



CTLA Annual Report 2024-2025

Mission: The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA) supports faculty in developing high quality, innovative, and inclusive teaching and learning experiences to meet the diverse learning needs of Eastern's students. The Center promotes faculty dialogue, collaborative learning, and information-sharing across the disciplines and provides resources that support the continuing improvement of teaching.

Consistent with the university's mission, the **vision** of the CTLA is that:

- All Eastern students are engaged in transformative learning experiences that enable them to reach their full potential.
- Faculty have the support, resources, and community they need to thrive and to effectively utilize inclusive, evidence-based teaching practices.
- Eastern is recognized as providing innovative, high-quality learning experiences for students from all backgrounds.

Strategic Goals: Following a needs assessment process in the fall of 2023, the CTLA committed to the following strategic goals for 2024-2026:

1. Create opportunities for faculty to work together and learn from and with each other.
2. Develop resources and provide professional learning opportunities that support faculty in successfully implementing Eastern's Liberal Arts Core curriculum and that respond to emergent needs of faculty in supporting students' diverse learning needs.
3. Build faculty expertise and confidence in supporting other faculty to implement best teaching practices and in disseminating scholarship in teaching and learning.
4. Provide junior faculty with ongoing support to succeed in their roles in a teaching-intensive institution.
5. Spotlight exemplary teaching and highlight innovations in the classroom that enhance equity in student learning, build a sense of belonging, and lead to depth in learning.
6. Work with faculty to develop and implement an assessment plan for Eastern's Liberal Arts Core curriculum.



Discussions at a session led by the "Teaching in the Age of Distraction" Faculty Learning Community

Faculty Development at a Glance

Participants

In the 2024-2025 academic year, 153 faculty participated in CTLA offerings, including 87 full-time faculty and 66 part-time faculty. This represents 56% of the full-time faculty and 28% of the part-time faculty who taught fall and/or spring semester. Faculty from **every academic department on campus** participated in CTLA offerings.

Number and Percentage of Eastern Faculty Who Participated in Any CTLA Offering

	# participating	# possible	% participation
Full-time	87	154	56%
Part-time	66	237	28%
Total	153	391	39%

Offerings

The CTLA offers several different kinds of faculty development opportunities, including ongoing new faculty orientation sessions, in-person workshops ranging from 2 to 6 hours, shorter virtual workshops, Teaching & Learning Conversations, year-long Faculty Learning Communities, and year-end presentations by members of Faculty Learning Communities. In addition, other small groups of faculty have been engaged in more sustained faculty development initiatives, such as the Teaching Scholars program. (These offerings are described later in this report.)



Suki Grandhi presents at the Swift Waters Sustainability Across the Curriculum workshop

In 2024-2025, the CTLA offered or supported a total of 148.75 possible hours of faculty development across 41 unique opportunities.

A total of 98 faculty participated in more than one CTLA offering, and 25 faculty participated in 6 or more offerings. In total, Eastern faculty engaged in **1,228 hours** of CTLA-sponsored or CTLA-supported faculty development in 2024-2025.

All CTLA offerings are listed on the faculty development [calendar](#).

Development Opportunities¹ for Faculty

Type of Opportunity	# of opportunities offered	Hours of development offered	# of faculty participating ²	Hours spent by all participants
New faculty orientation sessions & meetings	12	17.75	34	104.5
In-person workshops (2 to 6 hours)	7	24	81	434.5
Virtual workshops (30 min to 1 hr)	6	4	99	43
Teaching & Learning Conversations	7	7	48	79
Presentations by Faculty Learning Communities	2	2	40	46
Faculty Learning Communities	3	35	20	251 ³
Other ongoing groups	4	59	22	270 ⁴
Total	38	147.25	344⁵	1,228

Faculty Development Leaders

A total of 40 faculty presented at a workshop, led a Teaching and Learning Conversation, or facilitated a Faculty Learning Community—including 5 part-time faculty and 4 faculty who were in their first year at Eastern. Faculty from 15 academic departments served in these roles. These faculty not only provided a valuable service to the Eastern community, but also developed or further solidified their skills in supporting peers. For many, participating as a faculty development leader was a form of faculty development, itself.

¹ Includes data from opportunities in which the CTLA collaborated with other offices (such as Blackboard workshops led by CIT and a workshop organized by the Institute for Sustainability).

