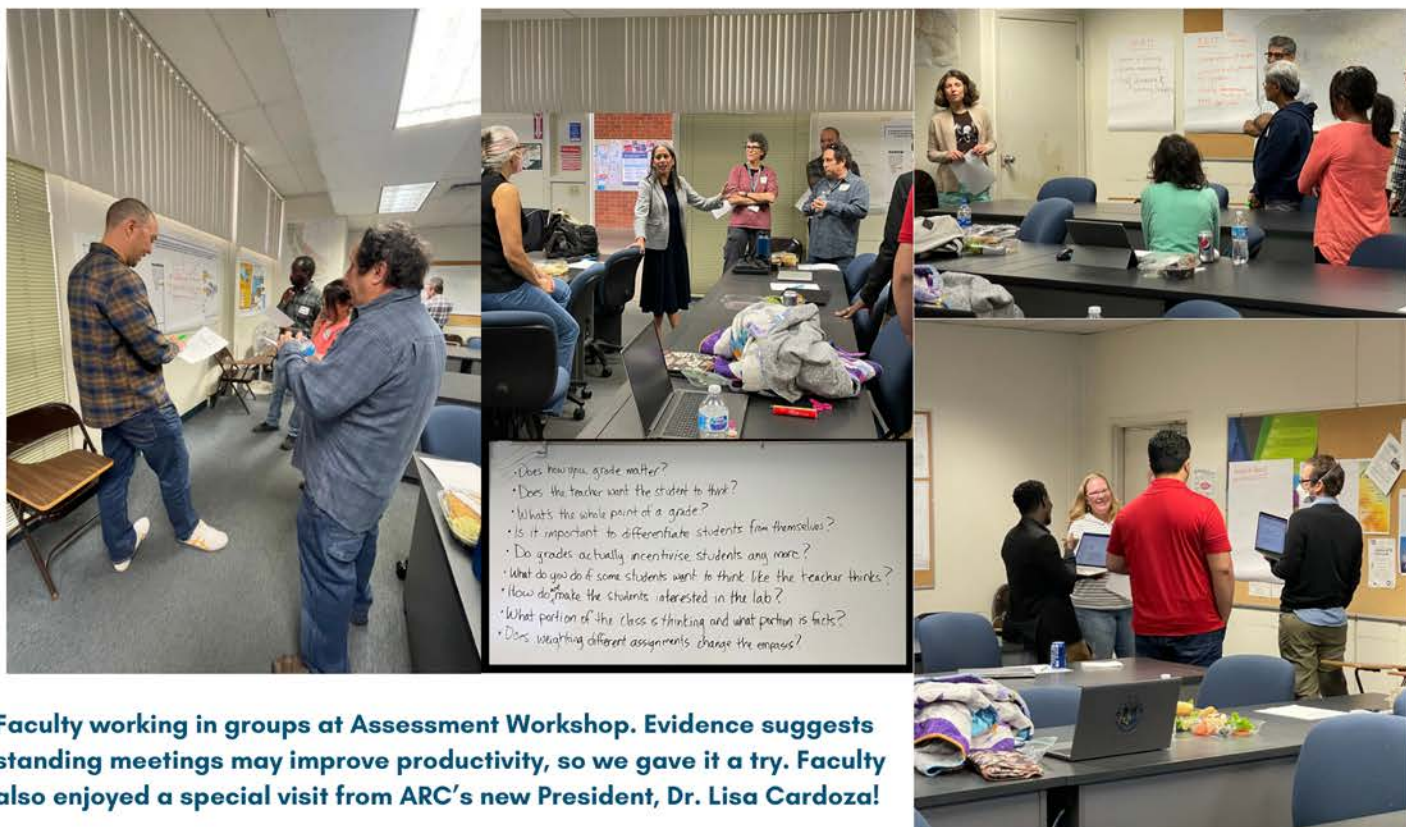


# TRANSFORMING TOGETHER

*The Newsletter of the SIRIUS\* II Project*



Faculty working in groups at Assessment Workshop. Evidence suggests standing meetings may improve productivity, so we gave it a try. Faculty also enjoyed a special visit from ARC's new President, Dr. Lisa Cardoza!

