

Stevens Initiative Connected Classrooms

Faculty Scholars Biographies



Rachid Akhmassi | Ben Guerir, Morocco

Language Instruction Project Manager: Language Lab
University Mohammed VI Polytechnic University

Mr. Rachid Akhmassi has taught English as a foreign language for over 18 years. He has taught in various public high schools, engineering and business preparatory classes as well as at the University level. He has also delivered different language courses for the American Cultural Association through its ALC in Marrakech. He holds a BA in linguistics

from Cadi Ayad University, and a postgraduate certificate in applied linguistics and TESOL from Portsmouth University. He is a specialist in curriculum development and evaluation. Mr. Akhmassi has worked on various language instruction projects within Mohammed VI Polytechnic University, where his passion to thrive as a professional and help students flourish meets the right means and the right people.



Fokiya Akhtar | Dubai, UAE

Assistant Professor of Media Production and Storytelling
Zayed University

Dr. Fokiya Akhtar has over two decades of combined experience as a teacher-scholar and filmmaker. She has produced educational documentaries and instructional television programs for University Grants Commission countrywide classroom in New Delhi. She has also produced and directed independent documentary films, live shows, game shows, current affairs programs for various production houses in India and Oman and UAE. Dr.

Akhtar's documentaries have won official selections and best film nominations at Mumbai International Film Festival; Golden Gate Fiction and Documentary Film Festival; San Francisco Film Festival; International Children's Film Festival and Delhi International Film Festival which include Children of God, a documentary on special needs children in Dubai (2011) and All Alone and Lonely, a documentary on the widows and orphans of Kashmir (2009). Dr. Akhtar's most recent project is a feature-length documentary focused on Irish-India migration and identity entitled, An Gorta Mór: Passage to India (2019) which has already collected many best documentary award laurels at numerous film festivals.





Abyre Asmaa | Beni Mellal, Morocco

Assistant Professor of Marketing and Management
Sultan Moulay Slimane University

Dr. Asmaa Abyre is a Professor at Sultan Moulay Slimane University (USMS), Faculty Polydisciplinary of Beni Mellal, she regularly works in Scientific Research through the production of scientific articles with other professors from different universities. It seems important to her in any scientific work to cross points of view and ideas in order to better understand the issues and propose serious

ways of reflection. For hobbies, she regularly does sports activities. She likes traveling with her family to discover other cultures and ways of thinking. Dr. Abyre hopes that this international partnership will allow her to improve her skills in terms of the teaching pedagogy, discover training techniques and collaborative tools to properly transmit knowledge to learners.



Lindsay Benstead | Oregon, USA

Associate Professor of Political Science
Portland State University

Dr. Lindsay J. Benstead is Associate Professor of Political Science in the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government and Director of the Middle East Studies Center (MESC) at Portland State University. Previously, she served as Fellow in the Middle East Program and the Women's Global Leadership Initiative at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC (2018-

2019) and Kuwait Visiting Professor at SciencesPo in Paris (fall 2016). She has conducted surveys in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Jordan. Her research on women and politics, public opinion, and survey methodology has appeared in Perspectives on Politics, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, Governance, and Foreign Affairs. She holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Political Science from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and served as a doctoral fellow at Yale University and a post-doctoral fellow at Princeton University.



Idrissa Diawara | Casablanca, Morocco

Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Molecular Biology
Mohammed VI University of Health Sciences

Dr Idrissa Diawara is currently an Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Molecular biology at the Mohammed VI University of Health Sciences, Casablanca. His research field is focused on Infectious Diseases and Molecular Epidemiology. His current research project is based on NGS data mining and Pan-genome analysis of microbial genome like Streptococcus pneumoniae. Dr.

Diawara started teaching microbiology and molecular biology in September 2016. His teaching fields include microbiology and laboratory techniques of microbiology; microbial genetics; molecular microbiology and microbial biotechnology; molecular diagnosis of infectious diseases; quality control in medical biology; lab safety; biosafety and risk management.



