Institute on Experiential Learning and Engaged Dialogue

Faculty Biographies



Dr. Eric Castillo is a second-generation Chicano from Yanaguana/San Antonio, Texas dedicated to building a just, compassionate, and liberated world. Grounded in a lifelong commitment to solidarity, peacemaking, and collective flourishing, he co-creates initiatives that advance compassion, cultural vitality, and sustainable social change. His work includes facilitating community healing circles, developing truth, healing, and transformation programs, and supporting storytelling initiatives such as the First Peoples Project of Yanaguana and the Black Westside History Project. He also stewards the San Antonio Peace Center, helping nurture a culture of dignity, peace, and collective well-being across the city. Dr. Castillo publishes on history, visual culture, and intercultural studies and curates art exhibits for the San Antonio community.

Areas of expertise: Global Strategic Communications, Sociology, Southwest History, Visual Culture



Dr. J. Elizabeth Clark is a Professor of English at LaGuardia Community College (CUNY), where she teaches composition, children's literature, fiction writing, and all three Liberal Arts milestone courses. A long-time leader in High Impact Practices (HIPs), she has helped shape LaGuardia's nationally recognized ePortfolio program and currently serves as one of the college's Writing Program Administrators. Her work spans faculty development, digital learning, project-based curriculum design, ePortfolio and composition studies. She has been deeply involved in initiatives such as Learning That Lasts, a research and storytelling project on HIPs, and CUNY's Building Bridges of Knowledge (BBK) project on Generative AI. She is currently leading a team at LaGuardia to develop a college-wide framework for ethical AI use at the college. Dr. Clark's scholarship bridges creative writing, composition studies, SoTL, educational technology, and the medical humanities. A past Chair of the Council on Basic Writing, she is Associate Editor of the International Journal of ePortfolio. Nationally, she has partnered with colleges and universities to support integrative, reflective, and project-based learning models, with a focus on writing, technology, and faculty development. She believes in the power of reflection, integration, and student voice and designs her courses to help students connect what they learn with who they are.

Areas of expertise: High Impact Practices, Faculty Development, Digital Learning, Project-based Learning, Integrative Learning, Curriculum Design, Writing Program Administration Assessment, ePortfolio, and Emerging Faculty Guidance on AI



Peter Felten is executive director of the Center for Engaged Learning, assistant provost for teaching and learning, and professor of history at Elon University. He works with colleagues on institution-wide experiential learning and faculty development initiatives that connect the classroom, the campus, and the community. Peter has published nine books about higher education, including *Connections are Everything: A College Student's Guide to Relationship-Rich Education*(2023) and *The SoTL Guide: (Re)Orienting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*(2025). Both of those co-authored books have an open-access online version free to all readers. Peter is on the advisory board of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and is a fellow of the Gardner Institute.

Areas of expertise: Faculty development, high-impact practices, institutional change, assessment, and belonging



Cara Krezek is the Founder and Chief Purpose Officer of both The Talent Strategy Collective, a consulting practice focused on strengths-based leadership and purpose-driven strategy, and The Apiary, a female-focused co-working space in downtown St. Catharines. She is a published researcher, certified Strengths Coach, and longtime national leader in career education.

Areas of expertise: Strategic leadership, Community building, work-integrated learning strategy, and values alignment



Nicholas V. Longo, Ph.D. is the director of the Rutgers Democracy Lab, which was created in 2025 at the Eagleton Institute of Politics with a singular mission: to strengthen American democracy. He is also a professor in the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. Nick is an advisory board member for College Unbound, a college working to re-invent higher education for returning adult learners, where he also teaches in the prison education program. He consults with some of the leading national civic engagement organizations, including serving as a deliberative dialogue fellow for Campus Compact, a faculty consultant for AAC&U's Institute for Experiential Learning and Engaged Dialogue, and an educator for the Constructive Dialogue Institute. He formerly served as a chair and professor of Global Studies and co-director of the Dialogue, Inclusion, and Democracy (DID) Lab at Providence College, where he was the 2022 recipient of the Innovation in Teaching Excellence Award. He was also a program officer at the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, the inaugural director of the Harry T. Wilks Leadership Institute at Miami University in Ohio, and the director of Campus Compact's national youth civic engagement initiative, Raise Your Voice. Nick is author of a number of books, articles, and reports on civic education, deliberative dialogue, youth civic engagement, and community-based learning. His publications include *Why Community Matters: Connecting Education with Civic Life* (SUNY Press) and several co-edited volumes, including *Creating Space for Democracy: A Primer on Dialogue and Deliberation in Higher Education* and *Deliberative Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning for Democratic Engagement*. He also published the free online guides: *Practicing Democracy: A Toolkit for Educating Civic Professionals,* along with the forthcoming *Engaging Community: A Toolkit for Reciprocal Teaching and Learning Beyond the Campus* (with AAC&U and Campus Compact). He holds a master's in public affairs and a Ph.D. in education from the University of Minnesota.

