GSU Partners with Crete Monee High School

On Monday, January 22, representatives from Governors State University and Crete Monee High School signed a first-ever partnership agreement to "open the door" for students to enter college.

Under the historic agreement, select Crete Monee High School students will be mentored and offered the opportunity to participate in a host of on-campus activities, including classroom simulations, admissions and financial aid workshops.

Read more
Experts from GSU Present at AACU Conference in D.C.
Making the connection between a college job and later professional career opportunities can sometimes be challenging for students. That's why a team of GSU experts exploring ways to help students synthesize their work experience with learning that happens in classes. For instance, they might link a student's summer job in the university to the broader concept and potential career opportunity in supply chain management to create a more meaningful and useful learning experience.

A snapshot of the team’s study, focused on a subset of students who either worked or interned on GSU’s campus, was highlighted last week during a panel session at the American Colleges & Universities Conference. The popular session, “Connecting Liberal Education with Life, Work, and Citizenship,” gained national media attention for how student language, learning, and higher reasoning skills can be developed through all work experiences and then leveraged as one moves from college to career.

Later in the week President Elaine P. Maimon presented before an audience of college and university presidents on the timely topic, “Overcoming Moral Distress: Respecting Constraints.” She led that discussion with Dr. Robert Pura of Greenfield Community College.

**Policy 21 Passes**

Through the work of appointed Student Senate members, GSU faculty, and administration, the section of Honors Policy 21 regarding criteria to earn Latin Honors at graduation was revised.

The Student Senate has been working on changes to this policy for over two years. Through their use of data and careful comparisons to Latin Honors criteria from universities across the state, they met with faculty and administrators to craft a policy revision that reflects best practices across the state and provide students who entered GSU as a freshman the opportunity to earn Latin Honors. Students enrolled prior to Summer 2018 will have the opportunity to earn Latin Honors under the previous policy.

The changes to the policy were effective Fall 2017.

**GSU All-Campus Symposium Friday, February 23**

On Friday, February 23, faculty, staff, and students will meet on the CPA stage for the Spring 2018 All-Campus Symposium.

Tom Matson, Senior Executive Leadership Strategist at Gallup Education, will give the keynote address. Tom is “the strategist, architect and senior writer for CliftonStrengths Students.” The symposium will explore the ways that GSU uses students’ StrengthsFinder results to increase student success. It will also address ways that we—as individuals—can use our own assessments to build on our own skills.

A continental breakfast will be available at 8:30 a.m., and the day will begin promptly at 9 a.m. Lunch will be served and the symposium will end in the early afternoon. Registration is required. Also, all attendees must take the StrengthsFinder test before the symposium.

To RSVP and receive your test code and instructions, please email Penny Perdue (pperdue@govst.edu) or call x4130.

**Get to Know Your Student Rights and Responsibilities!**
Everyone on campus has a responsibility for helping the GSU community as we strive for academic freedom, integrity, excellence in scholarship, justice, diversity, and accountability.

Our Student Code of Conduct, along with other university policies, provides clear guidance on what is expected of students as well as what they can expect from GSU facilities. The handbook also provides the procedures that guide the Community Standards process, which aims to hold students accountable for violations of university policy, reflect and develop skills that promote personal and community responsibility.

**Inside Higher Ed Features “Rethinking Remediation” by President Elaine P. Maimon**

This week, Inside Higher Ed published GSU President Elaine P. Maimon’s op-ed “Rethinking Remediation.”

In the article, Dr. Maimon writes, “At Governors State University, we are focusing on corequisite remediation, infusing additional support into the first-year experience, rather than students taking noncredit classes before enrolling in real courses. Much of what we do in developmental education is based on common sense and experience. Faculty and staff are committed to meeting students where they are.”

Click [here](https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAADddqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA) for the full article.

**Children of GSU Employees Eligible for Scholarship**

As a member of the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce, children of Governors State University employees are eligible to apply for its annual merit scholarship.

Chamber offers this scholarship annually to graduating high school seniors.

For more information, click [here](https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAADddqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA).

**Keeping GSU Healthy During Flu Season 2018**

[https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAADddqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA](https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAADddqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA)
It's that time of year again: runny noses, sore throats, and achy heads abound. While the notorious influenza virus (the "flu") is widespread in 2018, prevention methods at staying healthy through the flu season—a period that peaks from December through February and can last even into May.

Students are encouraged to utilize of the Advocate Health Center located on campus. Your visit to the Health and Student Counseling Center is included in your health f advantage of this great on-campus health resource. Prevention methods include:

- Washing hands—a simple but highly effective prevention method.
- Getting a flu vaccine (just not the nasal kind)—and while you've probably heard that this year’s vaccine is less effective than usual, the CDC estimates its effectiveness 39 percent against Influenza A). If you do get sick, you can help prevent further spread of illness by using your best judgment in day-to-day activities.

Although the flu can be combated with antiviral medications, antibiotics are not effective in treating it. If you test positive for the flu, resist the urge to request antibiotics—these medications will lessen their effectiveness in the case of a bacterial infection.