² Participation data throughout this report includes presenters, as designing a workshop or other faculty development offering is, itself, considered to be a form of faculty development. However, presenters/facilitators are not included in the *effectiveness and satisfaction* data later in this report, as presenters are not asked to complete feedback forms on their own sessions.

³ This number is an estimate. The CTLA did not ask groups to report on actual attendance for each meeting.

⁴ Estimate. Attendance was not tracked for all groups.

⁵ This number duplicates the faculty who participated in more than one CTLA offering.



Ashley Cote shares gamification ideas and materials during a Teaching and Learning Conversation

Goal 1: Create opportunities for faculty to work together and learn from and with each other.

1a. Faculty Learning Communities

[Faculty Learning Communities](#) are designed for small, interdisciplinary groups of teaching faculty to come together on a regular basis over a sustained period of time, with a focus on investigating and implementing new teaching and learning approaches. Each group is guided by a faculty facilitator who coordinates meetings and ensures that all members have equal opportunity to share ideas. Each community meets every 2 to 3 weeks over the year and explores their topic together, guided by one or more readings. Community members individually reflect on how they will incorporate what they've learned into their own teaching.

The CTLA sponsored three Faculty Learning Communities in the 2024-2025 academic year:

Topic	Facilitator and discipline	# of faculty participants	Total hours met
AI-Assisted Learning	Wayne Buck, Business Administration	7	11
Equity and Rigor	Reginald Flood, Playwriting	6	9
Teaching in the Age of Distraction	Racheal Pesta, Criminology	8	15

Each group came together every 2 to 3 weeks for 60 to 90 minutes, meeting for a total 9 to 11 times over the year. Two groups presented on what they learned over the year in April at Hurley Hall; 40 faculty (and 4 administrators) attended these sessions. The third group plans to hold a session in Fall 2025.

Faculty learning community participants were overwhelmingly satisfied with their experience; 64% reported on an anonymous survey (n=11) sent in May⁶ that they were “very satisfied” with their experience, and 36% reported being “satisfied.” Participants were asked what they found to be the most valuable activity or outcome of their participation, and the most common responses were “talking with peers from other disciplines,” “meeting new people/networking,” “thinking deeply about my pedagogical approach,” and “gaining new ideas about teaching and learning.”

“Not one person in the group acted as if they knew everything...it was clear that those who were in the room were there because they cared about their own pedagogy and teaching and wanted to improve.”

--Faculty Learning Community participant

Impact of Faculty Learning Communities

Importantly, 73% of survey respondents reported sharing what they learned with other colleagues, either formally in a department meeting or in informal conversations.

Those who attended the year-end presentations also reported value in what they gained by attending the session; 73% who responded to an anonymous survey (n=15)⁷ reported that they had learned something that they planned to implement in their own teaching. In their open-ended responses, some respondents reported making a connection to one of the presenters and getting additional materials or information from them after the session.

“We all have time constraints, but carving out time to discuss pedagogical practices with your colleagues is invaluable. I learned so much from other faculty and made a few friends in the process.”

--Faculty Learning Community participant

Based on feedback, in the future the CTLA hopes to provide more guidance and support to facilitators to help address challenges within learning communities as quickly as possible and offer assistance when communities have scheduling difficulties.

⁶ The survey was sent to members of the two faculty learning communities who presented what they had learned. Members of the third community will be asked to complete a survey after their presentation this fall. Facilitators were not included in the survey, so the total possible number of respondents was 15. (Response rate = 73%)

⁷ Response rate = 48.3%

1b. NEH AI Fellows

Under the leadership of Emily Todd, 4 faculty were selected through a competitive application to participate in an NEH Spotlight Grant that was focused on **humanities in the age of AI**. These faculty met on a monthly basis, planned a project for using AI in one of their courses, and shared their outcomes and challenges along the way. Some of them also participated in monthly meetings with grant partners from 4 other COPLAC institutions and/or in discipline-specific groups with COPLAC partners. Two of the faculty presented on their work at a 2-day “charrette” with other COPLAC faculty in May in Springfield, Illinois, where they had the opportunity to discuss the challenges of using AI in the humanities classroom with other faculty.



1c. Teaching and Learning Conversations

[Teaching and Learning Conversations](#) (TLCs) are faculty-led conversations about specific teaching strategies that begin with a short presentation on a specific teaching strategy, followed by time for faculty to reflect and engage in small group discussions about how the strategy might be adapted and utilized in their own discipline. These lunchtime discussions are explicitly designed to:

- Provide Eastern teaching faculty with an opportunity to explore new pedagogical ideas and consider how they might adapt those ideas in their own teaching.
- Build community among teaching faculty through peer discussion of specific teaching strategies.
- Showcase innovative teaching at Eastern.

