

What's Happening in CUE Classrooms in 2024

This month we take a closer look at how two of the professors at the [UNC Center for Urban Education](#) are helping teacher candidates be the best teachers they can be.



CUE Professor Jamie Lujan with her family

Building Connections with the Community

New CUE professor Jamie Lujan is just finishing her first semester teaching Education of Mexican American Students at the UNC Center for Urban Education. She has also taught Intro to Business at the University of Colorado at Boulder for several years and provided coaching and consulting services to entrepreneurs for more than 12 years. At [Saluzo Business Solutions](#), Lujan focuses on the intersection between entrepreneurship, education, and equity, with a particular interest in how to grow businesses with technology.

“Just like my entrepreneur clients, I meet the teacher candidates where they are and collaborate with them to help them achieve the desired outcome,” Lujan said. “I teach them the process of making their learning outcomes tailored to them and the students they work with.” Lujan teaches the history of education of Mexican American students and explores the work of modern-day Mexican American scientists, mathematicians, artists, writers, and activists. She asks the teacher candidates to set learning targets for content, cultural understanding, and language comprehension and incorporate them into their lessons.

Lujan partnered with a number of organizations and arranged on-site visits where CUE students could do some hands-on learning and create connections in the community. The teacher candidates can continue to seek guidance from the people at these organizations long after the class is over:

[Escuela de Guadalupe](#) is a dual-language pre-K–8 school where students read, write, and speak Spanish and English. There are 209 students from 14 different countries and 38 different zip codes, and 81% are Hispanic/Latino.

[Latino Cultural Arts Center](#) showcases the artistic and intellectual contributions of Latinos by centering, celebrating, and activating Latinidad through visual, digital, performing, musical, culinary, and literary arts. They offer 48 programs and events to the community.

[Sisters of Color United for Education](#) is the first and oldest promotora program. They promote culturally competent health, education, art, and leadership curricula to all communities, with a focus on elevating Latino holistic wellness.

“Students come into the UNC Center for Urban Education program because they are change-makers in the community, and they want to create more change-makers in their students,” said Lujan. “Educators are bridge builders. The theory is important, but the practice is where we have the opportunity to do some incredible work.” By partnering with community organizations and experts, Lujan is helping students start to build their professional networks and access to a wealth of resources beyond the classroom.

Lujan noted that there are many educators in our community who don’t choose to become teachers or professors but are still creating exciting learning spaces. “My hope is to bring together these two worlds so that the teacher candidates and their K–12 students feel comfortable connecting with and becoming part of these rich communities,” said Lujan. “We all become better educators when we are involved in the worlds that our students come from.”



CUE Professor Annie Trujillo with her family

Fostering a Growth Mindset

Annie Trujillo is the principal of [Denver Language School](#)—a language immersion K–8 school in Denver Public Schools. She’s also a professor of Diverse Early Language and Literacy at the UNC Center for Urban Education, where she’s just finishing her second semester working with our teacher candidates. Trujillo is passionate about language learning and inclusive, equitable instruction in K–12 classrooms.

“I have really enjoyed my teaching time at the Center this past school year,” said Trujillo. “The students are inspiring and work incredibly hard. It has been such a joy and privilege to learn about who they are, the different school settings they are working in, and their goals as educators. They all have unique stories to tell.”

Trujillo said she has witnessed her students apply classroom learning to their own classroom settings. “They incorporate their learning and strategies into excellent lesson plans and classroom discussions,” Trujillo observed.

In her class, she helps teacher candidates unpack and develop a deep understanding of the Common Core State Standards and the WIDA (formerly known as the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) English Language Development framework, which provides a foundation for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for K–12 multilingual learners.

Trujillo and her students dedicated multiple class sessions to understanding the standards by grade level, how they need to align their instructional planning to these standards, and how to effectively monitor and assess students’ growth and achievement of specific standards. “Applying that learning to their classroom settings has really helped them develop as educators,” Trujillo said.

“I ask my students to think deeply about their students’ learning, understand the range of

learner needs that exist in any classroom, and how to effectively meet those learner needs,” said Trujillo. “A growth mindset is essential for today’s educators. It can prevent burnout and help us find balance.”

Join Dr. Yemi Stemberge for a Virtual or Face-to-Face Workshop



Dr. Yemi Stemberge—author, speaker, educator

Virtual Workshops

Dr. Yemi Stemberge is hosting a free [Pop Up Virtual Design Studio](#) from 8:30 to 10:00 AM PST Pacific Standard Time on Saturday, May 4 and Saturday, May 18, 2024. Teachers: Bring your lesson plans and content standards and engage in thought-partnership to re-imagine the design of learning experiences for your students.

You will receive guidance on marrying artful thinking with the craft of culturally responsive pedagogy. This is a great opportunity for anyone to freshen up their familiarity with the culturally responsive education (CRE) mental model. [Register here](#).

Face-to-Face Workshops

Dr. Yemi Stemberge will be leading two three-day, immersive instructional design studios this summer on June 11 to 13, 2024 and July 24 to 26, 2024. These sessions will take place at the UNC Center for Urban Education.

You’ll plan culturally responsive learning experiences that have the potential to close equity gaps and engage students in rigorous and meaningful opportunities to learn. The Immersive Design

Studio is open to all educators interested in gaining tools for artful thinking. The discussions and activities will most appeal to classroom teachers, coaches, and administrators with responsibilities for supporting instruction.

The content draws on Dr. Stemberge's books, *Culturally Responsive Education in the Classroom: An Equity Framework for Pedagogy* (2020) and *Brilliant Teaching: Using Culture and Artful Thinking to Close Equity Gaps* (2023).

Reserve your spot today and [register here!](#) Continental breakfast and lunch are included each day.

Thinking about Becoming a Teacher?

We are enrolling new students for the fall 2024 semester. Call Dr. Rosanne Fulton, Director, UNC Center for Urban Education, at 303-637-4334 or [email](#) for more information. Watch our [short video](#) to learn more about the CUE teacher-preparation program.