

Learning Experiences That Linger: Digital Tools That Outlast the Course

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Abstract

Many early childhood education students enter higher education with limited access to high-quality practice, mentor classrooms, and professionally modeled instruction due to geography, work schedules, family responsibilities, and uneven local placement opportunities. This session shares how one university is using innovation and outreach to close that experience gap for diverse ECE students by transforming typical course assignments into reusable professional tools. Participants will explore a program designed Google Site that curates ten interactive artifacts students build during a course and then carry directly into their classrooms, including family communication resources, observation and documentation systems, inclusive planning templates, advocacy tools, and a living portfolio. The session highlights a practical model that blends digital tool building, structured reflection, collaborative feedback, and responsible AI-supported drafting to strengthen academic mastery while also building workforce readiness and professional identity.

Keywords

Early childhood teacher education, innovation, equity, online and distributed learners, digital tools, clinical practice alternatives, professional readiness.