

Dear Faculty and Staff Colleagues,

This month's newsletter includes reminders to request an SI or ALA embedded student support in your Spring 2024 course(s), opportunity to meet new colleagues, and reminders for upcoming awards and other programs.

UMSL | Center for Teaching and Learning

November 2023

CTL's Monthly Newsletter keeps you updated on research-informed teaching strategies, events, and support available to everyone in the UMSL teaching community.



Photo by [Timothy Eberly](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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Teaching in Difficult Times: Resources to Help Faculty & Students



We have all learned the powerful impact that teaching through a [trauma-aware lens](#) can have in our courses, but recent events demand an elevated level of shared humanity. Lessons from the scholarship of teaching and learning have shed light on how to approach teaching when important events are happening outside the classroom. The University of Oregon has prepared a "[Teaching in Turbulent Times Toolkit](#)" that provides faculty with resources to support learning during difficult times. They break the practice into manageable steps and also provide embedded strategies to support these steps.

1

Acknowledge context and build community.

The research indicates that your response need not be elaborate to be effective. Simply by acknowledging and giving space for reflection you show your humanity and normalize student feelings of stress and anxiety.

2

Support student success and well-being.

Point out campus resources (counseling services, communities of care) and related campus events.

3

Be proactive and flexible.

Consider providing students with extensions and options for participation as needed.

4**Connect context with the work of the class.**

Does your class content naturally lend itself to our current context? Consider ways you can connect course learning objectives with current events.

5**Facilitate productive and respectful interaction.**

Allow various modes students can interact with each other and the course content during this challenging time.

6**Facilitate difficult moments.**

You may find yourself in a difficult moment in the classroom. The toolkit provides some go-to resources to be prepared to handle charged moments. Georgetown University's [resource on facilitating difficult conversations in the classroom](#) provides some great strategies, as well.

7**Provide emotional outlets.**

When you pair an emotional outlet with an acknowledgement of context this provides the potential for a much more productive learning environment. Examples of emotional outlets are mindfulness, emotional awareness inquiry, journal or logbook, or anonymous comment or suggestion box.

8**Network with others and take care of yourself.**

Four pillars to avoid faculty burnout are reaffirming your purpose, practicing compassion for yourself and others, striving for balance, and seeking out connection.

Further Reading: To learn more about inclusive pedagogies, Georgetown University's CNDLS unit has published their [Inclusive Pedagogies Toolkit](#) providing a short but power-packed literature review, helpful tips, and concrete suggestions for making these areas of your course learning experience more inclusive: course content, pedagogy, assessment choices, climate, power, and mentorship.

If you have any questions or want to talk through these or other strategies for your course, schedule a time with Jen McKanry (mckanryj@umsystem.edu) or Keeta Holmes (keetaholmes@umsystem.edu) to talk through your concerns and ideas.

Apply by 11/17 for Student Support this Spring

*The Center for Teaching and Learning offers two student support programs: the Supplemental Instruction (SI) program and the Active Learning Assistant (ALA) program. If you have questions about which program would be the best for you and your students, please contact Assistant Director, Jenna Alexander (alexanderjm@umsystem.edu). Applications for both programs will be accepted on a rolling basis, but priority will be given to faculty who request an SI or ALA before **Friday, November 17, 2023**.*

Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program

The Supplemental Instruction (SI) program supports students in large, required, and/or challenging courses. In the SI program, faculty works closely with a student who has taken the course before and done well (called an “SI Leader”). The SI Leader attends class, assists with class activities, and serves as a model student. The SI Leader also holds regular study sessions outside of class for students. These SI sessions give students opportunities to teach and learn from one another in smaller group settings. Data shows that students who participate in SI earn higher grades, feel more engaged in the course, and are more likely to reenroll and graduate.

[Request Supplemental Instruction](#)

Active Learning Assistant (ALA) Program

The Active Learning Assistant (ALA) program supports faculty who want to create more engaging, collaborative, and student-centered courses. Faculty work with a student leader (called an “Active Learning Assistant”) to incorporate more active learning into their courses. ALAs attend various workshops with Assistant Director, Jenna Alexander, to receive pedagogical training on various topics: providing feedback, facilitating discussions, effective studying, and more. The ALAs also meet with faculty for weekly preparation sessions, so student voices can be incorporated into the design and delivery of the course.