The CTLA sponsored 7 TLCs in 2024-2025:

Topic	Presenter(s) and Discipline	# of faculty attending
Using OER-Enabled Pedagogy to Engage Students in Meaningful and Lasting Content Creation (9/25)	Nicolas Simon, Sociology	11
Making a Lesson Stick: Why Some Lessons Work and Others Don't (10/15)	Howard Luxenberg, English	14
Increasing Student Engagement and Understanding Through Perusall (11/8)	Miriam Chirico, English Lyndsey Lanagan-Leitzel, Psychological Science	10
Strategies for Building Classroom Community to Enhance Student Learning (11/18)	Tanya Moorehead, Education	13
The One-Pager: A Creative Alternative to Papers (2/4)	Lyndsey Lanagan-Leitzel, Psychological Science	8
Teaching in the Art Gallery: Developing Observation, Mindfulness, and Belonging (2/26)	Maeve Doyle, Art History Kristen Morgan, Theatre Julia Wintner, Art Galley/Art	22

Using Gamification to Promote Knowledge Retention (3/4)	Ashley Cote, Nursing	9
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A total of 48 faculty and 6 staff/administrators attended at least one TLC, and 87% of those who completed an anonymous survey (n=15) indicated that they had learned something that they planned to implement in their teaching.

"I appreciated learning about innovative teaching strategies that my colleagues are using and having a chance to be in conversation with other faculty whom I may not see as often. It was enlightening and energizing!"

--TLC participant

The biggest challenge for TLCs is that some are not well-attended. While some faculty write to the CTLA director asking if the session will be recorded⁸ because they are teaching at the time of the session, the CTLA lacks reliable data on whether low attendance is primarily tied to scheduling, topic, presenter—or even location. The most popular TLC in 2024-2025 was held in the Art Gallery, which provided both a unique and more convenient location than Hurley (but also a much more expensive lunch).

1d. Workshops with Peer Feedback Opportunities

The CTLA sponsored 6 in-person [workshops](#) in 2024-2025 that were designed to give faculty time to share ideas with and get feedback from peers (these workshops were often marketed as "working sessions"). A total of 81 faculty attended one or more of these sessions. In general, qualitative feedback from these longer workshops indicate that faculty find the discussions and ideas from their peers to be one of the most valuable parts of the sessions. (See more detailed descriptions of faculty feedback under Goal 2.)

Goal 2: Develop resources and provide professional learning opportunities that support faculty in successfully implementing Eastern's Liberal Arts Core curriculum and that respond to emergent needs of faculty in supporting students' diverse learning needs.

⁸ There are no plans to begin recording these sessions for two reasons: 1) TLCs are designed for most of the learning to come from small group discussions, and 2) view data from other CTLA recorded sessions show that very few (if any) people actually watch the recordings. Given the time and personnel required to record and edit a presentation, upload, and then fix captions per accessibility guidelines, this is not a service that the CTLA can provide with current staffing.

2a. ELAC-Focused Workshops

The CTLA sponsored 5 workshops that focused on ELAC in 2024-2025, including 2 virtual sessions and 3 longer, in-person working sessions. A total of 63 faculty attended one or more of these workshops.

Topic	Presenter/Contributor and Discipline or Role	# of participants
Working Session on DEI for Faculty Teaching LAC 100 and 101 (8/23) ⁹	Peter Bachiochi, Psychological Science Cara Bergstrom-Lynch, Sociology Brian Day, Film	17
Information Session on Developing New ELAC Courses (9/4, virtual)	David Pellegrini, ELAC Seminars Coordinator Josh Idjadi, Disciplinary Perspectives Coordinator	20
Designing 200 and 400 Level Seminars (1/21)	David Pellegrini, ELAC Seminars Coord. Courtney Broschious, Political Science	19
Designing Critical Thinking Assignments: Lessons Learned from Fall 2024 Semester (2/12, virtual)	Suki Grandhi, Assessment Coordinator Bill Forte, Economics	13
Designing Ethical Reasoning and Quantitative Literacy Assignments (5/27)	Courtney Broschious, Political Science Suki Grandhi, Assessment Coordinator Nicole Krassas, Political Science Megan Heenehan, Mathematical Sciences	16

2b. Workshops to Address Emerging Faculty Needs

The CTLA sponsored or co-sponsored 3 in-person workshops¹⁰ to address current concerns and interests of faculty. A total of 67 Eastern faculty (and 18 faculty from other institutions) participated in one or more of these workshops. In addition, the Center for Instructional Technology partnered with the CTLA to offer 4 virtual workshops on Blackboard.