Youmna El-Hissi | Beni Mellal, Morocco

Assistant Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship
University Sultan Moulay Slimane

Dr. Youmna El-Hissi is an Assistant Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship in the Business School (the Ecole Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion) at the University Sultan Moulay Slimane (USMS). She is a holder of the Ph.D. degree in Management and Information System as well as an Executive MBA from the Business School (the Ecole Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion) at University Hassan 1er. Moreover, she attained another MA degree in Quality Management. She is an alumna of IVLP program for Women in STEM. Currently, she is the head of the International Cooperation department at USMS, where she has extensive experience in coordinating multiple international cooperation projects at USMS including Erasmus; USAID; Intra-Africa; AUF. Previously, she worked as a Quality Manager in Textile, Agro-industry, and Building Sectors.



Suzanna ElMassah | Abu Dhabi, UAE

Associate Professor of Economics and Finance
Zayed University

Dr. Suzanna El Massah is a researcher, educator and mentor, she is an Associate Professor of Economics and Finance at both Cairo University's Faculty of Economics & Political Science (FEPS) and Zayed University's College of Business. She is the Quality Assurance Manager at the College of Business, Economic Research Forum (ERF) Fellow and Higher Education Academy (HEA)

Fellow. Dr. Elmassah has received her PhD in Sustainable Development (2009) and MSc in Finance (2004) from Cairo University. She has over 20 years teaching and mentoring experience at higher education, in addition to her involvement in mobile learning, course development and industry consultation. She speaks three languages English, Arabic and German, and in 2016 she founded and became an advisor for the InveSlamic Club at Zayed University. Dr. ElMassah has multidisciplinary interest in research areas of Economics, Finance, Sustainable Development, Economics of Education, and Behavioral Economics. She has published several scholarly papers in prestigious international journals and sits in the Editorial Review Board for a number of peer reviewed Journals.



Erin Fernández Mommer | Washington, USA

Professor of Spanish
Green River College

Dr. Erin Fernandez Mommer is a tenured faculty member in the Foreign Language Department at Green River College. She has developed the Virtual Exchange and Language Center for Green River College and has led Green River College's initiative to train faculty at the college in Collaborative Online International Learning, COIL and has designed and taught 10 international

and collaborative student teams. Dr. Fernandez Mommer is currently studying the effects of student support and tutoring on Foreign Language Proficiency Levels as well as retention, completion and success at the Community College Level. Erin has 20 years of teaching experience at the college level and has developed, directed and led multiple groups of students to study at the University of Oviedo in Asturias, Spain since 2016. Erin has developed the "Global Talks Series" on campus and is a co-developer/founder of the Global Studies' Concentration at Green River College.



Salem Haggag | Dubai, UAE

Chair, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering
American University in Dubai

Dr. Salem Haggag joined the Department of Mechanical Engineering at AUD in Fall 2013. He received his PhD in Mechanical Engineering in 2003 from the University of Illinois, Chicago, USA. His dissertation investigated the analysis and development of a novel steering system (Steer-By-Wire System) for

medium and large size earth moving equipment. After his Ph.D., Dr. Haggag worked with the Performance and Control Group of Caterpillar Inc., for a few years where he was exposed to the industrial state-of-art development in the fields of mechatronics and control systems. Prior to joining AUD, Dr. Haggag held faculty appointments at Ain Shams University and the Arab Academy for Science and Technology in Egypt. Dr. Haggag's research focuses mainly on advanced and modern mechatronics systems. At AUD, Dr. Haggag teaches a broad range of courses in the areas of mechatronics, control systems, instrumentation, and computer-aided design.



Amal Hajjij, MD | Casablanca, Morocco

Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery
Mohammed VI University of Health Sciences

Dr. Amal Hajjij, MD has been an Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery at Mohammed VI University of Health Sciences (UM6SS) in Casablanca, Morocco since November 2016 and she is the current director of the « Casablanca Audition Centre » at the Sheikh Khalifa International University Hospital. Dr. Hajjij completed did her residency at the University

Hospital Hassan II in Fez and graduated in 2015. She spent a one-year Research Fellowship at the department of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery at Stanford University Medical Centre in California (US) in 2013/2014. Dr. Hajjij has had many published papers and ongoing research projects with a special interest on pediatric cochlear implants, hearing tests in children and congenital hearing loss. She presented her research work at many international meetings in North Africa, Middle East, US and Europe. She has a special interest in implementing innovative modern pedagogy to the actual curriculum.