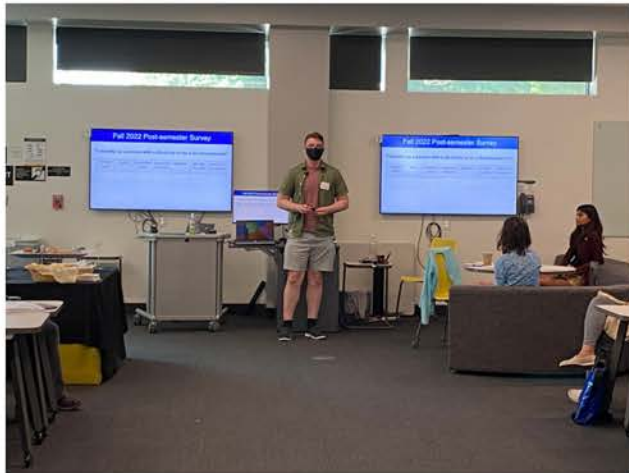
## ALE ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

In early November 2023, faculty from the SIRIUS II network gathered at American River College for an interactive workshop about student learning and assessment. Using the **Question Focus Technique** (a fun and effective strategy to get students primed for discussion), faculty warmed up their little grey cells by generating as many questions as they could to the quote "**Grades incentivise the wrong stuff: the product over process, what the teacher thinks over what the student thinks, etc.**" (from Jesse Stommel, "How to Ungrade," in *Ungrading* by Susan Blum). Small groups then tackled the questions: What other than content do we want students to take away from our courses – particularly our course-based Authentic Learning Experiences (cALEs)? Which learning goals/outcomes are we best/worst at assessing? And, how might we evaluate the hard-to-assess goals/outcomes? As these were challenging questions for a two-hour workshop on a Friday afternoon, we agreed that this work would need to continue in future activities. Two books that we recommend for anyone re-thinking their assessment/grading strategies are: "Ungrading," edited by Susan Blum and "Grading for Equity," by Joe Feldman.



## ALE-APOLOOZA 2023 RECAP

Our second ALE-apolooza took place on May 25, 2023 at Sac State and emphasized individual reflection, small group brainstorming, and whole group discussions related to the evaluation and sustainability of the SIRIUS II project. Faculty developed an elevator pitch describing their cALEs, and shared what has been working and what they would like help with. Faculty also discussed strategies to ensure the sustainability of SIRIUS courses beyond the life of the grant, and Dr. Anna Klimaszewski-Patterson presented ideas for storing, managing, and sharing SIRIUS II data.



Graduate student, Ethan Roberts (left), and undergraduate researcher, Shelby Chandar, shared data from a project to identify barriers to success for students in cALEs. An important finding from their work is that many students enrolled in SIRIUS courses have conditions that could affect participation, but do not identify as having a disability (or receive accommodations). As a whole group, faculty discussed changes they could make to their cALE curricula that would remove barriers for, and enhance the inclusion of, all students in their courses.

## STUDENTS CONFERENCE

Consumnes River College student Mai Nguyen (below left) presented her cALE work at the annual community college Honors Research Symposium as an oral presentation at Stanford University, and Saihej Kaur (below right) presented her findings at a poster forum during the Annual Northern California Chapter of the American Society for Microbiology Spring Meeting (both events held in May 2023). Both students collected data during their SIRIUS courses taught by Professor Eric Neff. Saihej won a mushroom growing kit as an award for her poster!

