

# NEWSLETTER

*“Penguins often dance for joy at the sight of someone [incl. penguins] they love,” writes Kaitlynn Breeden, Editor in Chief at the student-run Wayne State College paper. She also explains that penguins gift pebbles to loved ones..*

[article link here](#)

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### **A Letter from the Editors**

In seasonal theme, we are embracing LOVE this month. We share what we are LOVING seeing in our Winter '24 learning spaces—yes, we sometimes just walk around campus and peek in; we’re curious! We share some of the texts we have LOVED engaging with this month. We also put out a monthly teaching challenge focused on LOVE and highlight our love for open educational resources (OER, see Marianne Williams’s POV, p. 5 and Ladd Library’s Say Yes to the Text Event, p. 8). We gift this February 2024 newsletter to you as a penguin might gift small stones: We love the Bates community and thank you for being you. Also.. “GIFT” season is coming (p. 8).

Oh! And here’s a corny LOVE joke to pass along:

**Is your nickname Chapstick? Because you're da balm!**

We’re laughing over here in Dana. Come laugh with us.

*Lindsey*  *Wells*

# What we're loving seeing in our Bates learning spaces

We heard from multiple instructors that they used a 3-2-1 type activity or an annotating activity to encourage close reading of their syllabi. As one instructor wrote us: "I tried one of the syllabus activities and it went great! Students seemed more motivated and engaged than my typical first day."

**[More about Syllabus Activities HERE \(p. 3\)](#)**



We saw red markers and yellow cardstock; black sharpie and copy paper; rainbow pens and rainbow name tents across course type and discipline. These instructors could call students by name even on the first day, students knew who they were sitting next to, and we even saw nicknames and fun facts printed on them as classes began building their communities.

**[More about Name Tents HERE.](#)**



One of CITL's '23-'24 initiatives is Project MIC (Making Inclusive Classrooms). Thus, we are so happy to walk through our buildings and hear loud, crystal clear voices. And not just because 1 in 5 students have some degree of hearing loss—everyone can benefit when you use a mic.

**[More about Project MIC in our Sept. '23 \(p.4\) Newsletter HERE](#)**



"We all make mistakes" is a common turn of phrase. But sometimes our students struggle to internalize this. We had the chance to see a professor normalize and encourage making mistakes (and risk taking) in their classroom. They were struggling with a task (handing back papers on day 2) and called a few students by incorrect names. They explained that even though they were taking a risk in using names they weren't yet confident in, they were still going to attempt it. They would learn more by trying, even if mistakes were made. Great learning can emerge from learning mistakes, and they emphasized that taking risks would be welcome in their classroom.

**[More about normalizing and learning from mistakes HERE](#)**



# What's on Wells's\* desk?

It is mid January and I scroll through Inside Higher Ed ([LINK](#)). There seem to be so many headlines that make me cringe: Report Details Student Loan Servicing Errors (1/8/24), Little Movement on Pay Equity in Higher Ed (1/12/24), The Humiliation of Higher Ed (1/16/24), DEI Spending Banned, Sociology Scrapped in Florida (1/18/24). But there are also titles that make me happy: University of North Dakota Plans to Return Tribal Remains (1/4/24), \$100M Gift Will Build Endowment Pool for 37 HBCUs (1/12/24), Removing Financial Barriers to Study Abroad (1/16/24). Then, there was this [article](#):

January 18, 2024

## More Access Means More Enrollment for Maine Community Colleges

A recent report shows a surge in enrollment across Maine Community College System campuses from 2022 to 2023 and credits the state's Free College Scholarship program.