Eric Hamke | New Mexico, USA

Lecturer, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
University of New Mexico

Dr. Eric Hamke has over 30 years of experience with communication and control system evaluation and development. He has worked for BDM Corporation, Ball Aerospace Engineering, General Motors and Honeywell International. During this time, he worked on fielding new digital communications systems, predictive maintenance systems, flight and

guidance control systems and camera control and pointing systems. He is currently teaching Computer Logic Design, Signals and Systems and Digital Signal Processing. Dr. Hamke is also the Proctor Mentor for the UNM ECE WHY lab. The WHY lab is an Electrical Engineering and Computer Department Resource open to all students who wish to pursue their own research or class projects. The lab's goal is to provide the resources and mentoring needed to develop ideas into results. He has also developed applications as a source of additional example problems to augment his teaching.



Roshan Iqbal | Georgia, USA

Assistant Professor of Religion
Agnes Scott College

Dr. Roshan Iqbal is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Agnes Scott College. Her teaching and scholarly interests are mainly in the areas of Islamic Law, Modern Muslim Intellectuals, and Gender and Sexuality. Dr. Iqbal obtained her PhD from Georgetown University, M. Phil. from the University of Cambridge, M.A. from Tufts University, and B.A. from Cornell College.



Tien James | Oregon, USA

Assistant Professor of Management and Faculty Director of
SBA Honors Program
Portland States University

After practicing medicine for 11 years, Dr. Tien James became very frustrated with the delivery of healthcare in the United States and transitioned into teaching. For the past 15 years, as an Assistant Professor of Management, Dr. James has been teaching a variety of undergraduate courses (Business

Environment, Team Processes, and Organizational Design and Change) in a variety of formats (fully online, hybrid, face-to-face, and remote) for the School of Business at Portland State University. In addition to teaching full-time, Dr. James is the faculty Director of the School of Business Honors Program and course coordinator for one of our core business courses, Business Environment. Dr. James is new to COIL and excited to bring international learning and new curriculum into my courses.



Ramiro Jordan | New Mexico, USA

Professor, Associate Dean of Engineering for International Programs
University of New Mexico

Dr. Ramiro Jordan has twenty-five years of experience creating and leading STEM education, R&D, and entrepreneurial organizations and activities in Ibero-America and other regions in the world. He is a leader in international engineering education research with proven capabilities in fundraising and creating partnerships, regionally and internationally, among academia, industry, government, and multilateral organizations. He has extensive experience in education, industry, and entrepreneurship. Professor Ramiro obtained his Ph.D. (1987) and M.S. (1984) in Electrical Engineering, from Kansas State University, USA, and his B.E. (1981) in Electrical Engineering from Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina.



Kristina Katsos | Sharjah, UAE

Instructor of Global Problems
American University of Sharjah

Dr. Kristina Katsos' areas of teaching are introduction to global problems, as well as oil and gas in the modern world. Prior to joining the American University of Sharjah, she worked both in the private as well as governmental sector, giving her a unique perspective outside academia that is highlighted in her teaching. Her current area of interest is the impact of hydrocarbons on

international affairs, especially in conflict resolution. Dr. Katsos attained her Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) from Georgetown University, USA.



Evan Kristof | Oregon, USA

Senior Instructor
Portland State University

Mr. Evan Kristof is a Senior Instructor in the Civil & Environmental Engineering department at PSU. He practiced as a bridge design engineer for 7 years at David Evans and Associates and T.Y. Lin International before coming to PSU in 2012. In addition to teaching primarily undergraduate structural engineering classes, Mr. Kristof is also an academic adviser and supervises

the active American Society of Civil Engineers student chapter. Although he teaches at all levels of the undergraduate program, his curricular interests are in developing a more interactive and engaging sequence of sophomore/junior engineering mechanics courses (Statics, Mechanics of Materials, Structural Analysis). Mr. Kristof volunteered for the Bridges to Prosperity non-profit from 2012-2014, in which he mentored a group of PSU students who designed and constructed two 30m-long cable-supported bridges in rural Nicaragua to provide year-round access to schools, markets, and healthcare. He also holds a law (J.D.) degree and practiced as an intellectual property attorney in San Diego.



