

August 2021

CTL's Monthly Newsletter keeps you plugged into events, support and research-informed practices for use in the classroom.

In This Issue

- **A Message from the CTL:** We are here to support you.
- **Learn new teaching approaches:** Three Teaching Intentions: The Syllabus Edition
- **Link Update:** New link for Canvas Online Course Overview (for your students)
- **ACUE Lunch and Learn Series:** Learn from and with ACUE credentialed faculty
- **New Opportunities for Part-Time Faculty:** Part-Time Teaching Circle

- **FTTC:** Register now for the Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference September 29th - October 1st
 - **Meet our new team member:** Graduate Student Katelyn Hanners
 - **Mid-semester feedback:** Opportunities for feedback on your teaching
 - **Course Evaluation:** Updates about the end of semester Course Evaluation System
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We're here. By Your Side.

A message from your partners in the CTL.

My colleagues and I celebrate you, our innovative faculty, for rising up to overcome countless challenges to adapt to the needs of our students, the demands of a changing work environment, and the evolving future of higher education. We cannot let this chance to reflect and improve teaching and learning pass us by. Many faculty have refined their approach to teaching to focus on a pedagogy of care, innovated with new technologies to engage students wherever they are, and frankly, slogged through the molasses of these past 18 months with energy from we don't know where. We are humbled by the care and concern you express for our students and colleagues. As we enter our third year impacted this pandemic, we must continue to partner and lean on each other as we continue to experience these changes and emerge stronger than ever. We hope that this year brings opportunities to discuss what from the last 18 months could and should remain part of the learning experience at UMSL. Although we experienced waves of trauma together and alone, there are triumphs and successes to learn from, triumphs that kept our students with us and successful. You transformed the trajectory of their lives by showing how we could adapt to meet their needs.

We know there are extraordinary challenges and opportunities ahead. We hope that you see the Center for Teaching and Learning as a place of support, since teaching can often be hard and emotional, but rewarding work. Whether in the Resilient Course Design, ACUE, or Summer CAMP programs or in one of our Faculty Learning Communities, we intentionally design ways for faculty to hear from each other to celebrate the innovative, ongoing commitment you have to

teaching and reaching our students. In today's newsletter, we are excited to share several opportunities this upcoming year for you to reconnect with us or each other.

We are here, with you and for you. We want you to know us and more importantly know each other. Join our programs or reach out for individual consultations virtually or in-person. Please do not hesitate to reach out any time you need us to bend an ear or if you want a lifeguard in the physical or virtual room when you try something new. As a quick reminder, here's who we are and *some* of what we do:

- **Keeta Holmes** (holmeskm@umsl.edu) - Supports the Teaching Effectiveness Taskforce, Curriculum Alignment Process (CAP), Gen Ed Committee; Oversees the operations of the CTL including new faculty orientation and assists with Mid-Semester Feedback and Faculty Consultations on teaching and learning. Oversees the CTL operations.
- **Jenna Alexander** (alexanderjm@umsl.edu) - Leads the Supplemental Instruction (SI) and the Active Learning Assistant (ALA) programs; assists with the Anti-Racist Educators faculty group.
- **Sarah Butler** (butlersr@umsl.edu) - Coordinates the UMSL Testing Center for in-person testing for students who need to take paper- or computer-based testing in a proctored setting on campus.
- **Joel Erickson** (ericksonjw@umsl.edu) - Administers and proctors on-campus testing in the Testing Center.
- **Jen McKanry** (mckanryj@umsl.edu) - Leads the annual Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference, Part-time faculty orientations, Part-Time Faculty Teaching Circle, Teaching Assistant Academy, Certificate in University Teaching program for graduate students, mid-semester student feedback interviews (GIFTs), and faculty consultations.
- **Mary Painter** (mapxvc@umsl.edu) - Oversees the CourseEval end-of-semester course evaluation survey system; Coordinates Mid-semester feedback services and logistics; Assists with the Curriculum Alignment Process (CAP) including the design of degree program academic maps; Co-chairs the annual Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference
- **Erin Witteck** (erin.l.witteck@umsl.edu) - Leads Faculty Learning Communities, Anti-Racist Educators faculty group, annual Spring Forum on Teaching; Expert in STEM instruction, large-enrollment teaching strategies, inclusive teaching strategies: Assists with mid-semester student feedback interviews (GIFTs) and faculty consultations.