Topic	Presenter and Discipline or Role	# of participants
Maximizing Full Grade Center in Blackboard (12/9 or 12/11; 4 virtual sessions offered)	Mauricio Calpa, Center for Instructional Technology	20
Managing Disruptions: Responding to New Trends in Classroom Behavior (1/21)	Eunice Matthews-Armstead, Social Work Courtney Broschious, Political Science	24
Swift Waters Workshop – Sustainability Across the Curriculum (5/28) <i>Organized by the Institute for Sustainability (CTLA was a co-sponsor)</i>	Patricia Szczys, Institute for Sustainability Suki Grandhi, Business Administration Sarah Walters, Public Health Sydney Clements, Geography Bryan Connolly, Biology	18 (plus 3 from other colleges)

⁹ This session was co-sponsored by the Office of Equity and Diversity, who provided a stipend to participants.

¹⁰ The CTLA also provided logistical support for an AAUP-delivered workshop on promotion, tenure, renewal, and Interfolio on 9/25.

Designing AI Resistant Assignments & Assessments to Future-Proof Your Courses (5/29)	Cynthia Alby, Georgia College	21 (plus 15 from other CSU institutions)
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Cynthia Alby presents on Designing AI-Resistant Assignments

Workshop Effectiveness—Faculty Reports

For most in-person workshops, effectiveness is measured through feedback forms that participants complete at the end of the session. In 2024-2025, feedback forms were collected by the CTLA for 4 in-person workshops.¹¹ A total of 74 non-presenting participants completed feedback forms, for an overall response rate of 85.1%.

Questions on feedback forms are consistent where possible, with some variations based on the specific learning outcomes of the workshop. Below are the responses to questions that were comparable across the 4 in-person workshops. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 94% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they would recommend the workshop to others, and 93.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing that the workshop was a good use of their time. However, there were some differences based on topic and presenter; this information—in combination with responses to open-ended questions—will continue to be used by the CTLA to make decisions about future workshops and provide guidance to potential presenters.¹²

¹¹ Forms were collected for Managing Disruptions (1/21), Designing 200 & 400 Level Seminars (1/21), Designing ER & QL Assignments (5/27), and Designing AI-Resistant Assignments (5/29). No forms were collected for Working Session on DEI for Faculty Teaching LAC 100 and 101 (8/23) due to an oversight. The Institute for Sustainability collected feedback for the Swift Waters workshop (5/28).

¹²All presenters are provided summaries of the feedback from their workshops.

Questions	# and % of participants who report that they...				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would recommend this workshop to others.	54 73.0%	16 21.6%	3 4.1%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%
This workshop was a good use of my time.	50 68.5%	18 24.7%	4 5.5%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%
I learned something that I plan to implement... (in my teaching, assignment, course design, etc.)	45 60.8%	23 31.1%	5 6.8%	1 1.4%	0 0.0%
I have more confidence in... (a concept connected to the stated learning outcomes of the workshop)	31 51.7%	20 33.3%	9 15.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Feedback forms also invite participants to respond to open-ended questions about the strengths of the workshop, how the workshop could be improved, and a general “other comments” question. Themes on these open-ended questions indicate that faculty have most appreciated 1) the opportunity to share ideas with and get feedback from peers, 2) practical content and materials related to the topic, and 3) time to work and make progress on a course/assignment. The most common suggestion for improving a workshop was to have less lecture by the presenter and more opportunities for discussion with peers. Notably, some participants made comments about workshop length, but there was no consistency in their responses (e.g., within a single workshop, some participants indicated that they wished it had been longer, while others would have preferred a shorter session).

Feedback forms for ELAC workshops asked two additional questions specific to ELAC. Responses to those questions are below.

Questions specific to ELAC	# and % of participants who report that they...				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I have more understanding of... (something specific to ELAC)	13 59.1%	8 36.4%	1 4.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
I made progress on... (designing something for ELAC)	9 39.1%	12 52.2%	0 0.0%	2 8.7%	0 0.0%

Given that these workshops were specifically designed to give faculty time to work on an assignment or course proposal for ELAC, the low numbers of “strongly agree” in response to the second question is something that the CTLA will need to address going forward.

