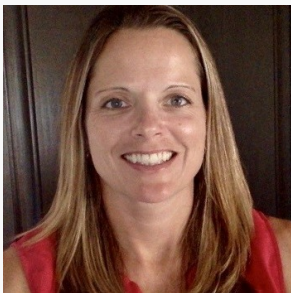


# Faculty Bios

Version 3

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## Faculty



### Jennifer Barbour

Jennifer Barbour is a professor in Seneca's School of Early Childhood Education (ECE). She has diverse experiences working with children from birth through adolescence and firmly believes in the value that international work experiences offer individuals. Ms. Barbour has assisted government organizations and local schools to open childcare centres founded on the principles of play-based new practices in Singapore and has presented at numerous conferences including an international conference in China, in 2017.

During her time as a kindergarten teacher in Toronto, Ms. Barbour implemented project-based curriculums focused on creative thinking and problem-solving that were inspired by the schools of Reggio Emilia. Her research interest is focused on supporting mathematics development in early childhood.

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## Dr. Jo Blay

Dr. Jo Blay is a professor of Seneca's ECE Diploma and Honours Bachelor of Child Development (BCD) program. She obtained her master of science and PhD in psychology of education, an honours bachelor of arts in social sciences and teaching certification and has published several papers, reports and conference proceedings.

Dr. Blay has extensive teaching and research experience in the field of early childhood education and has worked in the U.K., U.S., Caribbean, Africa and Canada. She has also acted as a government inspector of early childhood programs and schools in the U.K.



## Nish Damji

Nish Damji is a professor in Seneca's School of ECE and she teaches courses related to curriculum, art and working with families. She utilizes her experiences from working with a variety of curricula including Reggio Emilia, High Scope, International Baccalaureate and Montessori to engage students in best practices.

Ms. Damji has experience training educators and non-educators in areas of the world where early childhood education is limited. Her training includes the Play and Inquiry approach to learning, using anti-bias concepts. She has experience working with children, their families and educators in Kenya, Canada, Hong Kong, Bangladesh, Russia, Tajikistan and the United Arab Emirates.



## Julie Gerrits

Julie Gerrits is a professor of Child Development, ECE and infant mental health programs. She has a masters in counselling psychology and is a registered psychotherapist in Ontario. During her 12 years of experience as a child and family therapist, Ms. Gerrits supported children and families from diverse backgrounds. She has experience in providing holistic and therapeutic services to military families, adolescent female recipients of therapeutic care, families involved with child welfare and children impacted by maltreatment, trauma and loss.

Before pursuing her role at Seneca, Ms. Gerrits built capacity in the York Region's child welfare sector through her deliverance of comprehensive consultation and assessment services to professionals. She also delivered children's mental health training to foster parents. Julie offers knowledge in mental health interventions, emotional well-being, family dynamics, child maltreatment, interpersonal relationships and understanding behaviour through the lenses of attachment, trauma and childhood development.



## Laurie Georgopoulos

Laurie Georgopoulos is a Field Liaison ECE, and she teaches courses related to pre-school and school-age curriculum. She has taught at Seneca's School of ECE since 2013 and is admired by her students for her sense of humour and genuine love of teaching. When Ms. Georgopoulos is not working, she enjoys shopping, eating and spending time with family.



## Dr. Farveh Ghafouri

Dr. Farveh Ghafouri is a professor in the ECE and BCD programs at Seneca. She joined Seneca in 2015 and possesses more than 20 years of experience in teaching levels from pre-kindergarten to adults at various institutions. Dr. Ghafouri's teaching encompasses pedagogy and curriculum development focused on nature in urban school settings, the Reggio Emilia approach, research methods and digital technologies in early childhood.

She obtained her doctorate in education from the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

She is an active faculty pedagogist working with the Pedagogy Network of Ontario. She regularly presents at various conferences including the American Educational Research Association conference and the Canadian Society for Studies in Education. Her research interests include climate change, digital technologies and childhood, nature and children, play and literacy, self-study and community of practice.



## Minodora Grigorescu

Minodora Grigorescu is a professor in the School of ECE, with more than 25 years of experience as an early childhood educator, professor, consultant, workshop presenter and trainer. She pioneered training in Ontario's Ministry of Education initiatives such as Early Learning for Every Child Today and How Does Learning Happen?

