



CAR/W QUARTERLY

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR’S OFFICE



As is true every year, August is the time for new shoes, backpacks, and eager anticipation of returning to school to see friends. This year however, this anticipation is once again braided with anxiety as fires engulf some of our communities and the COVID-19 Delta variant threatens. I know we may be

weary of the pandemic, but I also know our educators are resilient and continue to lean into the work in support of student success. Let me once again thank you for all you do to support our candidates to become the literacy experts our schools need.

CAR/W faculty understand that “... a literate populace is fundamental to preserving our democratic, pluralistic society.” The importance of literacy is once again highlighted given recent events in schools. That is, the “culture wars” appear to be back. Reminiscent of the controversy regarding sex education over 50 years ago, a culture war is defined as a cultural conflict between social groups and the struggle for dominance of their values,

beliefs, and practices. The current culture war appears to be focusing on Critical race theory (CRT) which is based upon the work of scholars who have written about the need to teach the complexities of our history including Mary McLeod Bethune, W.E.B. DuBois, James Baldwin, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and others who remind us that our nation’s story is complex and layered. As educators we must tell the authentic story of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian American and Pacific Islander history.

Adding to this complexity is the fact that across the nation, many state legislatures have introduced and enacted new laws to restrict what can be taught in classrooms, including bans on CRT, anti-racist curriculum, and even ethnic studies. The impact of these laws and the resulting discussions in classrooms remains to be seen, but as CSU faculty who prepare our future teachers, I trust you are prepared to facilitate and support these complex yet necessary conversations on behalf of our students.

Let me close by offering my own warm welcome to Dr. Jyothi Bathina, our new CAR/W Co-Director. She is proving to be a valuable member of our team at the Chancellor’s Office.

Warm regards, Marquita



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WELCOME TO CO-DIRECTOR, DR. BATHINA!



Jyothi Bathina, Ph.D. is the new Co-Director for CAR/W based at the Chancellor's Office in Long Beach. In her role, she manages the center and oversees the Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum. Since starting in her position in August, Dr. Bathina has been meeting with the members of the

ERWC Steering Committee, and laying out her vision for ERWC going forward. She has been actively involved with submitting a federal grant proposal in conjunction with the Fresno County Superintendent's Office to study the effects of implementing ERWC with the Canvas Learning Management System.

Dr. Bathina's research interests focus on ways to reach and teach functional, academic and critical literacy to all students, particularly those who are marginalized due to race, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. She has published several articles regarding her research and practical implementation of literacy practices in the secondary classroom and has presented at various national and international conferences. Her areas of expertise include literature and language arts instruction, reading and writing instruction, content area literacy and discipline-based literacy practices.

Dr. Bathina attended the University of Illinois for her B.A. and M.A. and earned her Ph.D. in English at the University of Nevada. She started out as a high school teacher working with underserved populations in San Jose, California and in the South Bronx, New York. She served as a literacy coach as well as a small school coordinator, earned clear credentials in both California and New York, and is eligible for the administrative credential in California.

Dr. Bathina went on to achieve tenure and promotion to the rank of associate professor in the Literacy, Bilingual and Special Education Department at California State University, Fresno. During her time at Fresno State she worked with school districts across the Central Valley, building partnerships and conducting literacy projects with hundreds of underserved students. Her work resulted in six published volumes of student narrative. Internationally, she completed a seven-year project with a tribal orphanage in Odisha, India, conducting teacher training workshops and working with the school to build student literacy.

Prior to joining the CSU Chancellor's Office, Dr. Bathina was promoted to full professor and served as the Academic Program Director for the Graduate Credential Program at National University. In her new role as co-director of CAR/W, she is excited to serve literacy faculty at the CSU, district partners and practicing teachers, and K-12 students who benefit from the ERWC curriculum.



NEWS FROM THE CENTER

CCTE Presentation

On October 21, 2021, faculty from CAR/W and the UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity will present at the California Council on Teacher Education. This policy presentation shares the work of a collaborative effort between our two institutions. Our product was an elaboration of the Foundational Skills subsection of California's Literacy Teaching Performance Expectations for multiple subject and special education teacher candidates. In addition to the policy analysis, much can be learned from the collaborative effort between our two groups. Below, we report some of the conclusions and implications of that work. Please attend the CCTE conference in San Diego or reach out to tflushma@calpoly.edu if you are interested in learning more.

NEWS FROM THE CENTER (*continued*)

Elaborated TPE document: The elaborated document clarifies the purpose and pedagogy of foundational skills. It emphasizes systematic, direct, authentic, and explicit strategies, methods, and materials to provide students with multiple opportunities for feedback. The format more easily allows for specific discussion and documentation for accreditation purposes. It also allows for teacher educators to check for content that might not be as comprehensive in their respective TPPs (Alpert, 2020; Salinger et al., 2010). This document brings focus and guidance to components of reading instruction that are essential for nearly all students to learn to read and address the most common barriers for students who are most likely to struggle in school.

Collaborative Process: As helpful as we believe the elaborated document could be, the insights we gained from our collaborative efforts were equally powerful. Our groups think similarly about foundational literacy instruction (e.g., consensus came fairly easily when elaborating on phonics and word recognition). Some areas of disagreement remain unresolved and require ongoing reflection (e.g., using multiple cueing systems.) Dialogue encouraged members to better understand and appreciate tensions around teaching foundational skills. Collaboration is a value-added process. Each participant was qualified to write the elaborations on their own, but the document is better for having been written together.

Implications: It is a long road from policy to practice. Traveling that road requires individual and institutional commitments to shared goals. Leadership and collaboration both play vital roles on this journey. Our work exemplifies and sheds light on the intersectional nature of interpreting foundational skills policy for TPPs. This collaborative process can serve as a heuristic for our future work and the document itself is a guide for teacher educators in the state of California.

EXPOSITORY READING AND WRITING CURRICULUM (ERWC) UPDATE

The Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) has officially archived ERWC 2.0 effective September 1st and has launched version 3.0 online. In addition to the digital modules, the customizable readers, launching in October as a brand-new offering, allow teachers to choose from a variety of modules to build their own courses. The 3.0 mini-module readers are already available to order and can be used in conjunction with the customizable reader.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The CSU Center for the Advancement of Reading and Writing, dedicated to excellence in literacy instruction, promotes the preparation of knowledgeable and highly skilled teachers and reading/literacy specialists in the California State University by:

- Facilitating faculty communication and research;
- Disseminating research and policy information;
- Fostering connections among the CSU literacy faculty, P-12 partners, and public education stakeholders; and
- Serving as a forum for the interchange of public and academic interests.

The Center is committed to ensuring that California's children and adolescents will be capable readers and writers; as such, they will have the greatest chance of becoming successful and productive citizens in today's changing world.

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CONTACTING THE CENTER

CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF READING AND WRITING

401 Golden Shore Ave.
Long Beach, CA, 90802
calstate.edu/car

Dr. Tanya Flushman, Ph.D.

Co-Director, Center for the Advancement of Reading and Writing
Associate Professor, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
1 Grand Avenue
School of Education, Building 02-105
San Luis Obispo, CA, 93407-0389
tflushma@calpoly.edu | (805) 756-5537

Jyothi Bathina, Ph.D.

Co-Director, Center for the Advancement of Reading and Writing (CAR/W)
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA 90802
Jbathina@calstate.edu | (562) 951-4693