Workshop Effectiveness—Other Measures

For some workshops, it is possible to measure beyond faculty reports whether one of the primary goals of the session was achieved—and this shows more mixed results. For example, one goal of the January 21st workshop on “Designing 200 and 400 Level Seminars” was to increase the number of proposals for LAC200 and 400. Thirty-five percent (35%) of faculty who attended submitted such a proposal within 6 months of the workshop (participants were eligible to receive a \$400 stipend if they submitted a course proposal by a specific deadline).

Areas of Need

Going forward, the CTLA needs to develop a more systematic way to identify the most pressing needs for workshop topics and to identify qualified experts to lead those workshops. In addition, the CTLA needs to determine the best way to build the capacity of Eastern faculty who have expertise on pedagogical topics, but may have less experience designing a workshop—and to guide all presenters in ensuring that all workshop participants feel supported and have the opportunity to share with and learn from their peers (in addition to learning from the presenter).

“Sometimes other groups or events sponsored by the CTLA feel like the person leading the discussion acts as if they have all the answers and that can be rather off-putting, disappointing, and not worth the time spent.”

--Faculty Learning Community participant

One challenge in putting together programming is that there is a large variety of faculty needs, and faculty vary in their preferences. For example, while many faculty write in feedback forms how much they valued discussion with their peers during a workshop, a few have stated that they learn more from the presenter and would like more time to hear from them. In addition, at any CTLA event there are faculty in the room with vastly different levels of teaching experience and knowledge of the science of learning, making it difficult to design a workshop to meet everyone’s needs.

2c. Project-Based Learning (PBL) Team

Five faculty were selected through an application process to participate in a 3-day **Project-Based Learning (PBL)** Institute at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in June. With support from President Ismaili, these faculty each developed an individual plan for how they will implement PBL in one of their courses next year, contributed to a faculty development plan related to PBL, and got feedback from one or more faculty coaches. They will each participate in future faculty development efforts on PBL.

2d. Newsletter and Website

The CTLA distributed 8 monthly [newsletters](#) in 2024-2025. Each newsletter provided information on upcoming opportunities for faculty development—both CTLA-sponsored and external opportunities (many of them free). Each issue also summarized a book available from the CTLA Lending Library on topics such as formative assessment, concerns about cheating and AI, the science of learning, and learning and retaining student names. Many issues included a “Tech Tip” from the Center for Instructional Technology and/or a contribution from the Office of AccessAbility. In anticipation of the 2026 deadline of the [ADA Title II Web](#)

“I just wanted to let you know that this newsletter is fantastic! ...I am very excited to have this as a resource.”

“I genuinely look forward to your newsletters and have gotten so many good ideas from each of them.”

--From faculty emails to the CTLA director

[Accessibility Rule](#), in March the newsletter began including tips for improving the accessibility of documents shared digitally (including documents uploaded to Blackboard).

The CTLA has not yet developed a way to measure the reach and effectiveness of the newsletters, but keeps records of emails sent by faculty expressing appreciation or making suggestions for future issues.

The CTLA website includes a [Teaching and Learning Resources](#) section with a variety of pedagogical topics. Pages are sometimes added in response to immediate need, such as a page on teaching during the election added in fall 2024. Others are added in collaboration with Teaching and Learning Conversation presenters to provide additional resources for those interested in learning more about the topic. Some of the pages added in 2024-2025 include using Perusall as a collaborative learning tool, gamification and game-based learning, student mental health, and open pedagogy and OER.

In the future, the CTLA hopes to engage *faculty* in developing pages that are organized as teaching guides and include advice on how to implement specific teaching strategies (along with the research behind those strategies). Currently many of the web pages on the CTLA website are simply lists of links to other websites that include such information. (One of the expectations for faculty participating in the Teaching Scholars program is that they develop a teaching guide that will live on—or be linked from—the CTLA website.) The CTLA also needs to identify a way to evaluate the effectiveness of these web pages.

Goal 3: Build faculty expertise and confidence in supporting other faculty to implement best teaching practices and in disseminating scholarship in teaching and learning.