As you know, online course design and academic technology support was

centralized in the [UM-System Office of eLearning](#) (now Missouri Online) two years ago. That team is leading our campus through several transitions (OneCanvas and OnePanopto) to make our System stronger. Although the CTL is no longer leading UMSL's online efforts, we represent UMSL through shared governance to communicate the needs of our faculty and students related to online learning and academic technology.

Reach out when you need us or to say hi. We're in Lucas Hall, 5th Floor in-person, by Zoom, or wherever you need us.

Your Partners in Learning,
Keeta, Jenna, Sarah, Joel, Jen, Mary, and Erin

Three Teaching Intentions - Syllabus Edition

This section will highlight technology, activities, practices, or elements of course design for the online or on ground classroom to be implemented with intentionality. Every suggestion will not be appropriate for every context. Please see our contact information at the bottom of the newsletter to set up an individual consultation if interested in discussing these ideas in more detail.

Creative Approaches to Syllabus Design

Practice: One common misconception we encounter is that the USML CTL Syllabus template format must be used for all syllabi at UMSL. That is definitely not the case! The CTL provides those templates to get you started and to provide some helpful language but feel free to get creative with the format. Some creative approaches (syllabus overview video, infographic syllabus, liquid syllabus) are highlighted in the article below. Dr. Alicia Hutchings' (Nursing) motivational syllabus was also highlighted in the February 2021 issue of the CTL Newsletter.

[Click here to read about creative approaches to syllabus design](#)

[Click here for UMSL's Syllabus Templates](#)

[Click here for Dr. Alicia Hutchings' example of a motivational syllabus](#)

Creating a More Inclusive Syllabus

Practice: The syllabus is one way to set the tone and welcome learners into your course. There are a variety of ways to make the syllabus more inclusive, one being that you are mindful of the different holidays celebrated by different cultural, ethnic, and religious groups. By showing that you are mindful of these dates this signals to your students that you value their full selves. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has compiled a helpful list of dates in the link found below. Another opportunity to craft an inclusive syllabus is to include a basic needs security statement and complete a start of semester survey.

[Click here to access Dates, Practices, and Accommodations compiled by ODEI](#)

[Click here to read about a basic needs security statement and welcome survey](#)

How do I get Students to Read the Syllabus?

Practices: You have spent the time crafting a creative, welcoming, and inclusive syllabus, now how do you ensure that students read it? In our September 2020 issue of the newsletter Professor Aimee Dunlap (Biology) described a syllabus annotation activity that she completes with her students. This can be accomplished using either the annotation platform Perusall, or Hypothes.is (please contact the CTL if you are interested in implementing either of these tools). Other approaches include a syllabus quiz, discussion board, or scavenger hunt. It is also important to revisit the syllabus often in order to show that the syllabus is a relevant and timely resource.

[Click here to read about Professor Aimee Dunlap's syllabus annotation activity](#)

[Click here for an example of a syllabus quiz](#)

The Canvas Online Course Overview is a Canvas site built to help students get acclimated with campus technologies and supports. Many faculty link to this site in their own Canvas course sites. Make sure to [update your link to the new OneCanvas Online Course Overview](#) site.

ACUE Lunch and Learn Series: Open to All Members of our Teaching Community

Almost 50 faculty at UMSL were selected to participate in ACUE's "Effective Online Teaching Practices" year-long program that wrapped up in April 2021. Faculty participants from last year's program will host monthly Lunch and Learn meetings in 2021-2022 to share what they found to be successful in their courses. These monthly meetings are open to all UMSL faculty, staff, and graduate students to learn more about the innovative work of our colleagues.