By Jessica Blake

Although Bates might seem far removed from a conversation about community colleges, through reading this piece, I felt the need to ask some hard questions:

**Quote:** "enrollment in skills-based programs shot up 300%... students enrolling in trade occupation programs climbed from 71% to 81%"

**Skills-Based Focus:** In an 11/1/23 article, [Leonard Cassuto](#) writes that higher ed. is squeamish about teaching skills, as skills and content might seem to sit in opposition. When we imagine our fields' futures, we think *content* and teaching "what" seems more glorious than teaching "how." He describes fears of turning into service centers and never moving beyond remedial content. But this attitude might be shifting, as faculty embrace "emphasizing use-value" and "practical higher education." [Jessica Blake](#) (same as the Maine article) recently reported that a new study found that 86% of faculty and staff say there's a need for skills-based learning models, but only 22% of their institutions have implemented them. I ask: What do we think here at Bates? Do we want to encourage more skill development in our students? Train them in methods of literary, cultural, and writing studies? Help them cultivate critical and creative thinking skills? Prepare them to perform independent research and to reimagine what "research" looks like? Show them how to translate academic skills to different settings?

**Quote:** "it will open the door for more transfers to four-year colleges"

**Transferring Options:** But to where? is my question. Elite colleges have high retention rates and might not "take" community college credits. If transfer students even get in the door, there can be imposter syndrome both academically and socially ([source](#)). But transfer students bring in new perspectives and new ways of navigating the higher ed landscape. Bates accepts very few transfer students and most of them are not from community colleges. Why is this and how do we feel about this?

**Quote:** "there is power in the word 'free'"

**What FREE Means:** (Maine) students grow up hearing "college costs a lot," and can internalize "okay, college isn't for me." If they **do** learn that financial aid packages exist, there is still the barrier to correctly navigating and securing that money. But when college is a "free regardless" opportunity, more students might believe that that door can be open for them. Bates prides itself in supporting students from wide-ranging economic backgrounds. How might we get the word out that (our) college costs can fit in anyone's pocketbook and that tuition hurdles shouldn't be part of the "okay, college isn't for me" decision?

At least for this last line of questioning, I look towards the great work happening at the [Harvard Center](#). In the fall, Bates hosts 240 8th graders from Auburn and come May there are 350 8th graders from Lewiston Middle School who visit our campus. While here, they learn about trade schools, colleges, and careers, with a specific focus on how they, regardless of socioeconomic status, might apply to, enroll in, and succeed at a professional life of their choice.

If you or if anyone you know is also thinking about skills-based education, transferring options, and/or the cost of college (a casual plug here for the [Say Yes to the Text](#) OER workshop on 3/6), please reach out!

Wells

\*My dad gave me a copy of "The [Elements of Style](#)" when I left high school. Since then, he reminds me often that I own it. In the section *Elementary Rules of Usage* (p.2) one will find: Charles's friend and Burns's poems. This apple doesn't fall from the tree. So, it's Wells's desk here.

# Monthly Teaching Challenge

February  
2024

CITL offers a monthly teaching challenge—and that challenge might sound different or difficult, but we encourage you to try it out and see if it works for you, your course, and your students.

In addition, we would love to hear from you during the month. What has it been like to incorporate **this** teaching challenge into your current course? Write us or stop by Dana to share.

## Teaching With Love. Teaching with Heart.

Teaching with love may be more familiar in K-12 education, but that doesn't mean it doesn't have a place here at Bates. Drawing from work out of the Colorado School of Mines, a public RI engineering institution, we challenge you to teach with love and heart in an effort to combat the anxiety and depression students are reporting.

In their 2023 essay, Snieder et al. describe 12 Teaching with Heart practices that educators can incorporate into their higher-education learning spaces. Although you can find the complete list in the article, we laugh aloud at the last one and wanted to share it with you: **Always love your students, even if you don't feel like it.**

As the authors write, "The reality is that we sometimes are stressed or irritated and find it difficult to teach with a loving mindset. Cultivating our own well-being and approaching student interactions compassionately helps..." (p. 11). We challenge you to suspend the irritation, just for a second, and articulate what makes your students great and how you might showcase their greatness through pedagogical choices.

