



Alliant International University

Center for Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

November 15, 2021

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) monthly newsletter provides information about events sponsored by the CTL as well as around the university and beyond. We also highlight resources available to Alliant faculty on the CTE site and elsewhere. We encourage you to submit possible content of interest to faculty for an upcoming newsletter.

Dalia Ducker

Center for Teaching Excellence Events



UPCOMING

Alliant

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is sponsoring a third interactive presentation by Dr. Kumea Shorter-Gooden:

November 18, 12:00 - 1:30PM Culturally Responsive Mentoring

Dr. Shorter-Gooden is a principal at Shorter-Gooden Consulting. She is a thought leader with respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion and has provided consultation, training, and coaching to educational institutions, professional associations, and non-profit organizations.

Other Events



ON DEMAND

Center for Teaching Excellence

Dr. Dana Ferris, Professor and Associate Director of the Writing Program at University of California Davis presented an interactive webinar on **Facilitating Student Writers' Success Through Effective Feedback Practices**. The presentation included discussions of (a) assessing student writing, (b) responding to student written work, (c) providing feedback on content, and (d) providing feedback on language and mechanics. Below is the link to the recording of the webinar talk. The link to the talk and associated PowerPoint slides is available on the Center for Teaching Excellence SharePoint site.

[Feedback on Student Writing](#)

Resources on Center for Teaching Excellence site



Interactive Webinars

Sponsored by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dr. Kumea Shorter-Gooden presented two interactive webinars:

Diversity Flashpoints in the classroom

Implicit Bias: What It Is and How to Interrupt It

Her PowerPoint presentations and case scenarios are available on the CTE site.

[Interactive Webinars](#)

Teaching Tips



Active learning

Active learning techniques are based on the idea that students learn better when they do more than just listen to the presentation of information. It involves providing learning experiences that require students to think about and apply the material. The instructor provides activities that encourage students to seek patterns and connections, analyze and synthesize, and evaluate and apply the material. Following are examples of activities that can be used to both supplement and replace lectures:

1. **Pause procedure** – pause for two minutes every 12 to 18 minute and encourage students to discuss notes in pairs.
2. **Retrieval practice** – pause for two to three minutes every 15 minutes and encourage students to write everything they can remember from the preceding segment.
3. **Demonstrations** – Before a demonstration, ask students to predict the results and discuss prediction with a neighbor. After demonstration, ask entire group to discuss observed results and compare to prediction.
4. **Think - pair - share** – pose a question and ask students to think or write about an answer for one minute and then discuss response with a peer for two minutes. Ask students to share their responses.
5. **Peer instruction** – pose a question and ask students to think about an answer and vote on a response before discussing with a neighbor. Encourage students to change answers, after the discussion, if they choose. Graph responses and discuss.
6. **Minute papers** – pose a question and ask students to write for a minute. Ask students to share responses and discuss.
7. **Concept map** – identify key concepts and ask students (small groups or entire class) to determine general relationship of concepts. They should arrange them two at a time, drawing arrows between related concepts and labeling them with a phrase to describe the relationship.
8. **Student-generated test questions** – provide students with a copy of learning goals for unit and a figure representing Bloom’s taxonomy. Ask students to create test questions corresponding to learning goals and different levels of the taxonomy. Distribute questions to class.

