

Teaching Future Educators

Curriculum Materials Library provides resources for students to create course materials and explore new ideas

The Curriculum Materials Library (CML) is a space where elementary educators check out the puppet collection, business students create proposal boards, and graduate students bind their theses. The CML is a small space on campus, but large in its outreach and influence.

CMLs are highly specialized libraries developed to support teacher education programs within colleges and universities.

These educational collections include items from instructional materials to teaching tools like blocks, puzzles, and other objects that are used in classrooms, ranging from preschool to high school.

Grand Valley State University's CML is located on the Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus. It is one of the few curriculum materials libraries within the state of Michigan. At Grand Valley, the CML is used by students, faculty, and staff campus-wide, providing materials and services that promote student creativity in projects and lesson plans.

Janet Navarro, Affiliate Professor of English, believes that when a Grand

Valley student sees the variety of materials that are available for their use in the CML, "they start to see themselves differently, and their role as teachers differently."

In the book *Curriculum Materials Centers and Collections: Legacies from the Past, Visions of the Future*, supporters of CMLs maintain that they have a direct impact on the success of students teaching in classrooms, supporting student learning, and preparing them for careers as teachers.

Rita Kohrman, the Education Liaison Librarian at Grand Valley recognizes the value of this unique collection and works to develop and grow the CML. Working alongside Kohrman to support the CML is Library Specialist Donna Oster. Together they promote the CML at Grand Valley, leading multiple orientations each year and providing an overview of materials available and how they can be used. Members of a variety of departments attend these orientations, ranging from English, to speech language pathology, to education.

Kohrman also provides research instruction for many courses which give her more opportunities to introduce the CML to faculty and students. Since the CML is located on the Pew Grand Rapids Campus, Oster provides access to the collection by ensuring needed items are delivered to the various Grand Valley campuses.

Navarro encourages the students in her classes to use CML resources. She said the CML helps her students put together teaching materials in interesting and creative ways. She teaches a course in which Grand Valley students tutor children in reading, and she said the CML makes a large impact on students in that "it allows them to start to imagine how they can use materials to engage children as they move forward as readers."

Navarro notes that her students often leave the CML with a large bag of materials to try with their students. She never requires that her students use CML materials; however she consistently sees evidence of it in their lesson plans.

The CML at Grand Valley helps bring education students from the theoretical to the practical; it allows them to be engaged in their learning process, as well as engage their own students. Providing valuable resources for their future careers, the CML supports the future of education.

For more information on the CML visit www.gvsu.edu/library/cml