



**Associate Prof. Dr. James Cohen
Northern Illinois University,**

Title: PERSPECTIVES ARE THE KEY IN POLICY MAKING AT THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM LEVELS

Abstract: Due to the onset of standardized assessments across the globe and the subsequent competition that it has spurred coupled with the belief that we need to teach the ever-expanding list of standards that policy makers demand of us, I argue in this presentation that education systems have lost their focus on really what matters when teaching students. Are we treating our students as human beings or are we interacting with them as though they are empty vessels waiting to be filled up with knowledge? Are we willing to cultivate relationships with our students or are we making the excuse that we are too busy? Are we viewing our students from a deficit model or are we believing our students as capable of learning and teaching us? For this presentation, I will discuss how perspectives are essential and how to apply a non-violent approach to policy, both at the school and classroom levels.

Biography: Dr. James Cohen is an Associate Professor of ESL/Bilingual Education at Northern Illinois University. Dr. Cohen has been teaching for 33 years and has had the opportunity to engage in educational partnerships in nine countries on three continents addressing topics such as multicultural education, social justice education, pedagogical practices in the ESL/EFL classroom and the importance of viewing the power and possibility in our students. He has published more than two dozen refereed articles and book chapters and has been awarded several million dollars in grant funding. He specializes in teaching pre- and in-service teachers how to work with immigrant students and is responsible for educating hundreds of teachers each year on social justice education.