As always, see your personal physician if you have questions or concerns about your health.

GSU Votes!

Make sure you are registered and exercise your right to vote in the upcoming Illinois primary election this March. Even though the primary falls during Spring Break this year, make sure you vote than you think. You can even vote by mail! Just go to the Illinois Board of Elections site, select an application for regular Illinois citizens, then follow the instructions on the site. Applications need to go to your local election office. The Board of Elections site will show you the right place to submit your application to vote by mail.

Since a lot can happen between now and Primary Election Day that may potentially keep you away from the polls, the surest way for your vote to be counted is to register now, then vote as soon as you receive your ballot.

Bring Friends and Family to GSU at an Upcoming Open House

All are invited to attend two upcoming Open House events that will showcase Governors State to prospective students. On Saturday, February 10, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Undergraduate Open house will help prospective students and their families learn more about admission requirements, academic programs, campus resources, student campus housing. Register here.

The annual Graduate Open House will be held Saturday, February 24 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the Hall of Governors. Meet with program advisors, coordinators, and staff. Attend breakout sessions on financial aid, housing GRE preparation, program admission requirements, and much more. More information can be found here, or for more information contact Julie Anderson at 708.534.4086.

Student Athlete Academic Success Program Scores a Big Win

La'Toshia Burrell, Associate Athletic Director and Head Coach of the GSU Women’s Basketball Team, recently announced that at the end of the fall semester, 38 percent of student athletes in the Student Athlete Academic Success Program achieved a 3.0 or better GPA.

“I am so proud of our student athletes’ accomplishments,” said Coach Burrell. “They have stepped up and assumed responsibility for their academic success and have c our key partners, accessing the study hall times and services that have been offered to them.”

Partners in the student Athlete Academic Success Program are the Student Success Commons, including the Career and Writing Centers, as well as the GSU Library.

“We are very pleased to be a partner in supporting the success of our student athletes, and look forward to continuing our support during our Spring semester,” said Lyd Dean of the GSU Library.

“We know that the success of our student athletes in the classroom transfers to their success on our Jaguar playing fields,” said Coach Burrell. “We look forward to expanding our partnerships as we move forward with this program.”

For more information, contact lburrell@govst.edu.

Announcements and Events

Send-Off for Provost Bordelon
Join the GSU community for a farewell party for Provost Deborah Bordelon on Wednesday, Feb. 7 from 4 – 6 p.m. in the E Lounge.

RSVP to Penny Perdue or 708.534.4130.

Circle of Sisters
Is your junior year bogging you down? Circle of Sisters (SoS) provides information, mentoring, support, and motivation on topics such as how to take care of yourself, mental balance, and other topics aimed at African American women in their junior year. This opportunity is a part of the AACU Equity Grants.

Please join us at our informational meeting on Wednesday, January 31 at 3:30 p.m. in the Jaguar Den. Email SWadhwa@govst.edu to RSVP and more information.

Interfaith Conversations
Join Intercultural Student Affairs and the Counseling Center on the first Thursday of every month from 3 – 4 p.m. for Interfaith Conversations in A1115, the Interfaith Prayer Room. This is an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to discuss how faith impacts their lives and reflect on how it intersects with our multiple identities in current contexts.
For more information, please email diversity@govst.edu.

Reconstructed Calls for Entries
Reconstructed is GSU’s journal of arts and literature published in print and online. The journal includes fiction, poetry, personal essays, and visual arts (including film) by celebrate the culture of our university. Submit your work to be considered for publication in the 2017 – 18 issue to reconstructed@govst.edu by Friday, February 2.
Include the following information with each submission: your name, the title of your work, materials used, year finished, name of corresponding files, a jpeg image file of applicable), and an attached Word document of your artist statement.

Office of International Services Mix ‘n’ Mingle
The Office of International Services is hosting a mixer January 31 from 2 – 4 p.m. in the Lakeside Lounge for all GSU students to meet and get to know each other and there will be icebreakers, prizes, food, and fun. Please stop by and join in on the excitement!

In the Name of Love
Friday, February 2 is the date of the inaugural In the Name of Love, a night of dancing and comedy sponsored by the Student Activities Council. The comedic skill of comedian T. Murph is sure to have the crowd in stitches by the end of the night. The evening runs from 7 – 11 p.m. in the E Lounge.
What better way to celebrate with your sweetheart? Music by DR JMC. Admission is free for all GSU students with ID. Students may bring up to two non-GSU guests at

Submit a Program for Women’s History Month
Women’s History Month can trace its roots back to March 8, 1857, when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions. International Women’s Day was observed in 1909, but it wasn’t until 1981 that Congress established National Women’s History Week to be commemorated the second week of March. In 1987, Congress declared National Women’s History Month.

Join us in celebrating the contributions of women by submitting a program for Women’s History Month. Click here by Friday, February 2, to submit your program. This opportunity is open to university departments, student organizations, and GSU community affiliates.

Caroline, or Change in the CPA at GSU
Caroline, or Change is a ground-breaking work that tells a story of political change, social change, and plain old pocket change. Performances are scheduled on Friday, p.m., Saturday, February 3 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, February 4 at 2 p.m.