This said, if stress and irritation become unmanageable and love seems completely out of the question, come find us. We are here for you.

## What was Shared: 3 in 3 Challenge

(( nothing! ))

So, if **you do** the monthly challenge, please consider reaching out and letting us know how it went! We would really appreciate it.



If you do try out this teaching challenge, please consider letting us know how it went.

What worked and what did not work?

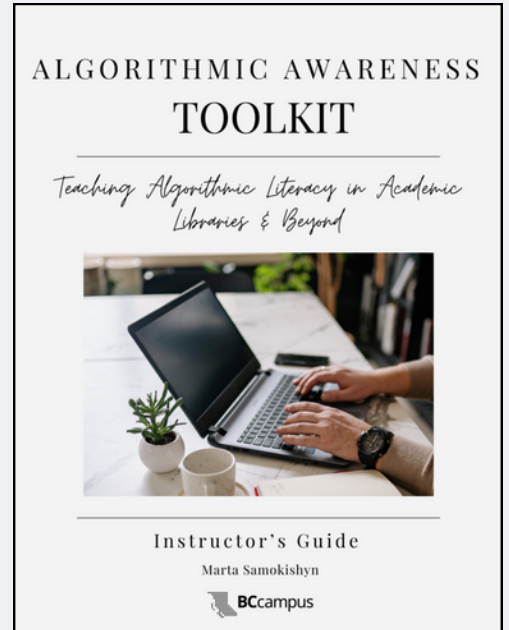
We highlight individuals who share their experiences with us in next month's newsletter.

So please reach out or stop by to share.

# Pedagogical Point-of-View: Marianne Williams

Earlier this year, I came across the open-access textbook *Algorithmic Awareness Toolkit: Teaching Algorithmic Literacy in Academic Libraries and Beyond* by Marta Samokishyn, and I've been endlessly interested in how I can integrate discussions and activities focused on critical thinking about algorithms into my research workshops and class visits with students.

One particular issue I encounter as a librarian is seeing and working with students (and educators!) frustrated with academic search interface—like LibrarySearch or other academic databases—not returning the results they need based on natural language keywords or sentences. So much of the internet that we use regularly is designed and mediated with personalized algorithms, which offer suggestions of results based on (a) your previous choices, search history, cookies, and location and (b) targeted advertisements, which show ads based on this data. These make the internet easier to use; however, they are designed for the user to be a consumer. What I am interested in is teaching others how to interact with the internet as a citizen, which often means identifying and avoiding algorithmic bias. This requires more effort, more understanding, and more patience with an interface like LibrarySearch, which does not collect this level of personal data and therefore does not personalize results.



The *Algorithmic Awareness Toolkit* offers several different activities, discussion questions, lesson plans, and self-assessments exploring algorithmic bias, data privacy, generative AI, and critical awareness of how algorithms influence our lives and academic research. Drawing from this toolkit for workshops I've facilitated for the Bates community, I've led activities like the following:

**Activity Title:** Who does Google think I am?

**Connection to Toolkit:** Activity 1 of Lesson 3

**Program:** Attendees look at the Ad Center of their google account, which displays some of the personal information that Google has collected on them, including household income, relationship status, age, gender. Attendees then use Google to search for the same keywords and compare results with each other. Are these the same? How are these different? Why would this create issues for academic research?

As I continue to design and offer workshops for our campus, I'd love to hear your input on all this. How are you and your students thinking about algorithms? Do algorithms trouble or excite you? How might we become better knowledge consumers, knowledge creators, researchers, and citizens by learning about algorithms? How might open-resource materials, like this Toolkit, support us as we continue to ask, explore, and move forward? (And yes, this was a casual plug for OER week and the *Say Yes to the Text* event in March: [LINK](#))

Thanks for  
sharing,  
Marianne!

Thinking about teaching and learning? What is on your mind?  
We are looking for [contributions for this newsletter!](#) Reach out if you are interested.

