sentence frames, and technology-assisted instruction) on sentence construction for students with IDD. Implemented during story-based lessons in a small group setting, this study extended prior research by addressing classroom feasibility beyond one-on-one instructional arrangements.

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**Joy Stogner Hathcock**

**“Exploring the Individual Education Plan Literacy of Elementary School Teachers in Rural Schools Pre-Service Practicum”**

Students with disabilities face unique challenges when navigating the US education system. Despite an Individual Education Plan (IEP) guiding educators, high school graduation rates for students with disabilities lag behind nondisabled peers. This qualitative study gained insight into the IEP knowledge of 6 rural elementary teachers.

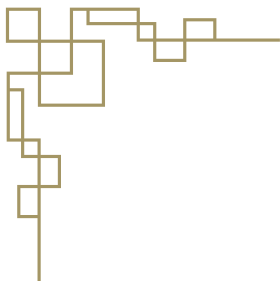
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**Paula Fromm**

**“Normality Constructions of Prospective Teachers”**

The dissertation project focuses on the constructions of normality of prospective teachers in the field of “Emotional and Social Development” (ESD). In order to gain an insight into their interpretations, semi-structured interviews serve as starting point for data production. Reflexive Grounded Theory is used as methodological framework.

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# LANGUAGE AND LITERACY



**Brandon J. Watkins**

## **“Literacy in Unlikely Places: Rethinking Black Boy Literacies through Gaming Practices”**

In this study, we use Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) to explore the literacies Black boys enact while playing digital games and how their literacies might extend school-based understandings of literacy.

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**Anni Lenz**

## **“Short-Term Book-Based Strategy Interventions To Promote EFL Literacy - SEND Perspectives on Self-Determined Learning and Student Agency”**

Combining perspectives from SEND and EFL pedagogy, this research project utilises short-term book-based strategy interventions to further literacy in young EFL learners. Moreover, it seeks to investigate learners’ executive skills and sense of agency in order to create EFL classrooms that may serve as laboratories for holistic learning and development.

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**Anastasia Proctor**

## **“Visual Semiotics in a Multilingual Classroom: Historical Institutionalism and the Construction of Linguistic Identity”**

This study examines visual elements in a multilingual fifth-grade classroom in Almassora, Spain, to explore how semiotic resources construct linguistic and cultural identities. Using a deductive semiotic framework and historical institutionalism, the analysis reveals how Francoist language policies and post-Franco reforms shape contemporary multilingual education, highlighting institutional signage, student agency, and multimodal interactions.

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**Jacqueline Little**

## **“Observation of Out of School Time Tutoring: Alignment with High Leverage Practices and Evidence Based Practices”**

There is a strong emphasis on the importance of literacy initiatives to improve student outcomes in schools across the state. Community organizations recognize the need to support literacy efforts, often operating independently from school services. We identify and assess community services and their alignment to school literacy initiatives.

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**Elisa Janser**

## **“Influence of Different Morphological Structures and Cultural Factors on Language Processing”**

My dissertation investigates the influence of different morphological structures and cultural factors on language processing. In a comparative priming study with German and Arabic native speakers, word categories are analyzed in order to empirically record cognitive mechanisms and intercultural differences in language processing.

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**Brittany S. Hart**

**“We Just Can't Wait’: Rural Teacher Agency in Reading Professional Development”**

This study examines rural teachers’ experiences with state-mandated LETRS professional development, exploring factors that facilitate or hinder learning. Using a case study approach with focus groups, findings will inform context-sensitive professional development design to better support for rural educators.

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# SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS



**Julia Busato**

## **“Factors Influencing Out-of-School Educational Settings - A Study of Pupils' Perceptions”**

Out-of-school learning environments differ from the classroom learning setting in numerous factors. Time in this learning environment is associated with different expectations of effectiveness for learning and experience. The learner's perspective and the conditions and factors that influence effectiveness are analyzed in a mixed-methods study design.

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**Jessica Hawkins**

## **“Learning Outside the Lines: The Enviroschools Model as a Liberatory Path for U.S. Outdoor Education”**

Current research on U.S. nature-based education demonstrates the need to disrupt inequities and include identities historically excluded from outdoor spaces. While outdoor inclusion efforts exist, a cohesive liberatory roadmap remains absent. Using New Zealand's Enviroschools model alongside equity-centered pedagogies, this research offers U.S. implications for not only responding to cultural identities but ultimately sustaining them.

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# SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION



**Rudy Hawley**

## **“Equity & Diversity in Music Education”**

Diversity and equity in music education has been a long standing issue. The culture and nature of music education as well as school policies affecting music education in public schools can feed a self-perpetuating cycle of cultural relevance, lack of resources, lack of diversity in school ensembles, and a lack of diversity in music educators.

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**Jamar Whitfield**

## **“A Qualitative Study on the Experiences of Black Men in Acquiring Transfer Capital and Adjusting Post-Transfer”**

This presentation highlights a qualitative study on the experiences of Black men in acquiring transfer student capital and their post-transfer adjustment. Through a Community Cultural Wealth lens, this study explores the challenges Black men encounter, support opportunities, and how they build social, academic, and navigational capital in the transfer process.