Set in 1963 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the civil rights movement is underway, and change is brewing everywhere. Caroline Thibodeaux is doing laundry in the basement home and is told she can keep the pocket change she finds. Torn between her pride and the chance to improve the lives of her children, Caroline must face the moment and her life through new eyes. The production comes to life through a range of musical styles (blues to Motown, spirituals to Klezmer) and unique characters.

Caroline, or Change has the power to change the way audiences think about musical theatre.

Tickets for the GSU community are $25 at the Box Office.

Register for Two-Day Comprehensive Suture Workshop
GSU's Department of Nursing is hosting a two-day (16-hour) course directed at nurse practitioners and physician's assistants. This course provides broad exposure to procedural suturing. Learners at any level of experience will gain knowledge using integrated lecture and hands-on training, following the expert guidance of experienced instructors using surgical-grade instruments.

The workshop will be held February 10 – 11, beginning at 8 a.m. each day, in the G-Wing Nursing Simulation Lab. Cost of attendance is $300. Click here for more information, or email Dr. Josephine McCaskill or call 708.235.7687.

S.H.E.R.O. Call for Workshops
The S.H.E.R.O. (Sharing Her story of Empowerment, Resilience, and Opportunity) Women's Leadership Symposium inspires women to seek their highest level of professional development through a greater understanding of leadership and the acquisition of new ideas to optimize and sustain personal potential.

The 2018 S.H.E.R.O. Women's Leadership Symposium will be held Friday, March 30 at Governors State University. We are currently looking for workshops that pertain to the theme “Reclaiming My Time”—a theme that encourages women to use their voices to be heard, celebrate how valuable they really are, and take ownership of their destiny.

Please submit your proposal by Friday, February 16.

SEA to Host Disaster Relief Project
The Student Education Association (SEA) is organizing a disaster relief donation drive from January 29 to February 21. Funded by a National Education Association (NEA) grant and event will benefit residents of Texas affected by the hurricanes of fall 2017. This project and grant focuses on helping South Houston High School (SHHS), along with the teachers, and families. SEA at GSU will be collaborating with the school, retired NEA teachers, and the SEA chapter at San Jacinto College.

The project has two goals: to restore the outside area at SHHS and to collect school supplies and personal care items to be donated to school children of Texas. Items can be donated at the SEA office (G228) or in one of the donation boxes located in the G building on the second floor until February 21. The culminating event will take place Tuesday, January 30, from 1 – 5 p.m. in the G Building Atrium/Lobby where SEA members, faculty, and other volunteers will work together to sort items and package them for transport to Texas.

Please only donate items listed on the flyer, or consider a cash donation for the purchase of paint, trees, and shrubs.

For more information, please visit the SEA at their GSU website and social media. If you have any questions, or would like to donate or volunteer, please contact the student advisor (Jessica White or Reyna Hernandez) or faculty advisors organizing this project (Dr. Katy Hisrich, Dr. Xiaobo She, or Dr. Amy Vujaklija).

Nominations Open for Sixth Annual Student Leadership Awards
The Student Leadership Awards serve as an opportunity to recognize outstanding student leaders, organizations, and advisors for their contributions to the campus community presented to student organizations recognizing leadership, programming, innovation, and creativity. Award recipients are distinguished student leaders who have excelled and have made a difference through their service and leadership at Governors State.

Categories are listed, and nominations are accepted, at Jaguar Connection through February 16.

Get to Know Your Library Liaison

https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADdqpB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA...
"As the Spring semester begins, I invite you to make the GSU Library and librarians your partners in achieving academic excellence," said Lydia Morrow Ruetten, Dean of Libraries.

"As your information and research resource 24/7, your subject liaison librarian can be very helpful to you."

Liaison librarians are subject area specialists for students, faculty, and academic programs. Liaison librarians assist students and faculty with collection development, instruction, coursework collaboration, and research. You can find the subject area liaison librarians by visiting this link.

Questions? Email GSULibraryInfo@govst.edu.

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Highlights

**GSU Student Speaks Out on Deaf Culture**

Tiffany Sampson lost her hearing to a childhood accident, and her performance spoke volumes in a recent GSU stage play adaptation of *Children of a Lesser God*.

Read more . . .

**GSU Student Awarded Gilman Study Abroad Scholarship**

The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship has awarded to Honors student Athanasios (Tommy) Kolovos $4,500 to help fund his excursion to Rome from May 22 to June 26 to participate in an Honors Leadership Seminar.

Kolovos is the third GSU student to be awarded the Gilman scholarship. Akya Gossitt received $1,500 in the summer of 2016 to do service learning in Ghana, and Dana Lakin received $3,000 to spend the summer in South Korea, learning the Korean language and Korean art.

