

Faculty Leader	Department	What is the title of your Professor Protege Program project?	Please give a short description of the project. This description will be posted for prospective students when applying for the Professor Protege Program.
Katie Leckenby	Special Education	Mindfulness Teaching Practices Collaboration	The protege will assist in planning trainings and site visits in collaboration with the Allegheny Health Department's Chill Project. Protege will also assist in programming planning and implementation for Concentration in Mindfulness-Based Teaching Practices.
Tricia Shelton	Curriculum, Instruction, and Educational Leadership	Exploring Program Evaluation	This position offers an excellent opportunity for a student interested in data analysis, program evaluation, and educational research. The protege will support ongoing research efforts focused on a K-16 teacher leadership academy, which provides high-quality, culturally responsive professional development to school teams. The student in this role will assist with the analysis and interpretation of data collected from various components of the leadership academy. The protege will gain hands-on experience in program evaluation research, learn about data collection methodologies, and contribute to understanding how effective professional development can address inequities in education. This is a unique opportunity for a student passionate about education, data, and social justice to gain valuable research experience and to make a meaningful impact on educational practices.

Junko Yamamoto	CIEL	Assistant to an ACTFL Board Member	The protege will assist Dr. Yamamoto's work as an ACTFL Board member. The work includes searching and compiling contact information for world language educators. This is an excellent opportunity for a Spanish Education Major to join a language educators' professional organization.
Jessica Hall-Wirth	Special Education	Developing Future Special Educators	For the 2025-2026 school year, the special education department was awarded a \$20,000 grant to support the development of future special education teachers. The protege will help implement three different phases of the grant and work directly with students who are Juniors and Seniors in high school seeking to be special education teachers.
Enoh Nkana	Curriculum, Instruction, and Educational Leadership	International Student Teaching Coordination Assistance, Grant Writing, and Curriculum Related Research	This project offers an education student hands-on experience in international student teaching coordination, grant writing, and curriculum-related research. Responsibilities include assisting with logistics for study abroad programs, supporting research on educational practices, and contributing to funding proposals. Ideal for students interested in global education, policy, and academic research.

Jenna Copper	Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Leadership	Keystone State Literacy Association (KSLA)	<p>The Keystone State Literacy Association (KSLA) is a professional organization dedicated to promoting literacy and lifelong learning across Pennsylvania. As an affiliate of the International Literacy Association (ILA), KSLA supports educators, families, and communities through advocacy, professional development, and literacy initiatives. Our local chapter is KSLA-Midwestern which provides resources, conferences, and networking opportunities for educators to enhance literacy instruction and engage learners of all ages. Through outreach programs, book donations, and partnerships, we work to ensure that all individuals have access to quality literacy experiences. Our mission is to empower educators and inspire a love of reading and writing across the Keystone State. This project will dive into planning, scheduling, and creating many different events in our local community throughout the duration of the academic year.</p>
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Amy Orville	CIEL	Building Bridges: Enhancing Preschool- Family Connections	<p>The Professor Protégé will work collaboratively with SRU SGA Preschool on various projects that support the school's curriculum, family engagement, and overall program development. This role involves assisting with parent communication, including drafting newsletters, emails, and updates to keep families informed and engaged. The Protégé will also help manage the preschool's social media presence, creating engaging content that highlights classroom activities, special events, and educational resources. Additionally, they will support curriculum development by researching and implementing developmentally appropriate learning experiences that align with best practices in early childhood education. A key aspect of this position includes planning and coordinating family events, fostering meaningful school-home connections through interactive and educational activities. The Protégé will collaborate closely with preschool staff and faculty to develop innovative initiatives that enhance communication, learning, and community involvement, gaining valuable hands-on experience in early childhood education, program administration, and outreach.</p>
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Samantha Fecich	CIEL	Exploring the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Supporting Preservice Teachers in Planning, Design, and Assessment	<p>The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in education is transforming teaching and learning processes. AI-driven tools have the potential to support preservice teachers in lesson planning, instructional design, and student assessment. This research aims to explore how AI can be effectively utilized to enhance the experiences and professional development of preservice teachers, equipping them with the necessary skills to implement AI-driven strategies in their future classrooms. The primary objectives of this study are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examine how AI tools can assist preservice teachers in lesson planning and curriculum development.2. Investigate the challenges and ethical considerations associated with integrating AI into teacher preparation programs. <p>Participants will include preservice teachers enrolled in teacher preparation programs at SRU. To assess these preservice teachers' current perceptions and experiences with AI tools, surveys and questionnaires will be used. Qualitative data will be analyzed using thematic coding. This research will contribute to the growing field of AI in education by focusing on its application in teacher preparation.</p>
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Jesse Smith	Special Education	Exploring Paraprofessional and Teacher Training Research in Special Education and Inclusive Settings	<p>Summary: The role of paraprofessionals in special education and inclusive classrooms is crucial for supporting students with disabilities. Paraprofessionals often assist with instructional delivery, behavior management, and individualized support to ensure that students with diverse needs can access the curriculum effectively. However, research indicates that many paraprofessionals receive limited or inconsistent training in evidence-based practices (EBPs), which can negatively impact student outcomes. This project (i.e., literature review) aims to examine current research on effective paraprofessional training models that emphasize the implementation of EBPs in special education and inclusive settings. The professor protégé learn will skills related to producing a systematic literature review of recent paraprofessional training research. The final product will be a publishable manuscript whereas the professor protégé will play a large role in the gathering of resources and a lesser but important role in writing the manuscript. If the manuscript is selected for publication, the professor protégé will be listed as an author of the paper. This is a good opportunity for any student who is interested in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Students Who Require Inclusive Support • Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) • Direct Instruction (DI) • Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention (PMII) • Universal Design for Learning (UDL) • Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) • Learning more about Special Education Research
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Hye Ryung Won	Curriculum Instruction and Educational Leadership	Brining Fun and Educational Robotics to Elementary Classrooms	Current education needs more technology-based strategies and practices to prepare children to thrive in the 21st century. Educational programmable robots provide a fun way to learn programming languages while fostering children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Dr. Won's protégés will engage in research-related projects in robotics education (e.g., visiting elementary school sites). No prior experience in robotics, coding, or programming is required, but enthusiasm for learning about it and leadership skills are encouraged.
Sararose Lynch	Special Education	RockTEACH Outreach	This protégé will assist in the execution of recruitment and outreach for the RockTEACH Program, the mission of which is to recruit & retain typically marginalized students to the field of teaching. Projects will include bringing high school students from high needs high schools to campus, in order to get them enthused and engaged about future college attendance and potentially pursuing a degree in teaching. The protégé will assist in the planning and execution all potential activities related to the RockTEACH Program.