[Request an Active Learning Assistant](#)

Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) Program Spring Registration Open

The Certificate in University Teaching (CUT) development program provides opportunities for graduate students to receive best practice guidance in teaching from experts across campus, as well as regular feedback on samples of their work in instruction. This program, jointly sponsored by the CTL and the Graduate School, is open to UMSL graduate students (Masters and PhD candidates). If you have questions or consultation requests, please reach out to Jamie Martin at jmptr@umsl.edu.

The Certificate can be a great way to help prepare your Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) to support your students and for their career after graduation. It is also a great opportunity for any graduate students interested in a teaching career in higher education. It can be completed in full program, or just [specific Units](#) to customize per individual needs. The full program can be completed in one year but it is recommended to be spread over two years. The Graduate School will now reimburse registration fees for CUT participants when they complete each unit!

Benefits of the CUT program for your graduate students:

- Receive best practice guidance in teaching from experts across campus
- Engage with peers and faculty presenters across disciplines and campus leadership
- Receive regular feedback on samples of their work

Consider encouraging them to register today! Help us spread the word, and share [this flyer](#) with your graduate students.

NEW CUT Program Opportunities for Part-time (Adjunct) Faculty

CUT is extending its opportunities beyond graduate students preparing for future faculty positions to include UMSL part-time faculty looking to improve their current instruction. Registration fees are waived for UMSL part-time faculty.

Spring 2024 CUT Units D & T Open for Registration

CUT will offer Unit D: Career Development in the first half of the semester and Unit T: Teaching with Technology in the second half of the semester. Dates do not overlap so you can register for both Units if desirable. Participants who have completed Unit F: Foundations and who have a spring teaching appointment can also register for their Capstone Unit at this time.

Forward this newsletter component onto your graduate students to encourage participation.

[Register for CUT](#)

Finals Week Reminders from Registrar's Office and Testing Center

- Fall 2023 finals begin on Monday, December 11 and end on Friday, December 15.
- Final exams must align with the [official final examination schedule](#) published on the Registrar's site so that students do not have conflicts in exam times.
- While it is not required to have a final exam, if possible, we encourage faculty to be flexible and please consider giving your final exam as a take-home assignment or as a quiz online using the Canvas quiz features (such as a timer). Remember, all student work including final exams must be submitted in Canvas and not transmitted by email, per FERPA requirements.
- Exams can take place in Canvas with or without the web-based remote proctoring tool, SmarterProctoring, which is supported by Missouri Online. For information or technical assistance, please review Missouri Online's [online training materials](#).
- If you need assistance arranging a location for your final exam, contact the Registrar's Office **immediately** (scheduling@umsl.edu).

Testing Center Reminders

As a reminder, as part of the renovation of the JC Penney Conference Center to the Richter Welcome and Alumni Center, the Testing Center has moved to a temporary location as of January

2023, which we expect to be its home for the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters. The temporary Testing Center location is on the **UMSL South Campus at South Campus Computer Building (SCB) Room 200**. SCB is located behind Marillac Hall and the Provincial House near the former Child Development Center. As finals week draws nearer, please note the following reminders:

- **Testing is by appointment only.** All students are required to schedule a testing appointment a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the desired date and time. Walk-ins and same-day requests are not accepted. As seats are limited to availability, please encourage your students who may need to utilize Testing Center services for final exams to book a time slot as soon as possible.
- **No whole-class testing.** The Testing Center does not have the capacity to support whole-class testing or large groups of students from the same class. Services are intended for individual students who have a disability accommodation or miss tests given during class time due to illness, University-sanctioned event, or other unforeseen circumstance that prevents the exam from being proctored in the classroom or with SmarterProctoring online proctoring. (See [sample syllabus statement](#) if using SmarterProctoring or review the [training materials](#) by Missouri Online.)
- **24-Hour Requirement for Faculty to Send Test Instructions.** Faculty are responsible for providing the Testing Center with exam administration directions for each exam that a student is scheduled to take in the Center at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled appointment. Appointments without corresponding test administration instructions and/or files are canceled and students are directed to follow up with the faculty member.
- **Open-Resource Exams.** Students may not use personal devices in the Testing Center to access ebooks, notes, or any other supplemental resource on exams. Cell phones, smartwatches, laptops, and personal electronics are strictly prohibited in the testing areas.

Review more online for [additional policies and procedures](#) for using this campus resource.

Meet New Colleagues

Each newsletter will feature full-time faculty who have recently joined us at UMSL. Please welcome our new colleagues to campus!