If you are a Federal Pell Grant recipient interested in studying abroad for at least three weeks, there are two annual application periods: one in March and one in October. For more information, please visit the [Gilman website](https://www.gilman.org/). Study Abroad Coordinator, Amy Schoenberg, is hosting a Gilman workshop on **Monday, February 12** from 3 – 4 p.m. for those interested in applying for the Gilman scholarship. Please RSVP to [aschoenberg@govst.edu](mailto:aschoenberg@govst.edu). Additionally, if you are interested in applying for the Honors Leadership Seminar in Rome, the deadline is **February 15**. Please visit the [Study Abroad website](https://www.govst.edu/studyabroad/) for more information.

**Conversations with Leaders: Andrae Marak**

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https://owa.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADddqpb%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqpb%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAA9IAA…
Dr. Andrae Marak studies borders. With an emphasis on North America, he traces the flow of licit and illicit goods, peoples, and ideas from one nation to another. He also studies indigenous populations, especially those whose ancestral homelands transcend borders. His work with the Tohono O’odham Nation—a native group in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico—has brought him to the Arizona reservation on more than one occasion.

“As a non-indigenous person who studies and writes about indigenous peoples, there is nothing more important than being present to listen to what indigenous people have to say about their own histories and their own lives,” Marak said. “I learn so much that is new every time that I am there.”

Read more...

Metzger, Jones Names to CCAC All-Academic Team

Two members of the Governors State Women’s Cross Country team have been named to the CCAC All-Academic Team. Senior Keyona Jones and junior Emily Metzger are the first female runners at GSU to earn such honors.

The CCAC All-Academic Team honors student-athletes who have earned a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.25, at least 30 credit hours, and been enrolled for one year.

Read more...

Lamise Shawahin
Governors State University (GSU) Assistant Professor Lamise Shawahin eats a dinner of grape leaves, a staple in her Middle Eastern culture, while she reflects on her counseling and her psychology students.

“I’m like the vine that goes everywhere and connects different parts of the trellis,” said Shawahin. Her strong and extensive networks in the Arab-American and profession form the wooden support structure in her analogy. Students bear the fruit.

A 2016 graduate—she earned her doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology from Purdue University—the Chicago native had earned a bachelor’s degree in Psychology State College in Washington before returning to the Midwest to pursue advanced degrees. She served veterans at the Edward Hines Veterans Administration (VA) Hosp doctoral work and soon after joined the GSU Division of Psychology and Counseling in the College of Education in 2017.

Read more . . .

GSU OPUS Scholarship Read in 129 Countries in December 2017

OPUS is GSU’s Open Portal to University Scholarship and is a service of the Governors State University Library. In December there were 7,324 full-text downloads and submissions posted, bringing the total works in the repository to 10,046. Governors State University scholarship was read by 677 institutions across 129 countries!

The most popular papers were:

Design and Implementation of E-Commerce Site for Online Shopping (1,804 downloads) https://opus.govst.edu/capstones/79
Exploring the Effects of Text Messaging on the Spelling Skills of Ninth and 12th Grade Students (410 downloads) https://opus.govst.edu/theses/32
Smart Inventory Management System (392 downloads) https://opus.govst.edu/capstones/154

The most popular publications were:

All Capstone Projects (4,590 downloads) https://opus.govst.edu/capstones

GSU View January 31, 2018 Vol. 49, Issue 3
Workshops & Trainings

A list of workshops for students, faculty, and staff can be found [here](https://opus.govst.edu/), including Career Services drop-in hours and faculty and staff headshot opportunities.

Do you have a story or event you want to submit for the GSU View? [Click here to learn about our submission guidelines](https://ow.govst.edu/owa/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAADddqpB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREBwB%2fdqpB%2fH3VEZseAFCLrwREAAAAAK9IAA).

For questions or more information, contact [GSUlibraryinfo@govst.edu](mailto:GSUlibraryinfo@govst.edu)
GSU, Crete Monee High School Partner in Historic Move

If Dr. Aurelio Valente, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at Governors State University (GSU), could clone Student Senator Justin Smith—a member of GSU’s inaugural freshman class and a graduate of nearby Crete Monee High School (CMHS)—he would.

“Justin serves as an example of the kind of thing that should happen as a norm, not the outlier,” Valente recently said after signing the historic College Pathways partnership agreement with CMHS—a partnership designed to boost the number of CMHS graduates who attend and succeed in college.

In part, the program will expand the GSU’s lauded Dual Degree Program-Male Success Initiative (DDP-MSI), an innovative program at the university largely funded by The Kresge Foundation, that ushers students—particularly men of color—from community colleges to four-year university graduation. In this case, it will focus on bringing CMHS students to GSU.

In addition to assisting the DDP and MSI bridge initiatives, College Pathways would support high school students transitioning directly to four-year institutions.

“We support the student whether they start at a community college or decide to attend GSU immediately after high school. Even if the student decides to attend a different university, we’re opening doors,” said Randi Schneider, GSU Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management. “The role of this program transcends college choice.”

Smith, the youngest of 12 children grew up with a desire to attend college, but he had no direction.

“It was a huge struggle. There was a lot I didn’t know, and a lot I wasn’t taught. Like the basics—applying for college or the best colleges for me,” Smith said.

