



Professional Development Seminar Description

INSTITUTE:
Indigenous Early Childhood Educators (IECE)

2026 SEMINAR TITLE:
My Voice, My Wings: Non-Textual Bookmaking to Integrate Ancestral Language and Grow Children into Language Butterflies

Description	<i>This seminar supports Indigenous early childhood educators in integrating ancestral language into bookmaking with young learners. Participants will explore practical ways to weave words, stories, and traditions into simple, handmade books—such as accordion folds and sewn bindings—creating meaningful, intergenerational learning tools. Activities will help children value their home language and personal stories, strengthening their identity and self-esteem. The seminar concludes with developing a long-term curriculum plan that uses bookmaking to sustain and celebrate ancestral language throughout the year.</i>
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Meet the Seminar Leader, Jennie DeGroat!

Teaching Professor, NAU College of Education

Yá'át'ééh shí éí Jennie DeGroat yínishyé'. 'Áshjiji nishł́. Kinyaa'áanii 'éí bá shíshchíín. Tódich'ii'nii'éí dashicheii. Tsi'naajinii 'éí dashínálí. Bee'ek' ihoteel danasha. I am Salt clan born for the Towering House clan. My maternal grandfather is Bitter Water clan, and my paternal grandfather is Black Streak Wood People clan. I am from Mariano Lake, New Mexico. I am an Associate Teaching Professor and doctoral student at NAU specializing in Indigenous language revitalization and curriculum design. My research focuses on reversing

language shift through effective oral immersion pedagogy and developing Indigenous-centered learning guides. I collaborate with PreK-12 schools to support Indigenous language learners and advocate nationally for including ancestral knowledge in education. I am dedicated to empowering families to lead language acquisition at home and actively partner with communities, including designing language centers for Tribal schools like the Pipa Aha Macav community.

Program Information

Eligibility	1) Full-time teacher of 3-4 year olds 2) Employed by a Head Start or other preschool serving Indigenous children 3) The application will request that applicants submit documentation of support from a school administrator.
Commitment	Accepted educators must be able to commit to: 1) Attend one orientation session, 9 online seminar sessions, 2-day AIITEC Conference with a one 1-day in-person NAU campus session, 2) Complete a written/publishable curriculum unit, and 3) Attend and present at the one day on campus INE Showcase & Open House.
Incentives	1) Certificate of Completion (Up to 38.5 hours of PD) 2) Published Curriculum Unit 3) \$800 Stipend paid to educator at the end of the seminar



2026 IECE SCHEDULE

TOTAL PD SEAT HOURS: 38.5 (time is deducted for absences)

Up to an additional 16 PD Hours will be received by attending the AIITEC Conference

Deadlines and due dates are FIRM. Once a Fellow is accepted into a seminar and commits to participate, they must attend ALL online and in-person meetings and submit all materials on-time to be eligible for the stipend.

Day	Date	Description	Mountain Time & Navajo Nation time	Arizona time	Location
Wednesday	April 15	IECE Orientation session led by INE Director	6 – 7:00pm	5 – 6:00pm	online
Friday	April 17	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	May 1	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	May 15	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	May 29	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	June 12	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday-Sunday	June 26-27	AIITEC Conference Attendance	9:00-6:00pm	8:00-5:00pm	NAU
	June 28	In-Person Seminar Meeting *Check-out is Monday, June 29	9:00-6:00pm	8:00-5:00pm	NAU
Friday	July 10	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	July 24	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6:00pm	2:30-5:00pm	online
Friday	August 7	Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Friday	August 21	Final Seminar Meeting	3:30-6pm	2:30-5pm	online
Saturday	November 7 or 14 (TBD)	Showcase & Open House	9am-6pm	8am-5pm	NAU

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, February 20th

Application Link: <https://forms.gle/3jRWFMkqvYdFKMLe8>

Learn more at <https://in.nau.edu/ine/apply/>!

