TEACHING AND LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

Newsletter of Eastern's Center for Teaching, Learning, & Assessment
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The CTLA has hosted three Teaching and Learning Conversations so far this semester. We have had some thought-provoking conversations about the benefits and drawbacks of AI-based assignments and class activities, strategies for building students' skills to engage in challenging discussions, and alternative approaches to traditional grading. In addition, 31 people applied to participate in a Faculty Learning Community. There are now three learning communities meeting on a regular basis. Each community will share the lessons they have learned at the end of May.

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Upcoming Teaching and Learning Conversations (TLC)

TLC sessions feature a brief presentation on a specific teaching strategy, followed by time for participants to reflect and engage in small group discussions about how the strategy might be adapted and utilized in their own discipline. Faculty should come prepared to think about their own teaching, write down some ideas, and share thoughts with peers. All TLCs take place in the President's Dining Room in Hurley Hall, with lunch provided by the CTLA. *No registration is required.*

The full spring schedule is posted on the CTLA website. The next session of the semester is:

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Wednesday, March 20, 12 – 1 pm, Hurley Hall
Led by Anthony Girasoli (Psychological Science)

With Project-Based Learning (PBL), students work in small groups to address a real-world, open-ended question and apply skills learned in class to develop and complete a project. PBL is student-centered, with the instructor guiding students through a constructive learning process while promoting in-class community. In this session, Anthony Girasoli will describe how he has incorporated PBL in his classes to enhance student learning.

Upcoming Workshop: A Few Seats Still Available!

Understanding AI and ChatGPT: A Hands-on Workshop

Wednesday, February 28, 3-4 pm, Science room 115
Led by Garrett Dancik (Computer Science)

Are you interested in understanding more about how ChatGPT and other Large Language Models (LLMs) work? Have you wanted to spend time learning to use one of these generative Artificial Intelligence

tools, but didn't quite know how to get started? In this workshop, Garrett Dancik will give a 30-minute overview of how LLMs work, what these tools can and cannot do, and what can go wrong. Participants will then have 25 minutes to experiment with ChatGPT, including creating and refining prompts relevant to their teaching. Staff from CIT will be on hand.

Registration is required for this workshop due to space constraints.

Access Matters (A new, periodic column from OAS)

Welcome to learning about OAS Support Services! The OAS provides guidance and reasonable accommodations to ensure students' equal access to all educational programs and activities at Eastern. We also provide guidance, support, and additional resources for faculty, staff, and other University departments to promote a campus culture of inclusivity. Our homepage pop-up features the most utilized services, and our website also includes information on everything from what constitutes reasonable accommodations to links to information on instructional practices that effectively address a large body of students with diverse learning styles.

Digital Content and Accessibility

OAS is highly committed to securing multiple modes of communication, like the use of digital content and its accessibility. Our website provides information to help faculty ensure the accessibility of digital content, including tips for creating accessible flyers, instructions for adding alt-text to images, and information on using the Ally tool in Blackboard to make course content accessible. You can also make an appointment for additional guidance and support on making accessible documents.

The OAS staff is committed to offering services and programs that help guide success to the Eastern community. Don't hesitate to contact us at accessability@easternct.edu if you have any questions. Also, be on the lookout for more tips in future issues of this newsletter!

Spotlight on a Book in the CTLA Lending Library

How Learning Works: 8 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching (2nd edition)

By Marsha C. Lovett, Michael W. Bridges, Michele DiPietro, Susan A. Ambrose, & Marie K. Norman
© 2023 by Jossey-Bass (see publisher's description)

Originally published in 2010, the 2nd edition of *How Learning Works* incorporates research from cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, education, anthropology, and other disciplines to provide 150 practical strategies to use in the classroom. Each chapter opens with case studies submitted by faculty, followed by a review of the research on one or more principles of learning that affect college students. The authors explain the implications of the research and suggest multiple strategies to use in course design and teaching.
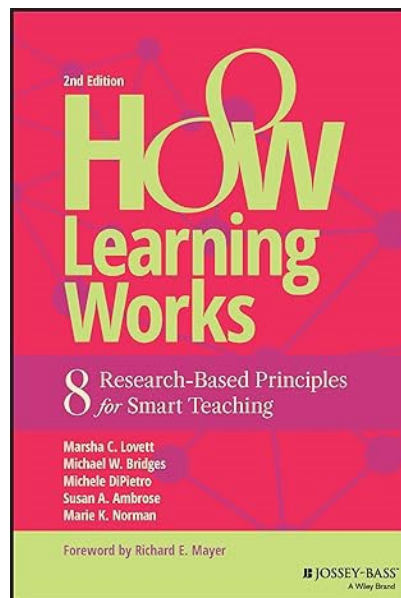
Chapters include:

- Introduction: Bridging learning research and teaching practice
- Why do students' identities and stages of development matter for learning?
- How does students' prior knowledge affect their learning?
- How does the way students organize knowledge affect their learning?
- What factors motivate students to learn?
- How do students develop mastery?
- What kinds of practice and feedback enhance learning?
- Why does course climate matter for student learning?
- How do students become self-directed learners?