Fortunately, he found his way to GSU, where he indulged his enormous talent for the saxophone and strong desire to achieve. At Governors State, the student found a platform to perform on as well as the opportunity to earn a business degree. Last year, he received the honor of being named a 2017 Lincoln Laureate—an annual award given by the Lincoln Academy of Illinois to one outstanding senior from each of the state’s four-year not-for-profit degree granting institutions.

Smith credits his faith and mentors on campus with helping him develop a deep sense of empowerment that fueled his focus and hard work. He’ll be serving as a College Pathways facilitator once the program is implemented. In that role, Smith will meet with CMHS students every week to talk through potentially daunting issues, as well as success strategies.

“My goal is to build them up get them on a path where they are going. I want them to know faith without works is dead,” Smith said.

Under the two-year agreement, select CMHS students will be mentored and offered the opportunity to participate in a host of on-campus activities, such as “A Day in the Life”—an on-campus event that will include workshops on admissions and financial aid as well as simulations of classroom interactions and life in a college residence hall.

In addition, GSU will plan and facilitate college preparedness workshops at CMHS twice a month, as well as Parent Academy workshops throughout the academic year. The CMHS-GSU agreement shores up the university’s critical role in shaping the future of first-generation college students—a group often neglected by traditional college recruitment methods—right here in the Southland.
GSU Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Elizabeth Cada said, “We can change lives, change families, and change generations by the work we do.”

CMHS Principal Marjorie Triche is helping College Pathways to target at-risk students—those who need mentoring and guidance the most—for inclusion in the program. She calls the group “Hidden Stars,” and it is composed of more than 100 CMHS students.

“The students we’ve identified are the ones who have fallen through the cracks,” Triche said. “We looked at grades, we looked at attendance, and we looked at behavior social-emotional development. They are not in activities, and they are not in sports. We are connecting them with other opportunities so they can flourish and grow and see the possibilities are endless.”

Connections are key, said Kristy Goodwin, Director of College Pathways at GSU. She helped build the program one brick at a time over the last year and a half.

“We’ve been around and around and now we’re here. This has been an extensive process and we are looking for students to be highly engaged and to play an active role and to give back,” Goodwin said.

College Pathways architects say they hope it will stand as a model for future high school partnerships.
A president explores the most effective ways to conduct remedial education (opinion)

Submitted by Elaine P. Maimon on January 24, 2018 - 3:00am

A significant number of students who begin college with two to four semesters of required, noncredit remedial courses never make it to the first for-credit gateway course, according to Complete College America [1], but instead drop out. The situation is particularly discouraging for students who test on the cusp of moving into introductory for-credit courses. Many colleges are studying better ways to serve these students.

At Governors State University, we are focusing on *corequisite remediation* [2], infusing additional support into the first-year experience, rather than requiring that students take noncredit classes before enrolling in real courses. Much of what we do in developmental education is based on common sense and experience. Faculty members are committed to meeting students where they are.

That sounds like a simple mantra, but it is actually highly complex. How do we gain knowledge of where students are so that we can meet them there? The first step depends on educating our own imaginations. In his novel *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens warned 19th-century educators not to view students as empty vessels, waiting to be filled with facts. Yet professors, especially those in developmental courses, may unconsciously adhere to that false metaphor. Or, even worse, they imagine that the students' heads are filled with all the wrong things -- junk that must be expurgated.

We use a strength-based model of instruction at our institution. During the first week of this year’s Smart Start summer developmental program in writing and math, I was deeply gratified when I visited a writing class and asked students how things were going. Several hands went up (in itself a happy surprise). The student I called on said (with a degree of enthusiasm not frequently exhibited by students required to end their summer early for two intensive weeks of developmental work), “This class is great because my professor is showing me that I know things.” And that’s the essence of meeting students where they are and of the strength-based model.

**Common-Sense Principles**

At our university, one of the common-sense principles that we apply to both developmental and gateway courses is that students should learn to write by writing. From our Smart Start program through first-year writing and beyond, students are actually writing, revising, rewriting, editing and, most important, reading and rereading what they have written. Critical reading of one’s own early drafts is one of the skills that are truly basic to learning to write. Our instructors are intentional about teaching this fundamental practice.

In writing instruction, student and teacher often engage in a tacit contest over responsibility for the text. Students want to get the assignment, for good or ill (usually ill), on the instructor’s desk as
soon as possible, leading to the submission of unread prose. The instructor, dedicated to student
development in writing, too often accepts responsibility as the student’s proofreader, editor or even
co-author.

Yet the essence of successful writing instruction is to perfect the role of teacher -- one who instills in
students responsibility for their own work. Doing so is a challenging task. It’s human nature to want
to be done with a difficult project. I recall my own experience in writing a chapter for publication in a
book edited by a superb editor. He kept sending the chapter back to me, always with excellent
suggestions for revision. Finally, I said to him outright that I no longer wanted the chapter to be
better -- I simply wanted it to be done. If an experienced and confident writer can react in that
childish way, how much more must we have patience with novice writers who simply want to be
done?