The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) "Effective Online Teaching Practices" program provided faculty with an opportunity to learn evidenced-based teaching strategies, apply, and reflect on what they have learned. We have been featuring faculty from the program who [employ practices from the program in our CTL newsletters](#) over this past year. Please check out past issues to learn from the creativity of your colleagues.

You will have the opportunity to continue to learn from and with your colleagues through a virtual Lunch and Learn Series where ACUE credentialed faculty will share strategies that have been successful in their courses and then host discussions about how you can employ those strategies in your own context. All members of the UMSL community (faculty, staff, graduate students) are welcome to attend.

Event Details:

- **Date of the first Lunch and Learn:** September 17th, 12:00 - 12:50 PM
Presenters: Erin Witteck (CTL and Chemistry and Biochemistry) and

Maureen Quigley (Art & Design)

- **Topic:** Accountability Groups with Students and Faculty
- **Location:** Virtual (see Registration below)

If you have any questions please reach out to CTL Assistant Director Erin Whitteck (elwbcf@umsl.edu).

[Register here for the Fall ACUE Lunch and Learn Series](#)

Part-Time Teaching Circle

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) recently launched a new Part-Time Faculty Teaching Circle to provide support and community to our amazing part-time faculty. We invite all part-time (adjunct) faculty to join the group as their schedule allows.

We are currently planning the Fall 2021 Circle sessions. If you would like to be involved in this Teaching Circle, please complete this [interest form](#) and we reach out with the schedule and details as soon as we have that information available.

Join us in the Part-time Faculty Teaching Circle. The purpose is to enhance teaching effectiveness on the UMSL campus specifically aimed at the needs of part-time faculty (sometimes referred to as adjuncts). Due to time of day and the unique needs of part-time faculty, traditional campus offerings are not always ideal for participation.

This Teaching Circle is guided by an advisory group of part-time faculty and will be supported by CTL staff providing the Zoom facilitation and recruiting presenters on teaching topics. Our monthly meetings dates, times and topics will be identified by the advisory group and held via Zoom. A repository of teaching materials, as identified as useful by the advisory group, is currently building built.

By completing this form there is not commitment to attend or participate in the teaching circle. But it will assure you receive updates about resources, upcoming events, and opportunities. We will also enroll you in our Canvas ORG where we share resources and session materials.

Please email Jen McKanry mckanryj@umsl.edu with any questions.

Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference (FTTC) September 29 - October 1st

The Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference offers an ensemble of keynote addresses, faculty innovations during concurrent sessions, technology workshops, and vendor exhibits. The conference this year is virtual and free.

What does the 2021 VIRTUAL Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference look like?

We are planning a variety of interactive, relaxing, and networking opportunities in between sessions. Registered participants should be sure to watch your will be updated through email for more details as the conference approaches.

1. **Platform:** Sessions will be held virtually on Zoom. Our Exhibit Hall will utilize Gather.town an interactive software to engage in a virtual and integrative way with our exhibitors as well as providing networking space to connect with colleagues from around the region.
2. **Conference program:** via digital-only mobile app or web interface (Guidebook). eProgram can be used to build your own customized schedule, access presentation files, and interact with other conference participants. Registered attendees will receive a link to download the Guidebook program two weeks before the event. All Zoom session links and Exhibit Hall access will be via the Guidebook eProgram.
3. **Keynote Speakers:** Bonni Stachowiak and Sandra Y McGuire. See our [conference schedule outline](#) for times and details.

4. Interactive exhibitor hall all three days.
5. Concurrent sessions and workshops all three days.

For more information including program or logistical details, [please see our Virtual Conference FAQs](#).

[Register here the Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference](#)

Meet our new Team Member - Katelyn Hanners

We are lucky enough to have a new graduate assistant joining our team in the Center for Teaching and Learning to assist our Assistant Director Jennafer Alexander with Student Support Programs.