The book includes many sample tools that faculty can use, including instructor and student self-assessments, sample ground rules, concept maps, rubrics, learner checklists, and exam wrappers.

> To borrow this book, stop by the CTLA Lending Library in room 425 of the Eugene Smith Library, or fill out a request to have the book sent to you via interoffice mail (enter **book #66** under question 1).

External Faculty Development Opportunities

Free opportunities

- February 27, 2 pm: **Enhancing Inclusive Instruction: Student Perspectives & Practical Approaches for Advancing Equity in Higher Education**. In this webinar, co-authors Tracie Addy, Derek Dube, and Khadijah Mitchell will discuss their forthcoming book, a sequel to *What Inclusive Instructors Do*.
- March 1, 11:30 am: **Inclusive Teaching Panel Discussion: Storytelling and Positionality as Inclusive Pedagogy**. This online panel discussion will focus on how (counter)storytelling, self-reflection, and positionality can help in understanding instructor biases and their impact on students as a part of inclusive pedagogy and fostering connection in college classrooms.
- March 28, 1 pm: **Generative AI Boot Camp: How Can AI Make Your Life as a Professor Easier?** Hosted by Stony Brook University, this webinar is designed for faculty with some experience using AI who are looking for new ideas.
- Available now: **Inclusive Teaching**. Led by Bryan Dewsbury and Kayon Murray-Johnson, this online course is sponsored for the Science Education and Society (SEAS) program and HHMI Biointeractive.
- April 24, 2-3 pm: **Utilizing the Humanistic Side of Learning: Promoting Expectations and Beliefs that Optimize Motivation**. The 4th webinar in a series on Universal Design for Learning will explore practical strategies for supporting students' self-regulation.
- June 12 – 14: The Corella & Bertram F. Bonner Foundation is hosting a virtual **Summer Institute on Teaching Social Action**. The institute will introduce faculty to an approach for incorporating student-led social action campaigns into a course. During the 3-day institute, participants will draft a syllabus and develop a teaching plan for supporting student campaigns launched mid-semester. Applications to participate are due June 1.

Other opportunities

- March 4 (12-1 pm): **Going Gradeless: Exploring Ungrading as an Assessment Innovation to Enhance Student Outcomes**. This recently rescheduled, online presentation is free for members of the New England Educational Assessment Network (NEean) and $15 for others.
- March 11 – April 8: The American Association of Colleges and University (AAC&U) is hosting a series of 4 webinars on **Teaching with AI**. The series will be led by Jose Antonio Bowen and C. Edward Watson, authors of *Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning*.
- March 21 – 23: The American Association of Colleges and University (AAC&U) is hosting its annual **Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success** in Philadelphia (virtual options also available). The theme of this year's conference is "What Unites Us."
- March 22 (10 am – 4 pm): The New England Educational Assessment Network (NEean) is hosting its virtual **Dialogues in the Disciplines** event. This year's theme is "Generative AI: A New Lens on Innovating Teaching, Learning, and Assessment."
- April 11 – 13: AAC&U is hosting a **Conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment** in Providence (virtual options also available).
- June 5 – 7: The Association for Faculty Enrichment in Learning and Teaching is hosting its **annual ICED Conference** at the United States International University Africa in Nairobi, Kenya (online options also available). The theme of the conference is "Advancing Higher Education Ecosystems for Competency Development."
- June 13 – 14: **National Higher Education Teaching Conference**. The annual conference of the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) will be held in Minneapolis, MN. The theme of this year's conference is "Accelerating Student Success and Belonging."

Opportunities to Present on Teaching and Learning

- Due March 1: Goodwin University is accepting proposals for their conference on Universal Design for Learning, **No Labels No Limits: Exploring the Power of UDL**, to be held September 27 in East Hartford. This year's conference will focus on applying the UDL framework to move from deficit-minded approaches to asset-based approaches.
- March 1 (priority deadline): IUPUI is accepting proposals for the 2024 **Assessment Institute**, to be held October 27-29 in Indianapolis. Conference organizers are seeking proposals addressing a range of assessment topics, as well as experiential learning, High-Impact Practices, and DEI.
- Due March 15: The Center for Innovative Pedagogy at Kenyon College is currently accepting proposals for their virtual **What Works in 2024 Conference** to be held May 29-31.
- Due April 30: Kennesaw State University's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is accepting proposals for the 31st annual **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Summit**, to be held virtually September 19-20. The interdisciplinary summit is designed to help faculty at all levels of SoTL experience grow as teacher-scholars.
- COACHes (CA Outcomes Assessment Coordinators Hub) is seeking proposals for their spring 2024 **Friday SLO (Student Learning Outcomes) Talks**, which take place via Zoom. The theme of this semester's series is "Teaching to Learning." Proposals are sought in the areas of assessment of student learning, project-based learning, mastery grading, competency-based education, performance-based assessment, data-driven instruction, and personalized learning approaches.