We also provide incentives at our institution for our students’ first writing assignment, a literacy
autobiography. Students are asked to write profiles of themselves as writers and readers. This
assignment is an excellent way for instructors to know where students are so that they can meet
them there. The assignment also encourages reflection on the initial narration. Students revise the
assignment throughout the academic year and, in the second semester, can submit final versions
for monetary awards.

My husband and I personally fund those awards, because we believe so much in the process. From
a presidential perspective, I also regard this support as my microphone to communicate the
importance of first-year writing. The heavily revised literacy autobiography gives form to the concept
of meeting students where they are and challenging them to move forward.

To encourage sympathy for the novice, I also have a general recommendation for all instructors:
periodically, try to learn something that you have no natural aptitude for. For me that something was
always easy to find because I have no propensity for anything athletic. My eighth-grade gym
instructor required what looked to me to be contortions on the rings, ropes and stall bars. I tried and
tried, even arriving at school to practice in the early morning hours before my regular class
schedule, but to no avail. The gym instructor gave me a D, keeping me off the distinguished honor
roll -- something that still stings decades later.

But even that did not deter me from trying to participate in sports. As an adult teaching college
composition, I tried to learn to ski. My friends skied frequently in Killington, Vt., and I wanted to be in
the party. I opted for private lessons with Sven the expert Killington ski instructor. I realized that I
had to tell him up front that he would have to show me how to do things that he never thought he
would have to explain to a functioning adult. He was not a good teacher. But his sneering attitude
taught me an important lesson about my own teaching of composition: don’t judge students who
have to struggle to learn what comes easily to you. Frequent lessons in humility and empathy would
improve not only ski instruction but also remedial/developmental education.

Another common-sense element in successful remediation is to avoid making students feel stupid --
and that doesn’t involve coddling them. Instructors are proud of their own fluency and may be
tempted to model their expertise to impress students. I recall the classic story about the 19th-
century woman who met with the two great British prime ministers Gladstone and Disraeli. She
commented that her meeting with Gladstone led her to believe that she had just met the smartest
person on earth. Her meeting with Disraeli, however, made her think that she herself was an
intelligent and interesting person. Students learn more from Disraeli-like instructors than they do
from the Gladstone type.

Redesigning Math Pathways

When it comes to remediation in math, figuring out the appropriate requirement for students is
crucial. Gearing math requirements to students’ general career directions, called metamajors by
Complete College America, would remove significant barriers to student success, while providing rigorous preparation in mathematical thinking that was actually relevant to students’ future achievements.

For example, research [3] conducted at the City University of New York demonstrates significantly higher success rates for “remedial” students following a statistics pathway rather than those assigned to the traditional route to calculus through intermediate algebra. It’s interesting to note that a number of scientific fields do not require calculus.

Reform in math pathways should begin in high school. Across the country, 11th graders who don’t do well in intermediate algebra are told that they are not college material. Many high-stakes math tests focus on concepts in intermediate algebra, creating insurmountable barriers for students who might be on track for success in the majority of leadership careers that require statistics rather than algebra.

Many states that endorse core courses for transfer to any college or university already build in a choice between the calculus pathway and the statistics pathway. At Governors State, students in two of our three freshman learning communities take statistics, and those in the third take precalculus. We advise students accordingly and send them on, in the words of Uri Treisman, a professor of mathematics at the University of Texas at Austin, the “stat-way to heaven” -- or at least on the road to a leadership career.

Teaching to Strengths

Instructors in developmental courses must also exercise a high level of analysis to identify and motivate students to build on their strengths. That’s easier said than done: it’s far more difficult to identify and articulate what someone is doing right than to point out what is going wrong.

Yet research by Shaun Harper, executive director of the University of Southern California Race and Equity Center, as well as the Gallup organization, bears out the importance of this approach. Harper studied programs in operation from 1997 to 2012 designed specifically to improve the college performance of African-American men and found vast differences between “intended” and “actual” effects. In Men of Color in Higher Education [4], he argues that the “near exclusive focus on problems … inadvertently reinforced a hopeless, deficit-oriented narrative.” He calls for detailed studies of the one-third of black men who did complete college rather than dwelling on the two-thirds who did not.

Harper calls for meaningfully engaging black undergraduate men “as collaborators and … experts in designing, implementing and assessing campus initiatives.” The most important point in his research is that “fixing the student” does not work. Instead we must look at transforming universities so that students will have a better chance of succeeding.

Yet extensive research by Gallup demonstrates that the strength model is effective at institutions of all types for all students, from those in developmental courses to those in honors sections. The 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report, “Great Jobs, Great Lives,” studied more than 30,000 college graduates across America. One indicator of success is college completion, so studying graduates is a starting point in discovering the strengths that led them to succeed.

It’s important to note that Gallup and Purdue avoided simplistic and misleading measures of success -- for example, salaries for first jobs. Instead, they “created an index that examines long-term success of graduates as they pursue a good job and a better life.” Great Jobs, Great Lives elaborates: “For example, if graduates had a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in their well-being.”
Gallup invites “a national dialogue on improving the college experience,” with professors making assignments that build on students’ strengths and encourage real-life applications of classroom learning.