9. **Decision-making activities** – provide a short description of a real life problem and ask students to work in groups to arrive at a decision related to it. Have groups share their decisions and reasoning.
10. **Case-based learning** – provide students with a case, additional necessary information, and potential impact and implications of decisions. Ask small groups to consider responses and then share them with class.
11. **Cooperative groups in class** – divide students into small groups, pose a question for each group, and allow time for them to discuss. Ask groups to share discussion points with rest of class.
12. **Collaborative note taking** - pause during class and ask students to take a few minutes to summarize in writing what they have just learned and/or consolidate their notes. Ask students to exchange notes with a partner to compare.
13. **Peer review** – ask students to complete an individual homework assignment and have them submit two copies, one for the instructor and the other for a partner. Have the partner give critical feedback on both the form and content of the assignment.
14. **Jigsaw discussion** – divide students into small groups that discuss different but related topics. Then shuffle students to create new groups with one student from each of the original groups. In these new groups, each student is responsible for sharing key aspects of their original discussion. The second group must synthesize and use all of the ideas from the first set of discussions in order to complete a new or more advanced task.
15. **Error identification** – Provide students with statements, readings, or other materials that contain errors, and ask students to find and correct the errors.
16. **Debate** – Assess student opinions on a topic, divide the class into groups accordingly, and ask the groups to develop arguments supporting their own or the opposite opinion. Give each group a limited amount of time to make their case and give the other group the chance for a rebuttal. Afterwards, open the discussion to talk about the results.

[CTE site on active learning](#)

Additional readings:

Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation

[Active Learning in Online Teaching](#)

Washington University in Saint Louis Center for Teaching and Learning
[Effectiveness of active learning activities](#)

Other Resources



Articles

[Screen-free zones in the classroom](#)

The UCLA Center for Advancement of Teaching presents a summary of an article published in *Teaching in Psychology*: [“The impact of screen-free zones in an undergraduate psychology classroom: Assessing exam performance and instructor evaluations in two quasi-experiments”](#). Results indicated that these policies improved exam scores in the class; students who chose to sit in the screen-free zone did better on exams.

(<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00986283211017443>)

[Creating Inclusive, Engaged Hybrid Classrooms](#)

In this article, which is a shortened version of a webinar, Dr. Aleanandra Sedlovskaya, Associate Director at the C. Roland Christensen Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard Business School, describes her use of chat, discussion boards, and group projects to ensure that all students can actively engage with the course content and with each other.

Podcasts

[Supporting ADHD Learners](#)

In this episode of *Teaching in Higher Education*, Karen Costa, a faculty development facilitator specializing in online pedagogy and trauma-aware higher education, speaks about supporting ADHD learners.

[Culturally Responsive Online Teaching](#)

In this episode of *Teaching in Higher Education*, Dr. Courtney Plotts, National Chair of the Council for At Risk Student Education and Professional Standards, speaks about culturally responsive online teaching.

[Small Teaching Reprised](#)

This episode of *Teaching in Higher Education*, Dr. James Lang, Professor and Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence at Assumption University, speaks about small, manageable changes to teaching that can have a significant positive impact on student learning.

Blogs

[Timing class sessions](#)

In his blog post from *Teaching in Higher Education*, Dr. Bonni Stachowiak, Dean of Teaching and Learning and Professor at Vanguard University of Southern California, provides advice on how to plan class sessions to fit the available time.

[Learning Myths and Realities](#)

In this blog post from Teaching in Higher Education, Dr. Michelle Miller, Professor and Distinguished Teaching Fellow at Northern Arizona University, discusses using psychological principles to create more effective and engaging learning experiences.

Shared Resources



Inclusive Teaching

[Inclusive Teaching Principles](#)

This resource from the University of Michigan Center for Research on Teaching and Learning provides five principles that can guide instructional choices across all domains of teaching to support inclusive teaching in in-person, hybrid, & remote classes. The document also provides examples of practices that align with each principle. It is designed to help individual instructors reflect on a range of inclusive teaching practices to reinforce practices already in use and identify new ones to adopt.

Faculty Success and Well-Being



Improving Teaching

[Myth of Natural Teacher](#)

This article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* article argues that good teaching is a skill that can be learned and refined. It alludes to evidence-based approaches that can improve students' performance. These include creating a clear and detailed syllabus; using active learning techniques; and providing opportunities for practice and feedback from the instructor.

[How to Become a Better Teacher](#)

This article, also in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, summarizes responses to a request for faculty members to share stories on becoming a better teacher. Examples of strategies included participating in workshops, learning communities, and conferences; seeking mentors and models; and reading articles and books on teaching.

Dalia Ducker

Alliant International University

dducker@alliant.edu