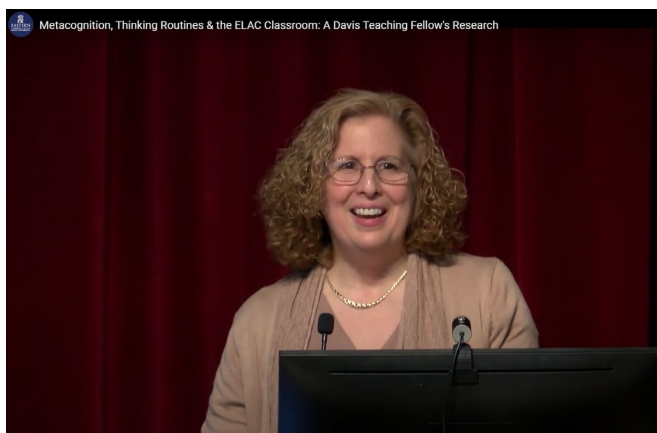
3a. Teaching Scholars program

In May 2024, the CTLA began implementing the [Teaching Scholars](#) program, directed by Courtney Broschious and supported by a \$281,120 Davis Educational Foundation grant. The program supports faculty to engage in scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) projects over a year-long project. The first cohort of Teaching Scholars was selected in June 2024; five Scholars received release time and developed a classroom intervention, implemented it in their courses, and conducted research to examine its effectiveness over the past academic year.¹³ The CTLA met with the Scholars monthly throughout the academic year and provided training and support related to implementing their projects and preparing to share what they have learned, at Eastern and beyond. To support this, the CTLA provided trainings on 1) Preparing a SoTL Manuscript, 2) Designing a Faculty Workshop, and 3) Creating a Faculty Guide on Implementing a Teaching Strategy. One Scholar shared her findings related to teaching ethical reasoning at a workshop in May, and other Scholars are currently planning their workshops for

¹³ An additional Scholar implemented an intervention in spring but will receive release time in 2025-2026.

the coming academic year. Three Scholars have been accepted to present at SoTL conferences.

The Teaching Scholars program is funded through May 2026, but it is hoped that the program can continue on a smaller scale (perhaps 1 or 2 Scholars per year) with release time support from the institution. This would not only increase the number of faculty who have engaged in pedagogical research, but also provide the previously grant-funded Scholars with opportunities to serve as mentors to future Scholars.



Miriam Chirico describes her Teaching Scholars project at the Faculty Symposium connected to President Ismaili's inauguration.

3b. Engaging Faculty in Leading Teaching and Learning Conversations

The CTLA solicits proposals from faculty to lead TLCs, which require less preparation than designing a full 2- or 3-hour workshop. Presenting for 10 to 15 minutes at a TLC—and identifying discussion questions for participating faculty to spark reflection on their own pedagogy—can give faculty an opportunity to try leading faculty development on a smaller, more manageable scale. The CTLA also actively recruits faculty to lead these sessions based on recommendations from other faculty.

3c. Faculty Evaluators Engaged in ELAC Assessment

Eight faculty served as faculty evaluators in the ELAC assessment process in 2024-2025. Their role included 1) reviewing anonymized assignment prompts for alignment with the ELAC critical thinking rubric and 2) scoring a sample of anonymized student artifacts using the ELAC rubric. Evaluators were divided in two groups, and each group was provided two training sessions; a total of 4 trainings were led by Assessment Coordinator Suki Grandhi to prepare them for their tasks.

Faculty evaluators provide a critical service to the institution, but their participation in assessment is also a faculty development opportunity for each of them—and for them to develop the knowledge and confidence to support their peers. At the end of the year, each evaluator was invited to complete an anonymous survey about their experience as an evaluator. Four of the five survey respondents “strongly agreed” and the remaining respondent “agreed” with the statement, “Participating in assessment activities has made me feel better prepared to support my colleagues in designing ELAC assignments (if they were to approach me).”

Future Needs

Eastern would benefit from having a formal program for faculty to support and learn from one another. Many other institutions have implemented peer coaching, peer observation, or Teaching Triangles (or Teaching Squares) programs to give faculty opportunities to get non-evaluative feedback and support from someone outside of their own department.

Goal 4: Provide junior faculty with ongoing support to succeed in their roles in a teaching-intensive institution.