All this is why, from the beginning of their college experience at Governors State, students become part of a community focused on what is right with them rather than what is wrong. In addition to courses in writing and/or in math, the Smart Start program requires students to take a one-credit course, Mastering College, which guides each one through the Clifton StrengthsFinder and uses StrengthsQuest as a program guide.

All freshmen also benefit from teams of advisers and counselors. Peer mentors, cohort advisers, career specialists, writing consultants, library liaisons, digital learning experts, psychological counselors and faculty members from the Center for the Junior Year are assigned to each freshman/sophomore cohort. The idea is to integrate support into every student’s experience rather than sending “deficient” students to special treatment centers to cure their difficulties. The clear message is that asking for help is not a display of weakness, exposing students’ deficits, but instead a mature approach to learning and growing. Active engagement with the support teams builds on students’ strengths.

Our ACHIEVE Program is open to all freshmen but mandatory for students requiring special support. This corequisite remediation offers tutoring sessions for English and math. Faculty members track student progress through monitoring attendance, attitude and participation. Midterm grades provide an early-warning system.

These academic measures are complemented by a full-scale, intentional commitment in student life to the strengths-based model. Talking circles and leadership seminars are available to the student body in general and also to segmented groups, respecting the idea that in some instances women, men, people of color and members of the LGBTQ community may find it easier to discover and capitalize on their strengths in confidential, protected conversations.

Focusing on students’ strengths does not involve spoon-feeding, condescension or false praise for trivial accomplishments. It’s difficult. It’s revolutionary. But it is necessary.

Finally, while we are willing at Governors State to do everything possible to accelerate preparation for college success, we realize that some students may need more time and attention than we can provide. We must admit that we have not come up with approaches for students with deeper developmental needs. Instead, we recommend that they go elsewhere -- and they unfortunately may wind up going nowhere.

Thus, looking ahead, more research, especially cross-disciplinary research, is necessary. For example, how might we apply the findings of neuroscience to learning in general and to remediation in particular? Also, we know that we are teaching students who have experienced homelessness, violence and other traumas. How do we tailor remediation under these circumstances to help traumatized students address academic challenges? We offer small grants to faculty members willing to research such issues, and the educational world needs large-scale investment in cross-disciplinary scholarship and research teams. But the first steps are to have the vision and courage to rethink remediation.

Elaine P. Maimon is president of Governors State University. This essay was adapted from her new book, Leading Academic Change: Vision, Strategy, Transformation (Stylus Publishing, 2018).

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Conversations with Leaders: Andrae Marak

Dr. Andrae Marak (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/amarak/) studies borders. With an emphasis on North America, he traces the flow of licit and illicit goods, peoples, and ideas from one nation to another. He also studies indigenous populations, especially those whose ancestral homelands transcend borders. His work with the Tohono O’odham Nation—a native group in the U.S. Southwest and Northwestern Mexico—has brought him to the Arizona reservation on more than one occasion.

“As a non-indigenous person who studies and writes about indigenous peoples, there is nothing more important than being present to listen to what indigenous people have to say about their own histories and their own lives,” Marak said. “I learn so much that is new every time that I am there.”

As Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (http://www.govst.edu/cas) at Governors State University, Marak applies the same hands-on ethos to student learning that he employs in his own research.

“Ideally, we want students to be co-creators of knowledge,” he said. “By allowing them to engage in research, work alongside faculty members, and essentially ‘get their hands dirty’ in their fields of study, we’re opening the door for students to learn in the most meaningful ways possible.”

Since joining Governors State University in 2012, Marak has played a central role in a number of important initiatives, including the university’s transformation from an upper-division and graduate university to a four-year regional comprehensive institution. He has taken a leadership role in developing the lower division curriculum for GSU’s already existing programs, spearheaded the creation and launch of a series of new undergraduate liberal arts majors and minors, and worked to forge new pathways for high achieving students—all the while insuring that high-impact practices are embedded in them.

In February, he adds Dean of Graduate Studies to his already full roster.

“I’m really looking forward to this opportunity to learn from our excellent faculty and their students about what our current and future students need to be successful in their graduate fields of study and in their future careers,” Marak said. “Our graduate programs are some of the best in the region and the nation. I hope that my leadership can contribute to maintaining GSU’s history of graduate excellence.”

In addition to his administrative and scholarly work, his passion for teaching keeps him—occasionally—still in the classroom. A military veteran—he served nine years in the U.S. Army Reserve and Wisconsin and New York Army National Guards—Marak, in partnership with colleague Dr. Rosemary Johnsen (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/rojohnsen/), cowrote a 2017 NEH grant (https://gsunews.govst.edu/gsu-student-veterans-take-the-lead-in-neh-class-on-war-and-trauma/) that allowed the pair to work in-depth with student veterans at GSU, an experience that brought enrichment to both students and professors.

“The exchange of knowledge that takes place when we engage students where they are and open the door for their valuable experiences to be brought into the classroom,” he said, “is what distinguishes rote learning from the kind of high-impact education that transforms institutions and lives.”
University Park, IL, January 30, 2018

Lamise Shawahin

Governors State University

(www.govst.edu)

(GSU) Assistant Professor Lamise Shawahin (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/lshawahin/) eats a dinner of grape leaves, a staple in her Middle Eastern culture, while she reflects on her relationship with counseling and her psychology students.

