

2008 North Carolina Teaching Fellows Conference

Topic: **Humor and Diversity "Humor - The Bridge that Unites Diverse Groups"**

Responses from feedback forms re: Emily Ballance, MEd, LPC

Date: Friday, July 25, 2008 Attendance: Approximately 500 college students

Comments from rising juniors attending the following universities & colleges:

ASU – Appalachian State University, Boone

ECU – East Carolina University, Greenville

Elon – Elon University, Elon

Meredith – Meredith College, Raleigh

NCCU – NC Central University, Durham

NCSU – NC State University, Raleigh

UNC-A – University of NC, Asheville

UNC-C – University of NC, Charlotte

UNC-CH – University of NC, Chapel Hill

UNC-G – University of NC, Greensboro

UNC-P – University of NC, Pembroke

UNC-W – University of NC, Wilmington

WCU – Western Carolina University,

Cullowhee

What did you like most about the Friday evening session with Emily Ballance?

- Everything!!! Emily was energetic and humorous and kept me interested in what she was saying.
- She was amazing and was the perfect contrast to our usual speakers. Usually speakers just tell us things we have heard a million times but Emily Ballance showed us things that we can take into our classroom to liven up ourselves and our students. It was the perfect beginning to our conference and really helped to change my opinion towards Junior Conference.
- Everything! She was brilliant.
- She was hilarious. Emily really made it fun, and many people do not see diversity as being fun. Her quiz was really enlightening as we all tried to guess things about her just by looking at her appearance...and many of us were very wrong in our assumptions.
- She made the weekend great! That night would have dragged without her presentation! Very funny!
- She was very funny. I loved her enthusiasm and her energy. She brought up points that most people wouldn't think about, thus giving us a new perspective on things we might do as future teachers.
- She was hilarious - so creative in her approaches to reach out to students. She showed how humor can be used in almost any situation.
- I thought she made us look deeper into diversity. Its not just about skin color, but about many other things. She gave us many tools of humor to overcome these in the classroom.
- I enjoyed the entire session. She was very entertaining while getting her point across.
- I loved everything Emily had to say. I thought she was witty and funny and used humor to make us think about the things that we say and do in response to what we think and believe.
- She was an amazing speaker. She got right to the point and was very personable. I learned a lot from her presentation.
- She was incredible. She did a very good job holding our attention and structuring what she was talking about and putting it into practice at the same time. Humor was very useful. I thought she had a great presentation. She can speak very well and is a very nice person. She was the biggest asset to the conference and I learned the most in her presentation.
- Her ability to find humor in just about anything. She was very entertaining and made me realize the power of laughter.
- Emily was absolutely hilarious. She found humor in everything and taught me that there is no better medicine than laughter.
- She is such a great speaker (and funny too!). I loved her message. She was very funny and it was good comic relief.
- She was hilarious! I liked the laughter most and also thought her humor kits were a good idea.
- Her message was powerful, yet entertaining, she involved the crowd and made an interesting presentation with stories, visuals, and handouts
- Her humor and how she talked about real life experiences and used examples
- Ms. Ballance was not afraid to show that humor has a place within the educational setting and that it provides great teaching moments.
- Her wealth of information - I enjoyed her entire presentation. It was a nice break that tied in to what we had been learning
- She was hilarious, and a real enjoyment! I loved all of her stories. I liked how she involved the audience. She kept my attention.
- I thought she was funny and provided a intelligent form of humor that college kids do not receive too often.
- Emily Ballance challenged us to find humor in our lives and to teach using humor. Some students may need a little humor in their life before they are able to start making connections and actually learn.
- I loved her humor. I'm glad that somebody can finally have humor when it comes to diversity.
- She was very funny. I took a lot away from her presentation on how to connect with students.
- She had great jokes and ideas on how to break the ice with students about diversity.
- She was funny and she kept my attention. She showed us how to build humor into our lives and use it for good.
- She made us laugh and showed us how to use a tool every human possesses, humor, to promote diversity.