4a. New Faculty Orientation and Onboarding

There were 8 new full-time faculty hired for 2024-2025, including 6 tenure-track faculty and 2 one-year hires¹⁴. The CTLA offered 8 development opportunities designed for new full-time faculty¹⁵. July and August sessions covered general onboarding topics related to university mission and policies, student supports, accommodation requirements, and guidance and resources for preparing syllabi for the coming semester. During the academic year, discussions and presentations focused on topics such as advising, soliciting mid-semester feedback from students, making sense of course evaluations, and university service. Multiple faculty, staff, and administrators were involved in onboarding and orientation sessions throughout the year.

In addition, the CTLA offered 4 virtual orientation sessions for new part-time faculty. Two of these sessions were delivered by staff from the Center for Instructional Technology. Twenty-six (26) part-time faculty attended at least one of these orientation sessions.

The CTLA needs to continue to build out the orientation program, with more opportunities throughout the year for new faculty to meet and discuss their challenges and successes. It may be worthwhile to engage new faculty in these sessions and meetings for a longer period of time (for example, Denison University engages faculty in the biweekly “New Faculty Seminar” for their first three years on campus). This would reduce the urge to cover absolutely every important topic in the first year and provide more opportunity for discussion, reflection, and community-building. Part-time faculty would benefit from having similar opportunities to come together with other faculty—but such opportunities must be scheduled around their needs.

New faculty would benefit from a carefully developed mentoring program that recognizes the different types of mentoring new faculty might need, including mentoring focused on teaching, balancing teaching and creative activity, scholarship in their specific field (likely to come from outside the institution), and even issues such as succeeding as a faculty member while parenting young children. In addition, faculty should have access to a robust consultation

¹⁴ The previous year there were no new tenure-track hires, so the 2024-2025 year is the first year that the CTLA was responsible for new faculty orientation.

¹⁵ The CTLA also arranged for an AAUP workshop on preparing dossiers for renewal and using Interfolio for the new tenure-track faculty on 11/8/24.

program, where they can receive confidential support on teaching challenges. This will require having a faculty member with release time during the semester for this purpose.



Amanda Leiss presents at the session led by the “AI-Assisted Learning” Faculty Learning Community

Goal 5: Spotlight exemplary teaching and highlight innovations in Eastern’s classrooms that enhance equity in student learning, build a sense of belonging, and lead to depth in learning.

5a. Teaching and Learning Conversations

One of the stated goals of the Teaching and Learning Conversations is to showcase innovative teaching at Eastern. Faculty presenters are asked to briefly highlight a teaching strategy that has worked in their own classroom and then give participants an opportunity to reflect on how they might adapt the strategy in their own teaching. In an anonymous survey conducted at the end of fall semester, 100% of respondents (n=4)¹⁶ agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “These sessions helped me appreciate the skills and knowledge of my colleagues.”

Areas for Future Growth

There is much more that the CTLA could potentially do to spotlight teaching excellence at Eastern—and to ensure that there is significant attention on issues of enhancing equity in learning, fostering belonging, and supporting in-depth learning. There are many possibilities for doing more under this goal, such as spotlighting faculty in the newsletter, sponsoring an annual Teaching Showcase, etc.—but implementing such ideas may require additional staffing or support from other offices.

¹⁶ The survey was sent to all faculty who attended any of the 4 fall TLCs (n=31). Due to the low response rate, the process for gathering feedback on TLCs was changed for spring semester, so there is no comparable data for this question in spring.

Goal 6: Work with faculty to develop and implement an assessment plan for Eastern's Liberal Arts Core curriculum.

The 2024-2025 academic year was the first year of ELAC implementation. Under the direction of Assessment Coordinator Suki Grandhi, the CTLA implemented a new assessment plan for ELAC. Main activities included:

- Designing a detailed assessment timeline with 35+ major action steps
- Participating in training sessions for Watermark Outcomes Assessment Project (this included Anik Vasington from CIT)
- Identifying fall and spring courses with critical thinking as the primary learning outcome—including surveying faculty teaching ELAC seminars
- Recruiting faculty to serve as evaluators
- Providing 4 trainings to faculty evaluators (2 trainings per group)
- Designing a survey for students in LAC101 to assess their understanding of ELAC learning outcomes and DEI concepts before and after taking 101
- Gathering and anonymizing assignment prompts
- Reviewing 66 anonymized assignment prompts for alignment with the critical thinking rubric (each prompt independently reviewed by 2 faculty evaluators)
- Attempting to gather student artifacts from all critical thinking courses
- Anonymizing a sample of student artifacts and uploading to Watermark
- Scoring 100 student artifacts (each artifact independently scored by 2 faculty evaluators)
- Conducting analysis of fall data, including a qualitative analysis of student surveys from LAC101
- Sharing interim (fall) results with stakeholders, including ELAC coordinators, LAPC, assessment committee, and academic deans and provost—and making results available through a link on the CTLA [website](#)
- Providing monthly assessment updates in the CTLA newsletter
- Making adjustments to spring assessment practices and communications based on feedback and lessons learned
- Offering a virtual session for faculty on reviewing their assignment for alignment with the ELAC rubric (including an example shared by a part-time faculty member)
- Contributing to an end-of-year workshop on designing ethical reasoning and quantitative literacy assignments, providing participants with the opportunity to review sample assignments for alignment with ELAC rubrics (as well as providing an overview of the assessment process)