“I’m like the vine that goes everywhere and connects different parts of the trellis,” said Shawahin. Her strong and extensive networks in the Arab-American and professional communities form the wooden support structure in her analogy. Students bear the fruit.

A 2016 graduate—she earned her doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology from Purdue University—the Chicago native had earned a bachelor’s degree in Psychology at Evergreen State College in Washington before returning to the Midwest to pursue advanced degrees. She served veterans at the Edward Hines Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital for her post-doctoral work and soon after joined the GSU Division of Psychology and Counseling (http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges_and_Programs/College_of_Education/Division_of_Psychology_and_Counseling/) in the College of Education (http://www.govst.edu/coe/) in 2017.

The fiery advocate immediately embraced ambitious students eager to make changes in the world for Muslims. And she went to work making much-needed connections—on and off campus—so she could connect her students with the resources and people who could best help them on their professional paths.

“My main mission is to support students in attaining their goals,” said Shawahin, who was recently inspired her to gift psychology majors (http://www.govst.edu/Academics/Colleges_and_Programs/College_of_Education/Academic_Programs/Undergraduate/Psychology_Bachelor_of_Arts/) with student memberships to professional organizations to help them establish networks of their own.

Shawahin’s passions cover a broad range of issues related to Muslim mental health and health disparities, cultural competence, counseling considerations for diverse populations, anti-Muslim prejudice, and social justice.

An associate editor for the Journal of Muslim Mental Health, Shawahin serves in leadership roles for multiple other professional organizations. She’s program coordinator for the Muslim Mental Health Conference, a steering committee member of the American Middle Eastern North African (AMENA) Psychological Association, and she’s also a board member of Arab American Family Services.

The daughter and granddaughter of Muslim Arab-American community organizers, Shawahin says she has seen anti-Muslim backlash since the September 11th terrorist attacks and is disheartened by recent anti-immigration policies.

A tireless organizer, she encourages students to use their voices for increased awareness and is proud to work with a university that boldly supports Muslim students—especially women.

“Look at the Governors State billboards. It features a hijab-wearing woman. I think that’s wonderful. It sends a message, ‘You wear the hijab, and you belong here.’ It’s powerful.”

GSU Newsroom: Growing up, your father was outspoken in the community. You also remember where you were on Sept. 11, 2001. How did those factors impact your career choice?
Shawahin: Former Mayor (Richard M.) Daley named my dad to the city’s Arab-American Council, and I grew up going to meetings with him all the time. My grandfather also was a community organizer, focused more on the South Side of Chicago, where there is a large Arab community.

On the morning of 9-11, I was at school. Then, I attended the Muslim Community Center Full-Time School and was in eighth grade. I remember they sent us home, and later on someone threw big rocks through the school windows. The next day, kindergarteners were going to the gym and had to walk around the broken glass.

I didn’t understand then, but I have since realized we live in a world with a lot of injustice. I could be angry and sad, but I choose to channel it by doing good and helping people connect to something that will help them do good.

GSU Newsroom: In your dissertation, you define the faith community of Muslims by race. Why?

Shawahin: “Who are Muslims?” is a real question. A lot of research that describes the Muslim population leaves out big chunks. Most people hear, ‘Muslim’ and think, ‘Arab.’ In the U.S., the Muslim population is a little less than a third of each: Arab, south Asian, and African American, and the remaining is Eastern European and Latino. I aimed to capture all those groups in the sample that ultimately examined Psychosocial Risk and Protective Factors Among Muslim Americans.

GSU Newsroom: You seem especially interested in the African American Muslim population. Why?

Shawahin: Most of the research that’s been done focuses on Arabs or south Asians, so we don’t get a good picture of the Black Muslim population.

I didn’t realize that until I started working with Black Muslims who shared their experiences of being racially stereotyped in immigrant Muslim mosques. I was very saddened to hear this, and it made me aware of this issue for African American Muslims. The men I worked with noted that members of the congregation treated them poorly, made assumptions about them, and accused them of wrongdoings. I saw a parallel in the literature on Muslims which similarly excluded and marginalized Black Muslims. I didn’t want to contribute to this problem as a researcher.

GSU Newsroom: With the current administration’s policies on immigration, do you feel Muslims in America suffer more?

Shawahin: In 2016, the number of assaults against Muslims was higher than it was in 2001, and Muslims are experiencing an increasing amount of surveillance and issues of entrapment. We’ve also seen research that suggests even witnessing this can take a psychological toll. Yes, this is a hard time to be Muslim in this country.

GSU Newsroom: What special traits do GSU students offer to help you promote wellness in the Muslim community?

Shawahin: On the clinical side, the field of psychology is not very diverse as far as practitioners. We need multicultural students who are resilient and have grit. We need them on the other side of counseling—administering it—because they carry knowledge and experience that is very difficult to train.