By infusing her teaching with field requirements, Ms. Grigorescu helps her students gain practical knowledge. Her expertise lies in child development and curriculum, with a narrowed interest in preschool and school-age children.

As an active member in the Romanian community, Ms. Grigorescu teaches grade one Romanian class and has developed curriculum published by the Toronto District School Board – International Language Elementary. Ms. Grigorescu's work in the Romanian community was acknowledged by the Romanian President in August 2018 with a high distinction.



## Dr. Jo Ann Iantosca

Dr. Jo Ann Iantosca is a professor in both the ECE and BCD programs at Seneca. She instructs on topics such as critical disability theory, educational philosophy, early childhood assessment and research methods. Dr. Iantosca completed her doctorate in education studies with a specialist in applied psychology at the University of Western Ontario. She previously completed her master of educational administration, bachelor of education (primary/junior), honours specialization in developmental psychology and early childhood education diploma. She is an Ontario Certified Teacher (OCT) and Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE).

Dr. Iantosca is a research fellow with interRAI, an international consortium focused on gathering high-quality assessment data to support vulnerable people and agencies serving at-risk children and youth. Her research focuses on instrument development, psychometric validation, child development and disability, and early childhood mental health. She continues to publish in peer-reviewed journals and present at relevant conferences. Finally, Dr. Iantosca participates as a peer reviewer for the *Journal of Early Intervention* and the *Journal of Early Childhood Research*.



## Louise Jupp

Louise Jupp is a professor in the BCD Honours Bachelor program and ECE diploma program at Seneca. She holds a master of education in teaching and learning and a bachelor of arts in ECE. She is a Forest and Nature School Practitioner, the Pedagogist for KOLTS Forest School and a Shanker Self-Reg Learning Facilitator.

Ms. Jupp has facilitated many workshops and conferences with early childhood practitioners, elementary school teachers, and early years leaders and has engaged in on-site consultation to early learning communities in Canada and abroad.



## Alain Koo

Alain Koo is a professor of ECE with more than 20 years of experience. He taught as an elementary school teacher, athletic director and faculty member in the School of ECE at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Mr. Koo is passionate about promoting physical literacy, and has worked to create a Physical Literacy Handbook for all childcare centres in the York Region.

Mr. Koo has experience working with non-profit organizations such as The Canadian Chinese Youth Athletic Association and Girls Addicted to Basketball, where he facilitated programs and curriculums that promote physical literacy for children in early childhood.



## Kathrina Lalog

Kathrina Lalog is a professor and the field placement co-ordinator in the School of ECE. With more than 30 years of experience, she has worked as an educator, a centre supervisor, home childcare co-ordinator and adult educator. Ms. Lalog offers diverse experiences that benefit the classroom teaching curriculum, development and professional practice courses and field placement coordination.



## **Dr. Shawna Lee**

Dr. Shawna Lee is a professor of the ECE and BCD programs at the School of ECE. She has a master of arts in early childhood studies and PhD in educational psychology. Her expertise and passion are rooted in the field of Children's Mental Health, Inclusion of Family Support. Dr. Lee is passionate about understanding children's mental health in educational settings and how mental health professionals can support them.

She actively collaborates with Triple P International and the University of Queensland on various initiatives, including research projects related to the Triple P Positive Parenting Program. She has experience leading various research projects and cross-sectoral community partnership initiatives.



## **Jennifer Lewis**

Jennifer Lewis is a professor in the ECE and BCD programs and is the Co-ordinator of the IMH program. With more than 20 years' experience in the field of ECE, she has a passion for

supporting others in understanding that the infant and toddler years are foundational for a lifetime of positive physical and mental health.

Ms. Lewis is an advocate for the ECE field, both in the classroom and in her work. Her advocacy focuses on improving the value placed on an ECE designation as well as improved compensation. She is a board member for the Association of Early Childhood Educators.

Ms. Lewis has an undergraduate degree in women's studies and psychology from Trent University, an ECE diploma from Mothercraft and a master's degree from the Institute of Child Study. She has worked with infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children in various environments, including home child care, child-care centres and school boards.