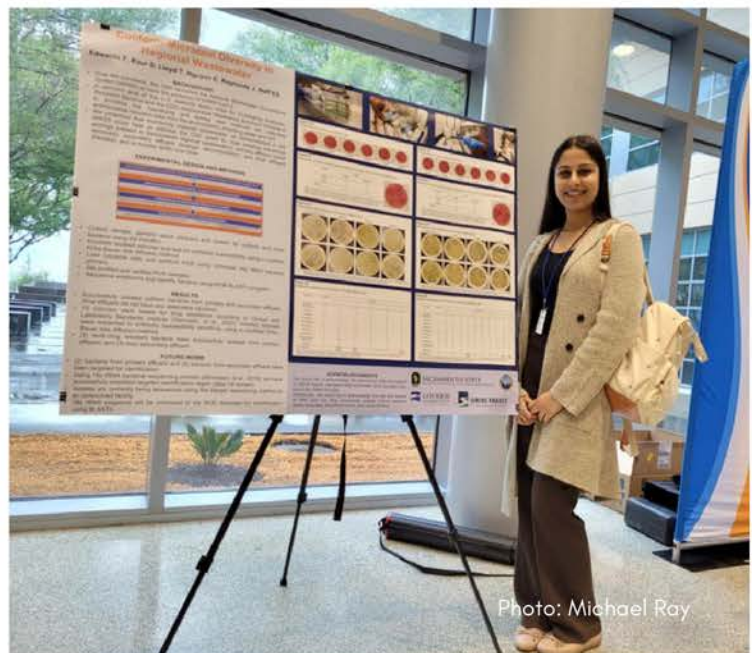
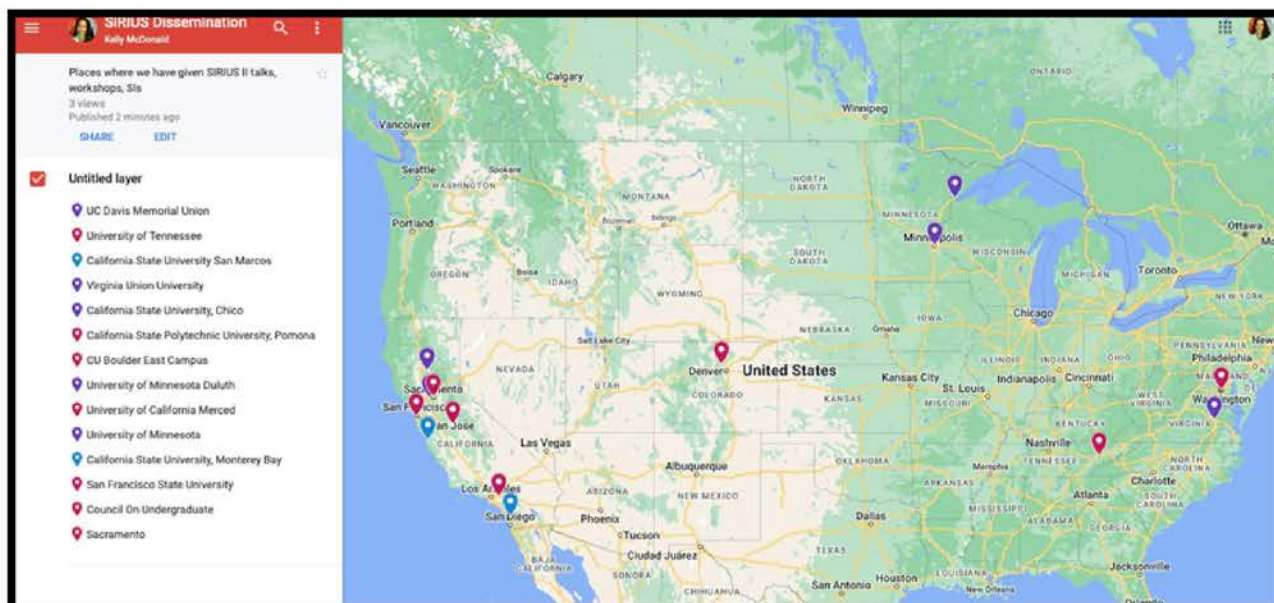


Photo: Michael Ray



## HIGHLIGHTING SUCCESSES

The SIRIUS Network has been busy sharing our model and cALE work across the country. The map below indicates where we have given talks (red), workshops (blue), and/or provided long-term professional development training (e.g., Summer Institutes; purple) to educators in recent years.



## SIRIUS Publications:

- Jensen, MH, Morris, EJ, and MW Ray. 2023. Implementing a course-based authentic learning experience with upper- and lower-division physics classes. *American Journal of Physics* 91, 696-700.
- Von der Mehden, B., Pennino, E., Fajardo, H., Ishikawa, C., & McDonald, K. (2023). Building Authentic Science Experiences: Students' Perceptions of Sequential Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences. *CBE-Life Sciences Education*. 23 (4). <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.23-03-0042>
- Pennino, E. and McDonald, K. In-class workshops to teach introductory biology students about undergraduate research. *CourseSource*. Available online in January 2024.

## LOOKING AHEAD/SAVE THE DATES

### SIRIUS STEM Conference March 26, 2024

Save the date for the second annual SIRIUS STEM Conference to be held on March 26, 2024 from 4-7 pm in the Harper Alumni Center at Sacramento State. This will be a time for students in SIRIUS courses to share their work with each other and the public through posters, demonstrations, project displays, and more. This will be an informal gathering for networking and celebrating accomplishments with a light dinner to follow.

### ALE-apolooza III - Aug 12/13, 2024

ALE-apolooza III will wrap up our summer workshops, but not our SIRIUS work! We will meet on the Sacramento State campus on August 12 and 13, 2024 to celebrate our work, share best practices and brainstorm ideas for the future.

**GOT DATA?**

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!**

<https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/sirius/>

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