

Education pros to speak at Research to Reception

by Natalie Johnson - Tuesday, April 27, 2010

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/2660/uwo-education-profs-to-speak-at-research-to-reception/>

Two University of Wisconsin Oshkosh education professors will discuss the importance of teaching to students' strengths and interests at a Research to Reception Speaker Series event Friday, April 30, at Reeve Memorial Union.

UW Oshkosh College of Education and Human Services faculty members Joshua Garrison and Kathryn Henn-Reinke will present "Children, Youth, Schools and Society: Social Perceptions of Childhood and Youth and the Classroom Experiences of English Language Learners."

Garrison will outline his research as a historian of childhood. He looks at how childhood is represented in academic discourse and how ideas about childhood are created in society. Often, children are portrayed either as victims or perpetrators of crime.

"Young people are one of the few groups that do not have a say in how they are portrayed," he said. "They are not included in the conversation about themselves. They are a huge percentage of the population that doesn't experience their own history."

Garrison advocates a child-centered curriculum that speaks to the natural interest children have in learning about other children. For example, a lesson about the U.S. Constitution could address how children are affected by their nation's founding framework, while a history of World War I could focus on the role of children in the conflict.

At the event, Henn-Reinke will discuss challenges facing school districts with diverse student populations. She also will talk about her year-long sabbatical study of promising practices in multilingual education that could narrow the achievement gap for English language learners in the U.S.

In her visits to long-standing, successful trilingual schools in Buenos Aires, Prague and Spain, she discovered some commonalities. The schools all stated their commitment to trilingual education up front in their mission or on their website, employed fluent teachers and used multiple languages to teach academic content areas.

"By teaching through the languages, students can be more successful and build on the academic areas," she said.

The Research to Reception Speaker Series, in its third season, showcases the breadth and depth of the UW Oshkosh faculty's scholarly and creative activities. In October 2009, two UWO geologists presented "From Door County to Deep Geologic Time: How Geologic Research is Used To Protect the Modern Environment and How It Can be Used To Reveal the Impact of Environmental Change on Life in Earth's Distant Past."

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