TEACHING AND LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

Newsletter of Eastern's Center for Teaching, Learning, & Assessment

Issue 5 • March 2024

Dr. Garrett Dancik leads the *Understanding AI and Chat GPT* workshop on February 28.

Welcome back to all who were able to leave campus last week! The CTLA is gearing up for the end of the semester and planning some things for May—stay tuned for more information. So far this semester, we have hosted six workshops/teaching & learning conversations, and 80 faculty have participated in at least one CTLA offering. If you found yourself wanting to attend a session but couldn't fit it into your schedule, please note that web resources have been created for most of the sessions, including project-based learning, alternative grading practices, supporting challenging conversations in class, and utilizing generative AI in teaching and learning.

In This Issue

- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
- Access Matters from OAS: A tool for converting files into accessible formats
- Book spotlight: Enhancing Inclusive Instruction
- External faculty development opportunities
- Opportunities to share your teaching and learning expertise

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Are you interested in conducting research on student learning and/or your own teaching practices? The CTLA has a new web page on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, or SoTL[1]. The page includes the principles of good SoTL practice as defined by Peter Felton, resources for getting started, and a link to a directory of conferences focused on teaching where you might present your findings (including many disciplinary-specific teaching conferences). The web page also includes a list of some SoTL (or otherwise pedagogy-focused) publications by Eastern faculty—reach out if you'd like your publication added to this list!

The CLTA has the book "Engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: A Guide to the Process, and How to Develop a

---
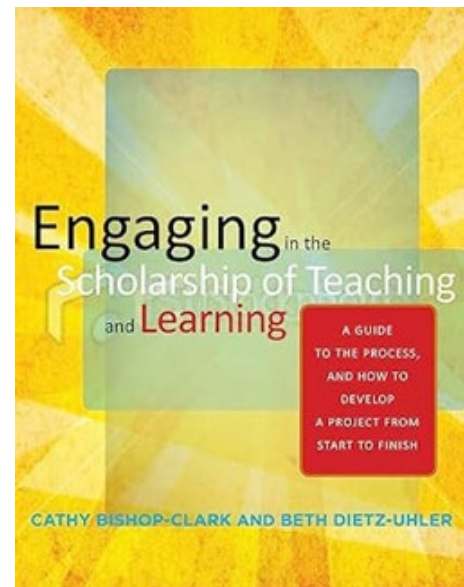
[1] Pronounced to rhyme with "total."

Project from Start to Finish" in our lending library. To borrow it, stop by Library room 425, or fill out a request to have the book sent to you via interoffice mail (enter **book #139** under question 1).

Access Matters (A periodic column from OAS)

SensusAccess: A Tool for Converting Files into Accessible Formats

Ensuring multiple modes of access to digital content provides a sure way to engage a diverse range of learners. Whether you have assigned or prepared a PPT, Word, or PDF file for your students, giving them an additional option to convert files into their preferred learning mode output enhances the way students learn content. SensusAccess, an online tool for converting files, helps ensure digital accessibility for all learners. It can convert documents into an MP3, e-book, or other accessible format (such as Braille). Equipping all students with various means to access information helps individual students attain their academic goals while additionally fostering a well-informed and inclusive academic community.

Review the SensusAccess - how to convert a file short video for an overview of how it can work for you and your students.

There are two ways to incorporate SensusAccess into your instructional planning. You can use and share our OAS SensusAccess Easternct link to upload files directly, or you can integrate it onto the Blackboard platform by adding SensusAccess to your Blackboard course menu. You can reach out to CIT for any guidance for this process. You can also reach out to the OAS for general support regarding your files and conversions.

SensusAccess has been servicing Eastern for the last 4 years, and Eastern's subscription allows for an unlimited number of conversions.