## **Sarah Liddell**

Sarah Liddell is a professor of the ECE diploma and BCD degree programs and clinician in the field of children's mental health. She focuses on the areas of attachment, family violence, settlement adjustment and risk. Ms. Liddell teaches about assessment, theory and infant mental health in both the BCD and Infant and Early Child Mental Health programs.

She obtained her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Toronto and has led presentations regarding addiction, homelessness and school readiness at various conferences.



## **Dale Long**

Dale Long is a professor in the School of ECE with more than 30 years of experience. She



held positions at Seneca as the program co-ordinator and academic chair. Ms. Long completed her early childhood education degree at Ryerson University and her master of education, with a focus on curriculum development, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. She has presented at several national and international conferences and has served on several conference and workshop program committees. Ms. Long is passionate about the integration of technology in the teaching and learning environment.

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## **Barbara Pytka**

Barbara Pytka is a professor in the School of ECE with more than 20 years of experience. She leads educational endeavours related to early childhood education pedagogy, scholarship, advocacy, policy and international networking. In her former roles, she was as a daycare supervisor and curriculum adviser and contributed to educating and developing educators.

Ms. Pytka's research interests include the relationship between professional development and mentoring practices in early childhood education, with a specific focus on mentoring practices that contribute to strengthening professional skills and increasing quality in childcare programs.



## **Dr. Sharon Quan-McGimpsey**

Dr. Sharon Quan-McGimpsey has been a professor at Seneca since 1988 and has experience teaching communication, child development, curriculum, theory and practicum courses. Her areas of interest are in mental health and family relations. She teaches Attachment Across the Life Span, Parent and Child Relationships: Theoretical Foundations, The Effects of Stress, Trauma and Violence on Children's Learning and Interpersonal Communications courses.

Dr. Quan-McGimpsey has a bachelor of arts in psychology from the University of Waterloo, a bachelor of education from the University of Western Ontario and a master of science and PhD in family relations and human development from the University of Guelph.

[Read more Dr. Sharon Quan-McGimpsey's bio](#)

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## Pat Resnick

Pat Resnick is a professor of the ECE program, and she teaches Child Development. Following her graduation from Seneca's ECE program, Ms. Resnick was invited to teach at Seneca. Simultaneously, she began working with preschool and children with special needs. For the past 25 years, Ms. Resnick has been active in the field of special education and continues to work with infants and preschool children with special needs.

She has been a guest lecturer for the Faculty of ECE at Kyambogo University in Uganda and North East Normal University in China.



## Jennifer Sabatini

Jennifer Sabatini is a professor in the School of ECE with more than 30 years of experience.

She joined Seneca in 2007 and has taught curriculum and development courses since. Ms. Sabatini utilizes teaching methods that allow learners to construct their own knowledge through the practical application of their learning. She sees her teaching role as having a critical influence in enhancing learning to engage in critical thinking, self-reflection and continuous professional development.



## **Cindy D Smith**

Cindy D Smith is a professor in both the ECE and BCD programs in the School of ECE, with a focus on family support and community development. She is a proud Seneca graduate with a diploma in Early Childhood Education and a certificate in Adult Education, she also holds a bachelor's degree from Ryerson University and a master of education from York University.

Ms. Smith has worked in the field of family support since the mid 1990s, as a practitioner, special needs consultant and one of the first early literacy specialists for the Ontario Early Years programs when they opened in 2001. In 2007, she co-founded the Family Supports Institute of Ontario, which continues to support the well-being of families, advocate for family friendly social policy, conduct research on contemporary family issues, deliver professional development for front-line practitioners and mentor Seneca placement students.



## **Dr. Jennifer Sullivan**

Dr. Jennifer Sullivan is a professor in the discipline of Child Development. Before joining Seneca in 2014, she was the Director of the Dr. Mary J. Wright University Laboratory School at the University of Western Ontario, Assistant Professor Psychology at St. Francis Xavier University and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at the University of Waterloo.

Dr. Sullivan has an ECE diploma from St. Clair College, a bachelor of arts in psychology from the University of Western Ontario, and a master of arts and PhD in developmental psychology from the University of Waterloo. Her research focuses on the development of vocabulary knowledge in young children and teaching methods for children learning their first or second language. She teaches courses in human development, music curriculum, language development, methods of assessment and statistics at Seneca.