Ginny Dembek Ph.D.

Researcher/Educator/Consultant/Advocate

About Dr. Ginny Dembek

As a third generation Special Educator, I am committed to improving the lives of students with disabilities and increasing their success and inclusion in the general education classroom. The foundation of my research, teaching, and service is built on three generations of knowledge advocating for higher expectations and equity for students with special needs. I am dedicated to focusing on individual outcomes and ensuring that teacher candidates are prepared to be advocates for their students. Improvement in academic, social, and emotional outcomes allow students to access more within their community. My dedication to inclusion and student success is demonstrated in three ways: through my research agenda, my work with teacher candidates at Brooklyn College with teaching and mentoring, and the continued service to improve and maintain programs we offer current and future educators.

My research agenda focuses on Intervention research. This type of research allows teachers to apply the work in the field with high validity and reliability. I have six peer-reviewed publications, and was co-editor for a special issue of the Journal of Research in Childhood Education. My recent publications are focused on how students with disabilities or students in foster care can be supported in educational settings. My research focuses on four distinct areas: problem solving in literacy, literacy instruction and tutoring, writing instruction, and enhancing teacher candidate preparation with universal design for learning (UDL). I have presented my work at national and international conferences.

The courses I teach at Brooklyn College allow me to focus on supporting my expectations for teacher candidates to apply evidence-based interventions in public school settings. I maintain high standards for expectations of teacher candidates and mastery of knowledge related to student/civil rights and teaching as a science. It is also important for my teacher candidate students to engage in reflective application of skills and strategies, emphasizing teaching and learning as a life-long process. A teacher candidate’s ability to apply knowledge and reflect on their performance is changed more effectively through ongoing mentoring and guidance in the field. Ongoing mentorship and guidance are built into my courses and how I engage with students through their coursework.

Since joining the School of Education in August 2013, I have deepened and expanded my research in problem solving, writing instruction, literacy instruction/ tutoring, and UDL in teacher preparation. My research in problem solving during the reading process involves a new type of instruction to help students with problem solving language, including both explicit lessons and frequency building to a performance criterion (FBPC). I built an intervention that requires students to speak up about their understandings and challenges during problem solving tasks. Students with disabilities overwhelmingly struggle with the language necessary to communicate information to teachers, and my intervention has shown success in teaching this skill. After my intervention, students with disabilities are able to voice their strengths and challenges, required to succeed in a general education classroom. Similar to think aloud skills, my research in writing instruction focused on explicit instruction and frequency building. In addition to classroom-based intervention research, I have expanded my work to include evidence-based literacy tutoring methods in collaboration with the New York Foundling. Foster youth have a significantly higher chance of receiving special education services (Gee, 2020; Scheer, 2007), linking this work directly with my current goals. My most recent research project has involved locating funding and training opportunities to enhance teacher preparation in special education within technology and Universal Design for Learning.

SECTIONS

1. Publications
2. Conference Presentations
3. Courses
4. New Program Development
5. Consulting
6. Tutoring