Areas of expertise: Deliberative dialogue, community-based learning, global education, and civic engagement.



Sara A. Mehltretter, Ph.D. is Professor of Rhetoric at Wabash College, in Crawfordsville, Indiana. From 2014-2022, she founded and served as the Director of the Wabash Democracy and Public Discourse Initiative, an interdisciplinary student program that focuses on teaching and promoting the kinds of communication that advance democracy. In

2026, she is a Scholar in Residence, Public Discourse Strategy, at Campus Compact. Her research, teaching, and practice center around using productive communication and collaboration to address campus and public issues. Mehltretter has led more than 50 dialogues and deliberations on campus and in the community, published more than 20 articles and book chapters on deliberative democracy and pedagogy, and run workshops for a wide range of nonprofit organizations and community groups. Additionally, she has a particular interest in the ways dialogue and deliberation intersect with the sciences, and served as co-PI on two National Science Foundation awards for deliberative pedagogy. She earned her BA in Communication and Political Science from Boston College, and her MA and PhD in Communication Arts and Sciences from The Pennsylvania University. Mehltretter serves on the Board of Directors for Indiana Humanities.

Areas of expertise: Community engagement, curricular development, dialogue, deliberation, deliberative pedagogy, democracy, facilitation, rhetoric



Jane E. Turk, EdD, serves as Associate Director in the Office of Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers. Her work at AAC&U focuses primarily on the Conference on Global Learning, the Institute on Experiential Learning and Engaged Dialogue (IELED), designing and managing digital engagement platforms, and contributing to research and partnership initiatives based in the Office of Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers. Turk has designed and facilitated educational and faculty development on topics including scaling high-impact practices across disciplines and programs; designing community-engaged courses; assessing integrative and experiential learning; teaching with technology to enhance student learning and engagement; and engaged dialogue design and facilitation. Turk previously served as Director of Member Engagement at Minnesota Campus Compact, and as Educational Development Coordinator, Director of the Liberal Education as Practice (LEAP) graduation requirement, Director of the Common Read program, and Civic Engagement and Service-Learning Coordinator at Hamline University. She has held teaching positions at Hunter College of the City University of New York (CUNY), Marymount Manhattan College, Lake Forest College, DePaul University, Normandale Community College, and Hamline University, teaching courses focused primarily on media and cultural studies, critical media literacy, journalism, and the history of media institutions and media regulation in the United States. Turk earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Media Studies and Humanities & Cultural Studies from Macalester College, a Master of Philosophy and a

Master of Arts in Communications from Columbia University in the City of New York, and a Doctorate in Education from Hamline University. Her dissertation research explored faculty narratives about teaching and learning with popular media in undergraduate liberal education programs at four-year colleges and universities in Minnesota.



Kiesha Warren-Gordon, Ph.D. is currently a Professor of Criminal Justice/Criminology and the director of the African American studies program. She is also an affiliate faculty member in the Gender and Women's Studies program. She teaches a variety of courses, including Victimology, a Capstone Criminal Justice course, and courses in the African American Studies program at Ball State University, where I recently completed my 19th year. Dr. Warren-Gordon's substantive areas include community engagement and intimate partner violence across the Black diaspora. Her research explores the intersection of intimate partner violence and poverty in black communities globally. Her work also centers on critical approaches to community engagement while working with marginalized communities. Currently, her research projects include the intersection of intimate partner violence and Christian religious practices and the policing of Black Women's bodies in public spaces. Dr. Warren-Gordon's service work includes serving as a faculty fellow for the Center for Economic and Civic Learning and as board chair for the YWCA of Central Indiana, along with various other community engagement and service-learning projects in her community.

Areas of expertise: Civic engagement, community engagement, service-learning



Dawn Michele Whitehead, Ph.D. is the vice president of the office of global citizenship for campus, community, and careers at the American Association of Colleges and Universities. She is also the director of the Institute on Experiential Learning and Engaged Dialogue. Her work focuses on advancing practices and strategies to integrate global, civic, and experiential learning across curricular and co-curricular initiatives, and on advancing equitable participation in experiential, global, and community-based learning for all. She has also served as the co-director for the joint AAC&U-Interfaith America Institute on Interfaith Teaching Excellence and served as a facilitator for the Teach Global Health faculty development workshop in Costa Rica. Dr. Whitehead has presented and published nationally and internationally on experiential

learning, community based global learning, high-impact practices, and institutional transformation. She led community-based global learning programs in Ghana, Kenya, and Costa Rica and taught global and international studies at Indiana University Indianapolis (formerly Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis). Whitehead was named an inaugural member of the Institute for International Education's National Academy for International Education and serves as vice chair on the board of The Forum on Education Abroad. Whitehead earned her Ph.D. at Indiana University Bloomington.

Areas of expertise: Community-based global learning, curriculum internationalization, experiential learning, global health curriculum development, global learning, high-impact practices, and integrative learning