- I loved her humor. She was very open and helped me a lot with some stress that was on me at the time.
- The jokes!
- I really enjoyed how her humor was clean and pure funny. I think it is so easy to get caught up in sarcastic and self-deprecating humor and this is a big no-no for teachers as it can be very harmful. I thought it was very important she brought this to light and showed us some simple and fun ways to bring safe and clean humor into the classroom!
- I really enjoyed her. She was enthusiastic about it and she kept my attention and I was able to learn from her. She made me realize that humor can make any situation better.
- It was both entertaining and beneficial. She was great and I would love to see her again.
- She was hilarious and really grabbed my attention the entire time even though I was so tired from driving so long to get to the college that day. I was pleased that she understood and was trying to spread the idea that humor is such a necessity...not only in the classroom, but in life in general. She was really a breath of fresh air! She was absolutely hilarious but she kept her message and points clear.
- I think she was hilarious. If someone wants to convince you to use humor they have to use it as well and she did a great job. It kept me laughing and showed me how no matter how we are different humor can bring us all together.
- She was amazing. Period. Exactly what I needed to hear. DO NOT change her role in the program. Humor is imperative in a classroom setting. She knew exactly how to bring that out in all of us. BEST PART OF THE WEEKEND!
- It was nice to see a woman do comedy. It sort of breaks the mold, so to speak. Emily was amazing and I truly enjoyed listening to her.
- She, more than anyone else at the conference, gave us advice we can actually use in our teaching profession.
- I enjoyed her sense of humor and how she showed us to use humor in life. We were able to relax and laugh.
- Her sense of humor about the challenges in her life. She was hilarious! I really liked the entire presentation.
- Her presentation was engaging and hilarious. Humor IS very helpful to overcome adversity as a group.
- I really enjoyed (& was impressed by) her confidence in using humor as a means of approaching diversity.
- It was a unique perspective on how to handle diversity
- It was nice to see a woman do comedy. It sort of breaks the mold, so to speak. Emily was amazing and I truly enjoyed listening to her.
- HUMOR, it was the best session for me. I loved her. She had a great personality, kept me entertained and focused.
- She was hilarious. She understood that our minds needed to get what a former teacher of mine calls "Commercial Breaks." We were not being spoken to in one manner alone, she had PowerPoint, a quiz, lecture, props, and audience participation. By factoring in various ways to convey her message, she was able to keep my attention better.
- I enjoyed her presentation. I really like the idea of using humor in the classroom to break down barriers between people. Laughter is a universal "language" and is something that should be used to communicate with others.
- Provided a nice, softer, comical feeling to the evening. Lightened things up. Very funny.
- Emily's presentation was very informative while providing mental break from the "heavy" material from earlier sessions.
- I felt like the best thing about Emily Ballance is she gave us something we can use in the classroom. I truly believe that humor can help bridge the gap created by diversity.
- She used her subject as a means of presenting her material.
- Humor is great. She kept us laughing which was good. We didn't get bored - I liked that she used humor to keep everyone focused and entertained. She also knew how to relate to our age group.
- Her jokes were hilarious, and her stories about how humor significantly improved people's lives were inspiring.
- I loved how she used comedy to show how our differences should be embraced and in order to make it more comfortable for everyone to address the issues of diversity.
- She was really funny...which was important to keep our attention. It was hard being in a conference on a Friday night, but she helped ease the situation because it was more enjoyable.
- After going through an issue with a friend of mine, I was totally turned off to the conference and I shut myself down. Because of Emily's presentation I re-opened myself and was able to continue receiving from the conference.
- That it was a different way of talking about diversity and that it was interactive. She was a very talented speaker.
- I liked that it was light after our introduction to a very heavy topic. It left us in a good mood at the end of the day.
- I loved this session. I thought her presentation was very interesting and a lot of fun.
- She was wonderful. Humor is so crucial. I enjoyed and appreciated learning new ways to bring humor into situations to help lighten the mood, and help things get better. So made the time fly, and helped all of us truly enjoy Friday night.
- Everything! Humor was a great idea to bring into diversity. A great reminder of how essential humor is for human life.
- It was just an enjoyable presentation and really showed us the positive effect that humor can have.
- She was a lot of fun! She incorporated the audience and was very entertaining and creative.
- She made me laugh. Her use of humor changed my attitude about the entire event.
- She was great! She helped me realize how humor is good for the classroom.
- I loved the humor, it was a great way to start the weekend and will be very useful in the classroom
- I am so glad humor was brought in as a topic this weekend. I agreed 100% with everything she did and said.