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**Katharina Maria Schneider**

## **“Attitudes Towards Multilingualism in Class”**

Positive teacher attitudes towards multilingualism are key to dealing constructively with students’ family languages in class (Schnitzer, 2020; Brandt, 2021). Therefore, this doctoral research project analyzes how they can be measured psychologically, how they can be developed through an intervention, and how they are related to students’ attitudes towards multilingualism.

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**Jennifer L. Merry**

## **“Leader of the Band: Critical Music Pedagogy Matters in the Band Room”**

In the United States, the majority of band directors are white males. Exploring the history of the American Wind Band and music education using a mixed methods approach, hoping to prove that embracing culturally sustaining pedagogy will invite more women and people of color to participate in band.

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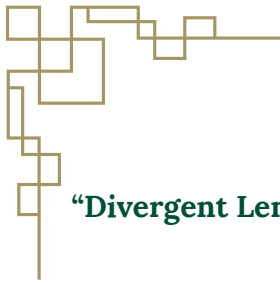
**Tyisha Terry**

## **“Black Students' Perceptions of Wellness Education Programs at Historically White Institutions”**

Student learning and success are influenced by holistic wellness. Black students at historically white institutions face barriers to engaging in wellness education programs. This study will use interpretative phenomenological analysis to explore their experiences. Findings will inform higher education practitioners in redesigning wellness programs to enhance engagement and support student success.

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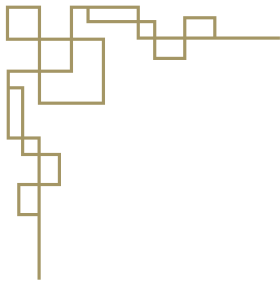


**Deziree K. Baker & Latonda Mitchell**

**“Divergent Lens: Examining African-American and Afro-Caribbean Educators’ Perceptions of Academic Giftedness”**

This proposed research study seeks to explore the divergence in African-American and Afro-Caribbean educators’ understanding of giftedness. Using phenomenological methods, this study aims to uncover how cultural perspectives shape educators’ personal experiences with giftedness, professional practices, and, subsequently, identification of Black students in their classrooms for academically gifted programs.

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# OTHER



**Caroline-Sophie Pilling-Kempel**

**“The Normalcy of Hearing. Characterization of a Hearing Culture from the Perspective of Deaf and Hearing People”**

The research project explores a culturality of Hearing people that constitutes social conditions and has an effect on them. Considering the description of the culturality of Deaf people in the definition of Deaf culture, a contrasting research is being conducted into how Hearing can be culturally characterized and what significance this characterization has for the normative establishment of Hearing as normality.

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**Candace "Candee" Richardson**

**“The Interconnectedness of Food-Nutrition and Educational Capacities of Secondary Scholars”**

Broader literature provides clarifying research on access to foods of high nutritional value is significant for building the learning capacities of all scholars especially secondary scholars living in urban communities. Scholars excel academically when they are provided with consistent diets of fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and water. This mixed-researched study will include quantitative and qualitative data.

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**Katja Beck**

**International Comparison of the Governance of Inclusive Education of Baden-Württemberg (Germany) and South Tyrol (Italy)**

This research is based on a comparative analysis of the regions South Tyrol (Italy) and Baden-Württemberg (Germany). Following the theoretical perspectives of Educational Governance and New Institutionalism guided by the Grounded Theory methodology, the study employs both a historical-reconstructive analysis and a analysis of the current situation to generate insights into the implementation of inclusive education.

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**Simeon Jäkh**

**“Between Normality and Difference: Power Relations and Gender Binarity in Queer Communities”**

This research examines how normality and difference are constructed within queer communities, focusing on gender binarity and exclusionary mechanisms. Based on interviews with binary and nonbinary subjects and discourse analysis, it explores how categories are reinforced through boundary-making practices, shaping normalization processes and contributing to the marginalization of nonbinary perspectives.

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**Mareike Oesterle**

**“The Role of Transient Transnational Communities in the Professional Development of Teacher Educators”**

This study, part of a cumulative PhD, investigates transient transnational communities through document analysis of European policies and project records. Findings highlight the role of collaborative learning spaces and supportive relationships in teacher educators' professional development. It argues for a pan-European approach, emphasizing investment in time, space, personnel, and policy.

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**Ashley Carter**

**“Trailblazers in Transition: Black Women Leading in Mid-Level Student Affairs Roles”**

Research on Black women at the mid-level roles in student affairs is limited (ACE, 2017; Wesaw & Sponsler, 2014). This qualitative study explores their leadership development, crucible moments, and experiences in mid-level student affairs roles at historically White institutions (HWIs), centering their voices on leadership, visible and hidden labor, and professional journeys.

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**Maxi Ritter**

**“Promoting Biodiversity-Enhancing Behavior through the Research Method: 'Challenges'”**

Research on Black women at the mid-level roles in student affairs is limited (ACE, 2017; Wesaw & Sponsler, 2014). This qualitative study explores their leadership development, crucible moments, and experiences in mid-level student affairs roles at historically White institutions (HWIs), centering their voices on leadership, visible and hidden labor, and professional journeys.

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**Thank you!**