I'm beginning my master's in biochemistry and biotechnology this semester as a part of the 2+3 program. I have been at UMSL since 2017, and in the past four years I have been a member of the Honors College, the UMSL cheerleading team, Alpha Xi Delta fraternity, Alpha Lambda Delta honors fraternity, the Pre-Med Society, and UMSL Student Government Association (SGA). I have worked as a Supplemental Instruction (SI) Leader for two years, and in the University Tutoring Center for three years. I have always loved learning and helping others understand difficult concepts and through the SI program, and I would like to teach when I am done with my degree. I'm excited to have this opportunity to learn and grow in the CTL! I also have two cats named Pebbles and Franklin, and I enjoy yoga, weightlifting, biking, baking, reading books and writing poetry.

Mid-Semester Feedback

The CTL offers two opportunities for faculty to get early feedback on their course. Through these resources, faculty can use feedback immediately to

adjust or improve courses while the semester is still in progress. This process empowers students to feel involved in shaping their educational experience. End of semester feedback improves when mid-semester feedback is solicited and addressed.

The Center for Teaching and Learning provides two ways faculty can obtain mid-semester feedback from their students:

1. Mid-semester Feedback System

What is it? Confidential online questionnaire administered to students to obtain early feedback on the course. See the [questions in the survey before you register](#).

Who can see the results? Only the instructor has access to the feedback.

What are the benefits? Confidential feedback that can be implemented before final course evaluations.

When can you register? [Faculty can register for the mid-semester feedback system](#) as soon as the semester begins and continue until registration closes at end of day on September 27, 2021.

When is the survey available for students? The survey is available through end of day October 15, 2021.

Need help or want to explore the FAQ about the mid-semester feedback survey system? [Check out this resource](#).

2. GIFT (Group Instructional Feedback Technique)

GIFTs will be offered during the 2021-2022 academic year as capacity allows for in-person or blended courses only.

What is it? A facilitated student group interview about what is working well in a course and where obstacles to learning may be.

- Instructor explains to the students in the class session prior to the GIFT what will happen during the process, and why the process is being

initiated.

- The day of the GIFT the instructor introduces the CTL facilitators and leaves the room.
- During the last 20-25 minutes of class the facilitators guide students to reach consensus around what is fostering their learning, barriers to their learning, and potential solutions to those barriers
- Facilitator summarizes the responses and within one to two days meets with the instructor to discuss the feedback and potential teaching strategies
- Instructor reports proposed changes and feedback to the class

Who can see the results? Only the instructor and the CTL consultant have access to the feedback.

When can you register? *GIFTs will be offered during the 2021-2022 academic year as capacity allows.* [Faculty can register for a GIFT](#) now for 16-week classes by end of 5th week of semester and for 8-week classes by end of 3rd week of course.

When should the GIFT be completed? The GIFT should be completed around mid-semester but should not be administered directly before or after a major exam or assignment.

What are the benefits? Confidential feedback that can be implemented before final course evaluations. Student empowerment and trust built with the instructor through the process.

If you have any questions about mid-semester feedback please contact CTL's Learning Analytics Coordinator, Mary Painter, mapxvc@umsystem.edu.

Course Evaluation System

Course evaluations are now managed in the CTL. The Faculty Senate sets the dates for opening and closing of course evaluation surveys, as well as when faculty can access their results.

The course evaluation schedule for the 2021-2022 academic year as decided by the Faculty Senate is now updated on the [CoursEval Resources Guide webpage](#) and the [CoursEval for Students webpage](#). On these webpages, faculty and students can find information on when surveys will be open, report release dates, and information on the CoursEval system.

Last year, CoursEval and course evaluation services became part of the CTL. Starting in the Fall, course evaluation surveys will be set up through the CTL in collaboration with department chairs and college deans. Faculty, business support personnel, college deans, and department chairs will be able to access reports through courseval.umsl.edu. If you have any questions about course evaluations, please contact Mary Painter at mapxvc@umsystem.edu.

About the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), a division of the Office of Academic Affairs, supports the professional development of those who teach and learn at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Our goals - to promote engagement in courses, on campus, and in the community - enhance the University as we align our activities, services, and consultations with the campus goals to promote excellence in teaching, research, and service.

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