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Ten Questions for Faculty Series

The Teaching and Learning Center is pleased to present the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*. The series is dedicated to helping faculty to stay connected with one another while working remotely. Every week, a faculty member will have the opportunity to answer ten questions about themselves and about navigating the changes brought about by COVID-19. This week, we are pleased to feature Kerri Keough Lampos, Professor of Student Life Skills and Psychology.



Kerri Keough Lampos
Professor, Student Life Skills and Psychology

Where are you from?

I was born and raised in the Chicago southwest suburbs. I moved my family to Marco Island in 2007 and have been in the area ever since.

Which college or university did you attend?

My education was quite a journey. I earned a BA in psychology from North Central College, a BA in elementary education from Governors State University and then my MS in educational psychology from Capella University.

When did you begin teaching at FSW?

I began teaching as an adjunct in 2017 and full-time in 2018.

What made you become interested in your academic discipline?

I have always been interested in human behavior which is what brought me to psychology, but what

brought me to Cornerstone is actually what brought me back to education. Cornerstone allows me to support all other disciplines by preparing students to succeed no matter what they are learning.

Building their skills in communication, wellness, time management, and financial management can help them be successful in any aspect of their life. It's incredibly rewarding.

What jobs or positions have you held that were formative for you and from which you draw experience that shapes your approach to teaching?

Working in the commercial insurance business helped me learn a lot about the corporate world that I am able to share with my students. I also opened a couple yoga studios that brought not only experience in business, but mindfulness that students can bring into their daily lives.

What is your favorite food and favorite local restaurant?

That is such a tough question because I think it varies by the day! My standard one when my kids come back to visit is DaVinci's Italian restaurant on Marco Island. The food and service never disappoint and we're always surprised at how much we overeat. We never learn.

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?

There are quite a few, so this is another tough question. I used to teach history and admire so many strong figures. Harriett Tubman would be my choice right now and I would ask her where she drew such strength to go back and save others from slavery after finding her own freedom. It's truly a superhero story in my eyes.

What new things have you learned or done as a result of COVID-19 & working remotely?

COVID has been a time of transformation to say the least. It has made me realize the temporary basis of any situation and the need for flexibility. I had to close my studios due to COVID which was heartbreaking because I felt I let down our communities. I was able to transfer ownership of the Marco Island studio to an instructor in order to keep that going, however, which made me feel that at least we were still serving them. This was an incredibly difficult period. At the beginning of the quarantine, though, my granddaughter was born, so being able to work from home and see her grow was a gift. I kept trying to see the positivity in that amongst all of the madness.

COVID-19 has increased online learning, and as a result, the need for promoting inclusivity in virtual learning environments. What ideas can you share with your colleagues about how to ensure inclusivity in the virtual classroom?

I don't know if I have a magic idea because everyone's experience is still so unique right now. What I have learned through teaching during COVID is to try to meet students where they are mentally each day.

It's important to continue to challenge them and offer them all of the online, technology options we have to offer here at FSW. However, so many of them are still struggling with job loss, homelessness, and uncertainty that inclusivity might look different for students on certain days. This is the flexibility component that I have learned. I can still hold high standards for my students while having compassion during a pandemic.

What advice do you have for your colleagues on how to navigate social isolation and changes from COVID-19?

I think having a plan or person to reach out to when feeling isolated or overwhelmed by change is incredibly important. As I mentioned, all of us have experienced this a little differently and may be at various points on the coping spectrum. Some days our usual coping strategies might not be enough or turn old, so we need to have a backup plan. We can call a friend, find a new park/beach to walk, etc. but getting up to move is essential.

If you would like to be featured in the *Ten Questions for Faculty Series*, please contact Kelly Westfield, Coordinator of Marketing & Technology for the Teaching and Learning Center: kwestfield@fsw.edu

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