Tracey Laird | Georgia, USA

Professor of Music
Agnes Scott College

Dr. Tracey Laird is a professor at Agnes Scott College and obtained her Ph.D. degree and M.A degree from the University of Michigan and B.A. degree from the Loyola University. Dr. Laird is an author/editor of four books, including "Austin City Limits: A History" and "Austin City Limits: A Monument to Music"

the latter co-authored with her spouse who is also a writer. Among her other writings, "Louisiana Hayride: Radio and Roots Music Along the Red River" as well as "Country Music and Television-in the Oxford Handbook of Country Music". Dr. Laird's courses at Agnes Scott include American Popular Music, History of Jazz, Musical Elements in Global Perspective, Issues and Methods of Ethnomusicology, and others, including a course on the Beatles co-designed by a senior music major. She also regularly leads the senior seminar in music, with recent topics like music's relationship to neuroscience, to politics, or to the experience of meaning.



Sherry Lotze | Washington, USA

Professor of Communications
Green River College

Dr. Lotze is an enthusiastic, dedicated, and collaborative, adjunct faculty member in the Communication Studies Department at Green River College. She returned to teaching full-time following 20 years as a senior marketing executive in the banking industry. Dr. Lotze earned her Master of Arts degree from the University of Wyoming where she was a recipient of the Golden Apple Teaching Award. While building a successful, award-winning career in marketing, she continued to teach. During her time at Laramie County Community College she worked closely with Cheyenne LEADS, the Cheyenne-Laramie County Corporation for Economic Development, to develop an Interpersonal Communication for Business course. She was awarded Adjunct Teacher of the Year and Outstanding Achievement Award in Adult Tutoring. Dr. Lotze's belief in the growth and development of people drives her collaborative approach to teaching. Student evaluations reflect her participatory approach. She believes shared stories are the catalyst for human connection and everyone works better when they're having fun.



Lisa Luengo | Washington, USA

Professor of French and Humanities
Green River College

Dr. Lisa Luengo is a passionate advocate for intercultural competence in the Foreign Language Department at Green River College where she is a faculty member. She has grown the French program for Green River College where she spearheaded four new classes as well as created a daily French Language Lab where students develop their skills acquired in class. She also launched "Croque-M' Club," a French film series. Dr. Luengo was born and raised in France, her mother is American and her father Spanish. She grew up believing that knowing different cultures and languages made better citizens, gave a clearer understanding of the complexities and the beauty of the world and helped people understand each other. Her teaching philosophy reflects these beliefs. Dr. Luengo has been teaching since 1998. Her doctoral studies focused on linguistic exile, war trauma, and testimony. Her research never stops: In October 2018, she presented her paper "Intersectionality in the Francophone world," part of the Global Talk Series at Green River College. In November 2019, she presented "Francophone Heritage, African Voices and U.S Immigration."



Jeniece Lusk | Sharjah, UAE

Assistant Professor of Sociology
American University of Sharjah

Dr. Jeniece Lusk has taught sociology for over a decade at institutions in the US, Japan and the UAE. Her areas of teaching and academic scholarship include (but are not limited to) survey research methodology, global gender studies, environment and consumption, and deviant behavior. In addition to her academic career, Dr. Lusk has also conducted client-based qualitative and quantitative research and analysis for corporations in Atlanta and Central Texas. Dr. Lusk earned her PhD in Applied Sociology from Baylor University, Texas, USA.



Patrick Mumpower | Washington, USA

Intensive English Instructor
Green River College

Mr. Patrick Mumpower currently teaches full-time for the IEP program, and is a part-time German instructor at Green River College. He was born in Berlin, Germany and attended school there until he moved to the US during his high school years. After earning his undergraduate degree in graphic arts at Maryville College and his Master's degree in German/Teaching a Foreign

Language in Tennessee, he moved to New York City to begin his professional career working as an office manager at an international bank and later as a tour manager. After a few years in NYC, Mr. Mumpower decided to move to the West Coast where he briefly worked for some large technology firms in Seattle. However, he wanted to start his teaching career, so after taking a few part-time jobs teaching English to immigrants, Mr. Mumpower was fortunate to become part of the faculty at GRC. Mr. Mumpower has been teaching at GRC now for almost 15 years. In his spare time, he enjoys soccer, golf and German literature.



