Today is Friday March 1, 2019
Spring WILL come eventually. Probably. No, surely. Right?

Faculty Exchange between Drake SOE and Gjakvoa and Prizren Universities in Kosovo

Dr. Sally Beisser and Dr. Jennifer Thoma from the Drake University School of Education (SOE) are traveling to Kosovo March 1-8 in continuation of the partnership between Drake University and the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST). Dr. Beisser and Dr. Thoma will conduct professional development workshops in contemporary teaching methods for faculty of instruction at Gjakova University and the Univesity of Prizren. The Title of the series of workshops is "Pedagogical Design and Strategies for Student Engagement". There will be four separate workshops in the series: Student Engagement, Effective Questioning, Formative Reflective Assessment, and Representing to Learn.

At each university, the four workshops will be conducted over two days, providing ample time for the participants to collaboratively engage in the practices about which they are learning. These professional development workshops were co-conceived with the Rector of Gjakov Univeristy, Shaban Buza, and the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Mimoza Dushi, and at Prizren University with Dr. Sejdi Sejdiu, Assistant Professor and Faculty of Philology. The workshops at Gjakova University will be attended by faculty of instruction and teaching assistants from throughout the university, while at Prizren University the participants will be drawn from the Teaching of English program.

Additionally, Dr. Beisser and Dr. Thoma will visit two primary schools, one each in Gjakova and Prizren, to learn more about schooling in Kosovo. Drake University's School of Education, along with four other educational institutions in Iowa, will participate as a training site for the MEST "Train the Trainers" program, wherein MEST curriculum specialists will come to Iowa to be trained in curriculum development and then serve as 'national trainers' to develop professional development curriculum and training for Kosovo teachers. The school visits by Dr. Beisser and Dr. Thoma will provide better understanding of the schooling context in Kosovo and inform the development of the training program to be conducted by Drake University SOE faculty.

This will be the third visit by Drake SOE faculty since Drake University and MEST signed an MOU in 2017. In June 2017, Jan McMahil, (Dean) and Dr. Matthew Hayden (Associate Professor and Director of SOE International Programs), were part of a delegation organized by the Iowa Sister States (ISS) organization that brought various educational, business, and municipal leaders to Kosovo. In May 2018, Dr. Hayden and Stephanie Ely (Coordinator for Partnerships and Special Programs) joined another delegation organized by ISS. At the conclusion of this second visit Drake secured its role as a site for the Train the Trainers program, initial preparations begun for the professional development workshop series, and sites were identified and prepared for the Teach in Kosovo program (now the Working Worldwide program). Additionally, preparations and plans were made for the January 2019 J-Term Travel Seminar course "Kosovo: Repairing and Rebuilding", led by SOE Associate Professor Tonia Land and Ms. Ely, during which 19 Drake students learned about Kosovo's history and current efforts to rebuild after years of conflict.

NOTE: Support for this partnership has been provided by Drake Partnership Proposal awards from Drake International.

Sensory Processing Disorder Course

Back by popular demand, Drake SOE doctoral student Jayna Fischbach (also OT professor at Drake) is re-offering a course through Heartland AEA focusing on supporting students with sensory processing disorders in the classroom on March 30 and April 13. It's a great class and rigorously designed as part of her dissertation work. Please take advantage of this opportunity and/or share with others as you see fit.
https://prodev.aeapdonline.org/4DCGI/CM005492111902INV&*
Contact information for questions: Jayna Fischbach, OTD, OTR/L, BC. Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy; 515-271-2080; jayna.fischbach@drake.edu

Top 10 Soft Skills for the Future of Work
https://www.forbes.com/sites/adigaskell/2019/02/22/what-are-the-top-10-soft-skills-for-the-future-of-work/

Jennifer Gonzalez On the Best Classroom Tech Tools

In this Cult of Pedagogy article, Jennifer Gonzalez updates her list of the six most helpful classroom technology tools, plus two honorable mentions. "I don't think technology is the end-all be-all," says Gonzalez, "and of course it brings new problems into our lives, but just watching the creativity behind these tools makes me so excited to live in a time when so many ordinary people can actually bring their ideas to life and watch those ideas impact the world."

• **Equity Maps** http://www.equitymaps.com – This iPad app helps figure out which students participate in class discussions, how often, and for how long. Having entered a seating chart into the computer, the teacher taps each student's icon as he or she starts talking, and the app keeps track of each student's contribution time and displays a summary at the end, including a breakdown by gender. The teacher can also tap for periods of silence, pair-shares, small groups, and even "chaos" – when general discussion gives way to many smaller conversations. In addition, the app can audio-record the whole discussion for later review.

• **Pro Writing Aid** https://prowritingaid.com – This program does a deep dive into the quality of writing. The writer composes within the tool, copies and pastes or uploads the text, and gets a summary report with statistics on strengths and weaknesses, plus suggestions for changes when you hover over highlighted places within the text. Reports include readability (on four different reading scales), the number of times certain words were used, passive voice, overused words, use of clichés, sentence variety, unique words in the piece, average sentence length, the placement of different sentences by length, and adverb frequency. There's a paid version of this software, but Gonzalez says you can get a lot of mileage from the free version.

• **Google Tour Creator** https://vr.google.com/tourcreator/ – This new feature in Google Expeditions allows students to create their own tours using imagery from Google Street View and publish them into the Poly 3-D platform https://poly.google.com. These could be used as part of a research project, reflecting after a field trip, a tour of the neighborhood or the school, or a supplement to a creative writing project.

• **Great Big Story** https://www.greatbigstory.com has short, professionally produced, positively themed videos about people and phenomena around the world – for example, a 12-year-old who took on the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, the accidental invention of the best snack food, and America's oldest female BMX racer. Teachers should preview material because some may not be appropriate for younger students.

• **Geoguessr** https://geoguessr.com – "This one is my absolute favorite," says Gonzalez. "This would be a fantastic option for early finishers, lame duck days, or even as a reward for good behavior – it's that fun." Players are plunked down somewhere in the world using Google Street View and have to navigate around and figure out where they are. Players get points for how successful they are at pinpointing their location on a map.

• **Webjets** http://webjets.io – Users create what looks like a bulletin board on which they post items on cards, which can contain an image, an embedded video, a live Google Doc, an attached file, or a table with a variety of elements organized in columns. Students can keep multiple folders on one board, and all cards can be collapsed or expanded. This is a good tool for group projects.

• **Yoteach!** https://yoteachapp.com – This backchannel tool allows a teacher to set up a free, password-protected "room," give students the URL, and they can come in and chat, adding pictures or drawings.

• **Classroomq** https://classroomq.com – Students who need help or have a question can add themselves to an electronic queue and get help in order (and then get checked off by the teacher with one click).

"6 Ed Tech Tools to Try in 2019" by Jennifer Gonzalez in The Cult of Pedagogy, January 6, 2019, https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/ed-tech-tools-2019/