# CITL Fellows Programs

## want to come join our CITL team???

### Faculty Fellows Program:

- Provides an opportunity for faculty to serve in a leadership role and (a) expand campus capacity for inclusive and evidence-based pedagogical practices AND (b) support excellence in teaching and scholarship at Bates.

### Quick Facts:

- Commitments: Yearlong fellowship (Winter/Fall OR Fall/Winter semesters), 7-10 hrs/wk
  - First semester: Identify an area of focus and create an action plan for pairing that focus with CITL initiatives
  - Second semester: Implement and evaluate that action plan, later providing the campus an informal showcase on the work
- Benefits: One course release for each semester. Opportunities exist to attend and/or present at a teaching and learning-oriented conference. There is also a modest budget for action plan resources.

### Application Process:

- Qualifications for Applicants
  - Bates College Faculty (all titles and all disciplines encouraged to apply)
  - Has 4+ consecutive years teaching at Bates
  - Has a desire to learn about and support colleagues in implementing inclusive teaching practices
- Submit (rolling basis):
  - CV & List of courses taught at Bates
  - Several 250-word reflections concerning topic(s) about which you are passionate, relevancy to your unit/division/institutional priorities, and how all this connects to inclusion and equity in our classrooms (ENTIRE PROMPT: FOUND HERE)



# GIFT

Interested in having CITL perform a non-evaluative midterm focus group with your class? Request a "GIFT" for your course! We are especially excited to work with faculty members who have not yet done a GIFT in this academic year. But please reach out now! We have limited GIFTS available!

**WHAT IS GIFT:** GIFT (Group Instructional Feedback Technique) has been empirically tied to higher student satisfaction as measured by students' perception of the course, the instructor, and their motivation towards learning (Mauger, 2010; Gray and DiLoreto, 2016). GIFT allows students to feel heard, allows you to receive constructive suggestions mid-semester allows time for educator adaptation, until waiting until the end of the semester. Examining your teaching through the student lens is an important reflective practice.

**WHAT IS GIFT AT BATES:** After requesting a GIFT, CITL will meet to discuss your course, then CITL will visit your course for 20-30 minutes and lead a focus group. Students are encouraged to create constructive feedback using open ended questions in small groups and then in a full group discussion to reach consensus. After this, we meet to discuss and you get a confidential report on what your students are thinking!

REACH OUT



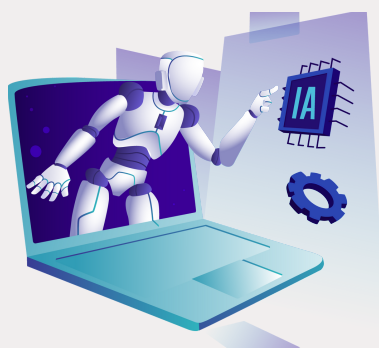


# UPCOMING WINTER '24 EVENTS

## Pedagogy Matters Special Series: Generative AI

Meetings: Tues 2/13, Thur 3/7, Wed 4/4  
4:00-5:00pm  
Zoom ([link with registration](#))

Join colleagues across Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin for a 3-session reading group. Each month, a brief article, video, or website will be shared ahead of the session. Then during the session, we will discuss generative technology and its impact and potential in our learning spaces. These sessions will be facilitated over Zoom by all three colleges' teaching centers.



For our first session, we will be exploring the foundations of Generative AI and discussing what this type of software is and is not. [Register here](#) (for Zoom link).