Vinod Pangracious | Dubai, UAE

Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering
American University in Dubai

Before joining American University in Dubai, Dr. Vinod Pangracious was doctoral researcher at the University of Pierre and Marie Curie Paris VI, France, He graduated from Indian Institute of technology Bombay (IITB) in year 2001 and held a Member of Technical Staff (Principle Development Engineer) position at Cypress Semiconductor Inc, Infineon Technologies GMBH Germany and

Innovative Silicon SA in Switzerland before joining UPMC Paris VI. His research interests include: Three-Dimensional Integrated Circuits, VLSI, EDA, Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGA), System on a Chip (SoC), and Application-Specific Integrated Circuits (ASIC), ML/AI implementation and Applications, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Dr. Pangracious has authored and co-authored more than 50 publications. He has served as a reviewer, review committee member, technical program committee member, program chair, area chair, organizing committee member and steering committee member for many international conferences, and reviewed papers for several journals including IEEE Transactions NanoBioScience, CPMT (Components, manufacturing and Technology) and VLSI. Dr. Vinod is a Senior Member of IEEE and ACM. He is also the chair of UAE society of IEEE CAS, SSCS and PELS chapter. Dr Pangracious maintain strong connections with semiconductor and software industry in UAE and middle east. Currently a Core committee member and mentor of the newly formed American University innovation and entrepreneurship center.



Ridwan Raji | Abu Dhabi, UAE

Assistant Professor of Marketing and Communications
Zayed University

Dr. Ridwan Raji earned a PhD in Media Management from the School of Multimedia and Communication Technology, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and specialized in Marketing Communications, Media Management, Brand Management and Consumer Responses. He obtained an MPhil in Management with a major in Marketing Communication from the Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS. Dr. Raji also received a bachelor's degree in Media Technology with a specialization in Advertising from the School of Communication and Multimedia Technology, UUM. He is a recipient of several scholarships and awards including the WAMY Partial Scholarship Award, Malaysia from 2010 to 2013, the Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS Graduate Assistance Scheme from 2013 to 2014 and the UUM Graduate Scholarship from January 2015 to January 2019. Dr. Ridwan has won international research grants and presented in international conferences on issues revolving around Sustainability Image Development and Sustainable Consumption among Youth, Green City Image Development from Residents' Perspective, Social Innovation and Corporate Identity. The findings from his previous studies have been published in refereed journals.



Ismail Raqi | Ben Guerir, Morocco

Language Instruction Project Manager: Language Lab
University Mohammed VI Polytechnic University

Mr. Ismail Raqi is a Teacher of English/Project Manager at Mohammed VI Polytechnic University. He has 15 years of teaching experience. Mr. Raqi has held different positions at different language schools as Teacher, Pedagogic Manager and Deputy Studies Manager. He has an MA in Humanities and Area Studies from Mohammed I University, Oujda. Dr. Raqi is also a Cambridge certified teacher and Berlitz certified instructor. He is currently preparing a PhD in Organizational Learning at UM6P. He teaches English for General, Specific and Academic purposes at UM6P and is also responsible for pedagogy and learning cycle.



Mona Tajali | Georgia, USA

Assistant Professor of International Relations and Women's Studies
Agnes Scott College

Dr. **Mona Tajali** is an Assistant Professor of International Relations and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, and an affiliate of the Middle East Studies programme at the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. Her areas of expertise are gender and politics, human rights, and social movements in Muslim countries. Dr. Tajali's current book manuscript investigates how religious and cultural norms, attitudes, institutional structures, and voter behavior affect the representation of women and quality of democracy in Muslim contexts, with a comparative focus on Iran and Turkey. Her research appears in journals such as the British Journal of Middle East Studies, Middle East Journal, and the Journal of Women, Politics and Policy, among others. Dr. Tajali has also co-authored a book titled Electoral Politics: Making Quotas Work for Women (WLUML 2011), and has been an active member in the executive board of the Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) transnational organization.



Yasin Tunç | Oregon, USA

Assistant Professor of Practice in Department of Curriculum
Portland State University

Dr. **Yasin Tunç** is an Assistant Professor of Practice in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at PSU. He received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Curriculum Theory and Comparative and International education (minor), and his MSc in the Department of Educational Sciences at Middle East Technical University (Ankara, Turkey). Dr. Tunç's teaching background is in English Language Teaching and World Language Teaching. He taught English as a World ('foreign') Language in Turkey at secondary and post-secondary levels and has taught Turkish as a World Language in the US (K6-16). Dr. Tunç currently teaches in the MA/MS Program and Graduate Teaching Education Program (GTEP) in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and leads the second cohort in GTEP. Dr. Tunç's scholarship is interdisciplinary, working at the intersections of cultural studies, history and sociology of childhood, curriculum theories, comparative and international education, and world language teacher education.