Kellyn Holliday, School of Social Work



Kellyn Holliday received her M.S.W. with a concentration in Community Development and a specialization in Research from Washington University in St. Louis. She has been an adjunct professor in the School of Social Work for the past five years, teaching Research Design in Social Work and Critical Thinking and Analysis, before being hired as a full-time Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor.

Kellyn has more than ten years of professional experience in the affordable housing sector, and has also worked in women's and domestic violence shelters, transitional housing facilities, and at housing authorities. Most recently, she served as the Director of Resident Initiatives for the St. Louis City Housing Authority. She

currently serves as a consultant for housing authorities nationwide and for local social service agencies. In addition, she serves on several executive boards in St. Louis. Most importantly, she *loves* research!

Jodi Kolpakov, Department of Art & Design



Jodi Kolpakov is a dynamic visual communicator, dedicated educator, and passionate foodie from Jefferson County, Missouri. She enjoys creating diverse art forms ranging from expressive zines to animated images to professional branding. She received a B.F.A. with an emphasis in Graphic Design from Webster University and an M.F.A. with an emphasis in Illustration & Visual Culture from Washington University in St. Louis. As a committed educator and a versatile freelancer, she specializes in the fields of blending design, illustration, and digital media, utilizing these mediums as powerful tools of visual communication.

Jodi worked as a graphic designer for more than seven years before pursuing teaching and has taught both design and fine arts courses at several institutions in the area before being hired as the full-time Visiting Assistant Professor of Art & Design here at UMSL. This semester, she is teaching Computer Design I, Typography I, and Graphic Design III in the Fine Arts Building along with mentoring students during their internships at Purina.

Besides design and art-making, you can find Jodi joyfully belting out tunes at karaoke nights, searching for hidden treasures, or practicing her Russian language skills (which she must confess, are still pretty terrible).

Mohi Saki, Department of Physics & Astronomy



Dr. Saki is at the forefront of understanding the chemical makeup of comets, specializing in near-infrared (1.1-5.3 micron) and UV/optical wavelength (2000-7000 Angstrom) cometary chemical measurements. He utilizes state-of-the-art space and ground-based telescopes such as the Hubble, James Webb, NASA-IRTF, and SWIFT, to draw connections between the chemical composition of comets and the early solar system. His specific interests revolve around the storage and release of ices and dust, as well as the chemical composition and evolution of ices within cometary nuclei.

Dr. Saki received his Ph.D. in Astrophysics from Missouri S&T and has been a post-doctoral fellow at Auburn University. He works in close collaboration with multiple researchers at both national and international levels. His substantial contributions to the field of astronomy have been recognized recently when [an asteroid](#) was named in his honor.

Nominate a Colleague for a UM System Faculty Award

The University of Missouri System offers multiple opportunities for outstanding faculty members to be recognized for their contributions to the University community. Since the nomination packets often ask for some of the same materials for promotion and tenure portfolios, you might already have the materials required to nominate someone from your department. Please review to ensure the chance to celebrate our faculty's great work here at UMSL!

Thomas Jefferson Award

Recognizes faculty who rise above excellence and demonstrate clear distinction in teaching, research, writing, creative activities and service to the UM System and humankind. Nominations are due to Office of the Provost by **December 15, 2023**

C. Brice Ratchford Memorial Fellowship

Recognizes a faculty member who demonstrates commitment, dedication, and effectiveness in advancing the land-grant mission through extension, international education, and agricultural economics programs. Nominations are due to UM System Office of Engagement by **December 15, 2023**

Curator's Distinguished Professorships

Prestigious positions bestowed upon outstanding scholars with established reputations. Nominations are due to Office of the Provost by **March 1, 2024**

To learn more about these opportunities or if you have any questions, consult the UM System Academic Affairs [website](#) or reach out to UMAcademicAffairs@umsystem.edu.

Upcoming Dates, Deadlines and Reminders for Faculty

Monday, November 13: Deadline to submit annual conflict of interest disclosures

Saturday, November 18—Sunday, November 27: Thanksgiving Break

Monday, November 27—Sunday, December 10: CoursEval student feedback survey window for 16-week and 8-week-II courses

Saturday, December 16: Fall Semester closes (end of day)

Saturday, December 16: Fall Commencement

Tuesday, December 19: Grades due (5:00 p.m.)

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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(We are hiring!)

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