Spotlight on a Book in the CTLA Lending Library

Enhancing Inclusive Instruction: Student Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Advancing Equity in Higher Education

By Tracie Marcella Addy, Derek Dube, & Khadijah A. Mitchell
© 2024 by Routledge (see publisher's description)

Just released on March 15, this book follows is a follow-up to the acclaimed book *What Inclusive Instructors Do*, which focused on inclusive teaching practices from the perspectives of faculty (informed by a national survey). In *Enhancing Inclusive Instruction,* the authors synthesize the findings from a new study focused on the perspectives of **learners**. The latest study included a survey of over 300 students from different institution types and learning modalities (online, in-person, etc.), followed by interviews that invited students to share their perspectives on the practices their instructors did that were or were not inclusive. Students' voices appear extensively throughout the book.
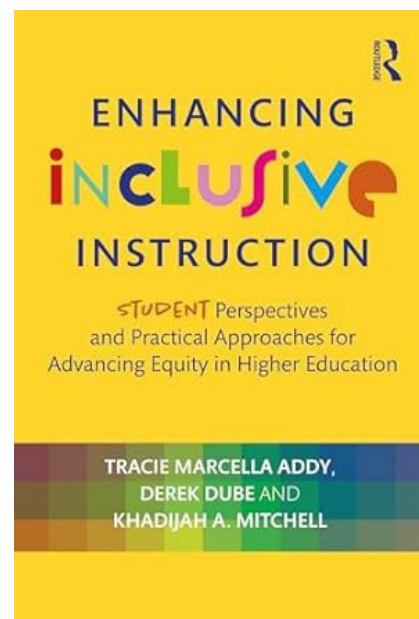
The book is designed to support faculty who are interested in making their classroom environments more inclusive. In Part 1, students share perspectives on how their instructors design inclusive courses, how their instructors make students feel welcome, and the day-to-day actions their instructors have taken to conduct class inclusively. Part 2 provides guidance on how faculty can reflect on their teaching practices, use observational feedback of their teaching, and measure and share the outcomes of inclusive teaching practices. In Part 3, the authors offer advice on how to transform departmental and institutional culture, advice for historically excluded instructors, and thoughts on using generative AI to enhance equity.

The book includes a forward written by two undergraduate student fellows who were trained to provide feedback to faculty related to inclusive teaching. It also includes sample questions that can be used to gather feedback from students in a course and reflection questions for each chapter that could be used individually or for book discussions.

The book authors recently held an event to launch the book's release, with each faculty and student author sharing their perspectives on the book. Watch the recording of the book launch.

> 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 #141** under question 1).

External Faculty Development Opportunities

Free opportunities

- 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.
- April 8 and 9, 6 – 8 pm: Gwynedd Mercy University is hosting its 4th annual **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Education Conference**. This year's theme for the free conference is "Belonging."
- 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.
- May 29, 2 – 3 pm: **Tapping AI to Increase Transparency, Relevance, and Feedback in Teaching: Providing Options for Sustaining Effort and Persistence**. The 5th webinar in a series on Universal Design for Learning will discuss how using generative AI can affect efforts to create inclusive learning environments.
- 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

- April 4: Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is hosting a virtual **Continuous Improvement Summit** focused on assessment in higher education. The $25 registration includes recordings of all sessions.
- April 5, 12 – 1:30 pm: the New England Faculty Development Consortium is hosting **Design Your Online Learning Space to Humanize and Inspire**, an online workshop. Eastern faculty may register at the member rate ($30).
- April 11 – 13: AAC&U is hosting a **Conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment** in Providence (virtual options also available).
- May 20 – 22: The International Teaching Learning Cooperative is hosting one of the **Lilly Conferences** in Austin, TX. This year's theme is "Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning." Faculty participants will create an individualized professional development action plan based on what they learn during the conference.
- 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."
- June 13 – 15: **The Grading Conference** is an online conference for faculty to learn about grading practices that best support student learning; promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the classroom; and enhance student and faculty classroom experiences. The conference is organized by eight faculty from different institutions and supported by the National Science Foundation. Registration is $50.

Opportunities to Share Your Teaching and Learning Expertise

- Due April 26: Editors are currently **inviting chapter proposals** to be considered for a new title in Elon University's Open Access Book series focused on faculty and student experiences of effective teaching practices. Editors are seeking faculty- student partners to co-author chapters on non-discipline-specific teaching strategies. Virtual Q&A sessions for potential authors will be held April 5 and 19.
- 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.