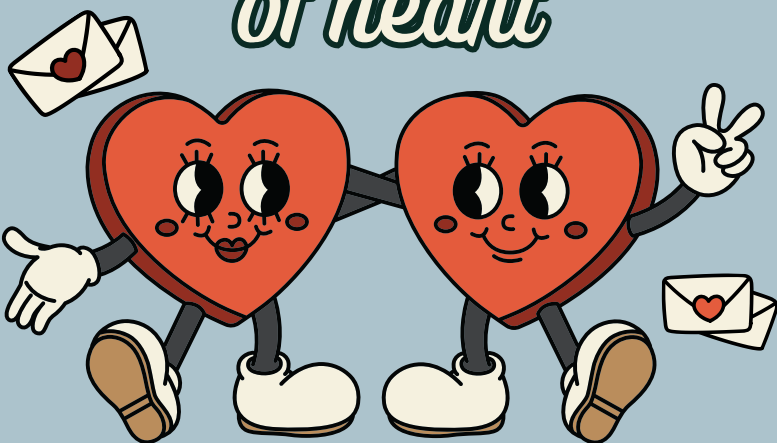
## Beyond Binaries Panel

Thursday, February 15th  
12:00-1:00 pm, Commons 221  
Go thru Commons line for lunch (charge CITL)

Postponed from last semester, Beyond Binaries has been rescheduled. Besides contributing to more inclusive classrooms, expanding beyond gender (and other!) boundaries and binarisms can enrich possibilities for creativity, learning, understanding, and joy. Join **Hanna McGaughey** (Asian Studies), **Ian-Khara Ellasante** (Gender & Sexuality Studies/Africana), **Kat Anderson** (Biology), **Brian J. Evans** (Dance/American Studies), and CITL Faculty Fellow **Erica Rand** (Gender and Sexuality Studies/Art and Visual Culture) for this cross-discipline panel on the generative potentials of thinking beyond binarisms in our work. [Register here](#).



## Educating is a work of heart



Be on the look out for a CITL Valentine, delivered personally by Lindsey & Wells on February 14th

## Accessibility Isn't Scary (it's LOVE) Lunch & Learn Workshop

Thursday, February 29th  
12:00-1:00pm, Commons 221  
Go thur Commons line (charge CITL)

Postponed from last semester, Accessibility Isn't Scary (it's LOVE) will tackle misconceptions about accessibility and accommodations in our learning spaces AND reimagine them as wonderful, exciting, and natural parts of all educational spaces.

Share, discuss, and problematize with **Wells Castonguay** (CITL), **Anita Charles** (Education Dept.), and **Carson Dockum** (Accessible Education) as we consider "accessibility" as a mindset that we can try on and hone.

[Register here](#).



# UPCOMING WINTER '24 EVENTS



## Say YES to the Text:

### Exploring the Open Textbook Landscape

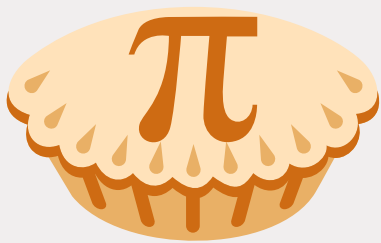
Wednesday, March 6th

4:15–5:30pm, Dana 219

Textbook affordability is a perennial concern for our students and one that we as educators have the power to address. Join CITL and Ladd Library in exploring the open textbook landscape, as we (a) review college costs, textbook market trends, and the impact these have on our students; (b) learn about Open Educational Resources (OER) and where to find materials that suit your courses; and (c) work with Research Liaisons to search for open materials. Come with a course in mind and your laptop/tablet AND leave with a new open textbook you can read, review, or adopt for your course.

If you want a little more information before registering for this event, [HERE](#) is an infographic highlighting how our students are impacted by textbook costs.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



## KROEPSCH PEDAGOGY PANEL: MAKING LOCAL CHANGES

Thursday, March 14th 12–1 pm Commons 221

**SAVE THE DATE!** Curated by Katy Ott, Associate Professor of Mathematics and winner of the 2023 Kroepsch Award for Excellence in Teaching. 3/14 is a special day for math! It is known as PI DAY and we plan to also celebrate the occasion with some pi(e) at this lunch time panel. Join us for lunch (through the line in Commons) and then upstairs for the panel discussion and plenty of pie!

