

Third Annual What Works Conference, *Shifting Landscapes*

December 18, 2023; Call for proposals (due November 9)

To learn about and amplify what works for student success.

Building on two successful years, the third annual conference has chosen the theme of: ***Shifting Landscapes***. Anchored by presentations on artificial intelligence and adult learners, this year's conference encourages presentations on the fast-changing world of students' lived experiences, the university, and how we, collectively, are adapting. How is learning and connecting shifting? How is technology, especially artificial intelligence, changing our world? Do alternate course modalities influence how we meet students? Tell us: ***What works in terms of furthering William Paterson's purpose? What works in terms of building on the momentum of our new and updated academic programs? How can we rethink and reaffirm our commitments to student well-being?***

What are the goals of this conference? This is an opportunity to gather and learn (conveniently in a virtual medium) about evidence-based practices used here at WP, or elsewhere, that benefit students. What outcomes are we striving for and how do we measure success? How can we contribute to student success at the university by putting our purpose at the center of our thinking, building momentum for academic changes, and supporting student well-being and success? What works for communicating with students, developing student belonging, teaching and learning, and assessing whether we have accomplished our goals?

When is it? Monday, December 18, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Online. (A link will be shared closer to the date). All sessions are online.

Why are we doing it? We want to put student success and well-being at the center of our thinking. What strengths do students bring to our campus, whether that is in-person or virtual? What can we do to meet them where they are and enable them to excel? Let's share practices that are working and have the potential for scalability.

Who is the audience? WP faculty and staff; anyone who has a touch point with our students, either directly or indirectly. This year, we will also be inviting our Passaic County Community College partners to join us, both as presenters and as attendees. We have like interests in the students we serve and the lives we seek to impact.

Plenary Speaker: [José Antonio Bowen](#), Ph.D. FRSA, Senior Fellow, American Association of Colleges and Universities. Title: ***Teaching and Thinking with A.I.*** Dr. Bowen has been leading higher education innovation and change for over 40 years. Bowen holds four degrees from Stanford University and has written over 100 scholarly articles. His forthcoming book is titled [Teaching with AI](#). The excitement (and panic) surrounding A.I. is shattering expectations around assignments, assessment, class preparation, and attendance, while challenging us to build more future-proof and inclusive classrooms. This session will examine the skills and content that will matter most in this new age, what policies and practices improve motivation and decrease cheating, and why articulation of 'quality' is essential. Focusing on the tangible, attendees will also learn techniques to transform assignments and assessments to motivate and engage students by placing greater emphasis on the process and experience of learning.

What are the conference's features?

- Concurrent individual and panel sessions
- Keynotes and invited presentations on artificial intelligence and on adult learners
- Round table discussions (ideas & brainstorming)

What are the targeted outcomes of this conference? We are looking to share among ourselves outcomes-minded strategies and assessments for:

- Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and/or Access
- Consideration of redesign of systems policy, procedure, student activities, curriculum, and pedagogy that serve one or more of those four goals
- Enhanced student retention, learning, and performance

Call for Proposals

We request proposals from faculty and staff for individual sessions and panel sessions. Faculty and staff may also propose a panel of students as presenters, or a mixed panel of students, faculty, and/or staff. Session proposals should showcase innovative programs, initiatives, scholarship, and/or assessment. Proposals should highlight what your best practice is, your strategy in using it, evidence that it works, and how others may apply it. Design your proposal to show how to facilitate the success of students, keeping the outcomes above in mind.

You may also present research on best practices in higher education. We are open to session topics that align with the conference theme and to those that display your current findings on student success – even if they vary from our theme.

Round table sessions are 20-25 minute brainstorming sessions on a topic you think faculty and/or professional staff needs to consider. The presenter speaks for no more than five minutes and serves as facilitator. Part of the five-minute or less presentation should be a short list of discussion questions. Content expertise is not necessary, but conversation facilitation, idea synthesizing, and perceptive interpersonal skills are important.

Session proposals are to be submitted via [THIS LINK](#) by November 9, with decisions anticipated in late November. Submissions should include:

- **Session Title**
- **Name(s), title(s), and email(s) for each presenter**
- **Individual, panel, or round table session**
- **Session Description (including session goals, 300 words max.)**
- **Plan for engaging attendees in light of the virtual format**
- **Panel session length: 20 minutes (mostly for single speakers and round table discussions) or 40 minutes (mostly for multiple speakers). Panels that include student speakers may request 60 minutes.**

Criteria for selection include (a) clarity of proposal, (b) likely interest to session attendees, (c) evidence of impact, or prospective impact, on students, (d) potential for attendee application of learning, (e) how well the proposal applies to the conference theme.

Proposals are peer-reviewed. All presenters should be available to present between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. of the conference day.