- She was great!!! Emily's presentation was my favorite all weekend! She seemed to lay her beliefs out there and made the audience feel comfortable and like we could interact if we desired.
- The fact that she had volunteers to go on stage and used humor to convey a message.
- This session was fun because it showed us how to bring humor into the classroom to defuse tense situations.
- She was very funny and used things that college kids could relate to.
- She was funny. She was easy to follow and kept our attention by getting us involved.
- That she made it light and funny and that she showed us there is a way to "make light" of a situation without insulting anyone
- Honestly, i wasn't very excited about being at junior conference and i am so glad emily spoke friday night. she was very funny and sent a good message out at the same time.
- Humor; she showed that it is so true that laughing engages people and allows for a more comfortable environment.
- That I learned a lot without even realizing it...she applied what she was teaching us about using humor to teach
- It was an interesting approach to humor. At my university we had a seminar last year about humor in the classroom and it was nothing compared to Ms. Ballance.
- It was certainly entertaining and for someone like me, who does not think of herself as a typically 'funny' person, I gained some practical ways to incorporate humor in the classroom.
- HILARIOUS! This was one of my favorite sessions. Emily was realistic and funny. I can see myself using more humor now because of her.
- She was so funny and showed us that by just looking at someone one cannot tell their background or how they live their life.
- Her stories - She was my favorite part of the weekend.
- I loved everything about Ms. Ballance's session--she made many beneficial points that will help us as teachers.
- It was a pleasant surprise to spend that long session laughing the whole time.
- I just enjoyed her humor and her straight forward presentation style. Most teachers know that humor is a useful tool in the classroom, but I think it takes someone like Emily with specific examples to get teachers minds working creatively to use humor as a beneficial tool in the classroom.
- The quiz she made us fill out. It really did prove that you can't judge a book by its cover. The inner child was also a cute idea.
- She was hilarious and used real life examples! I love the fact that she even incorporated humor to talk about the topic humor. I would definitely want other teaching fellows to hear her presentation again.
- Laughing! I love to laugh and be "silly". Her presentation was AMAZING! I remember calling my mom super excited about the ideas I'd written down , and Emily in general.
- Everything! This was the highlight of the entire conference for me. I loved her notion of the fun bag, and that you must have fun with your students while at the same time teaching them to want to learn.
- I could relate it to my life right now. It helped me think of ways to deal with stress which is a major problem in my life right now.
- I loved this presentation. I liked how she got her points across by using humor. It was funny and different.
- I thought that she was very funny. She also made a good point, that adding humor will help your teaching. She had every single person's attention. I loved how she explained the importance of humor and made it funny to listen to her.
- Emily Ballance showed me that humor is a great way to deal with diversity. She made a comment about how a math teacher teaches tolerance which really influenced me.
- She's hilarious and I enjoyed talking with her one on one as well! Definitely bring her back. That was probably one of the best speakers I've had with teaching fellows thus far! She gave us valuable info and did it all in such a fun way!!
- It was amazing, interesting, humorous, and pertinent.
- She was amazing. I never thought that I would be able to learn anything more about humor, but she proved us all wrong.
- It was fun! I was really tired, but she kept us laughing, and therefore, awake!
- She was hilarious, probably my favorite part of the whole weekend. I loved how she said to incorporate humor into your everyday lives. Humor really does bring people together.
- The jokes! She was so funny. I loved it. I loved how she talked about humor in the classroom and making it a "safe" environment for kids.
- The session with Emily was the best session of the conference. She was excited, but not to the point of insincerity. Also, the fact that she was funny made the session much better.
- It was nice to see someone who wasn't gravely serious about diversity. She took a serious issue and talked about serious solutions without making it sound like a lecture and without talking down to us.
- She proved perfectly that you can use humor to teach people. She gave us real games that we could use in teaching.
- She was hilarious. I felt like a little kid again! I loved that almost everything she talked about was in a joking manner. I could just relate to everything she said. And I absolutely loved the "inner child" thing!
- She brought a light-hearted feel to a weekend that could be, at times, very serious.
- Emily was a great change from what I expected the presentations to be about. It was nice to have a topic about humor that helps cover diversity and to see a different approach to teaching it.
- She was FANTASTIC! VERY FUNNY!