Results of the full year assessment will be analyzed in fall and shared with the university community to determine lessons learned and next steps. A systematic, sustainable process for closing the loop will need to be established.

As would be expected when implementing any new, complex process, there were several challenges over the year, including confusion around the assessment purpose or process (particularly from part-time faculty), an inability to look up seminar learning outcomes in eWeb

(thus requiring surveys of faculty), faculty errors in submitting prompts or artifacts (e.g., submitting for the wrong course), faculty who did not respond to requests for prompts and/or artifacts, issues with technology and the Watermark assessment software, challenges associated with processing hard copy student artifacts, tight turn-around times for both faculty and CTLA staff, inadequate resources to quickly anonymize and upload artifacts, and concerns from faculty about specific artifacts or other issues.

Some changes were made during the year to address challenges—for example, the deadline for submitting assignment prompts came 6 weeks later in spring semester based on feedback and challenges during fall semester. Communication with faculty was altered for spring semester to provide more clarity, and a new email address was created for sending assessment information. In spring, faculty received individualized emails with their course noted in hopes of 1) having the email actually opened/read and 2) ensuring that prompts and artifacts were submitted for the correct course. In addition, trainings and information sessions were developed to provide guidance around assignment-rubric alignment. Lastly, this summer the CTLA worked with the ELAC coordinators to offer an evening workshop on teaching ELAC courses that was designed for part-time faculty.¹⁷ The workshop included information on ELAC assessment.

Conversations are currently taking place about other possible changes for the 2025-2026 assessment process and timeline. Some adjustments will be necessary due to the sunsetting of current Watermark software (and the time needed to set up and receive training in the new software).

“This experience has really helped me think deeply about how we are helping students gain critical thinking skills.”

--A faculty evaluator on reviewing prompts and scoring artifacts

Additional Areas for Focus and Growth

This report has detailed many areas where CTLA services could be improved or where new services might be needed. In addition to what has already been mentioned within specific goal areas, one area for improvement would be to increase the percentage of part-time faculty who participate in faculty development.

¹⁷ This workshop was offered July 29, 2025, from 5:30 to 8:30 pm. All part-time faculty who were on the schedule (as of July 8) to teach a fall ELAC course were invited by email and offered a \$125 stipend to participate.

Part-time faculty represented 61% of Eastern's faculty in 2024-2025. They are teaching many of Eastern's students—including ELAC courses and courses taken by first-year students. It is critical that they receive support and opportunities to reflect on and improve their teaching. In addition, they often offer unique perspectives that full-time faculty can benefit from.

"I would encourage more adjuncts to participate. I found their perspective fresh and different."

--Faculty Learning Community participant

Yet only 28% of part-time faculty participated in *any* CTLA offering in 2024-2025. Although this is a large increase from the previous year¹⁸, it is a proportion that needs to increase. Based on conversations and correspondence with part-time faculty and with faculty leaders, one key reason why part-time faculty may not have participated in offerings is because CTLA offerings conflict with their work schedules. In addition, there is concern about asking part-time faculty to participate in additional work at Eastern given their current level of compensation.

The CTLA hopes to increase the percentage of part-time faculty by 1) offering a few workshops targeted to part-time faculty and offered during non-business hours, 2) providing a small stipend to support the participation of part-time faculty in some faculty development opportunities, and 3) explicitly stating that part-time faculty are invited to participate in most offerings.



PBL Team members pose with the WPI mascot (Gompei the Goat) at the Project-Based Learning Institute

¹⁸ In 2024-2025, 66 part-time faculty participated in a CTLA offering, compared with 27 PT faculty in spring 2024 (the 1st semester of CTLA programming).