



Alliant International University

# Center for Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

October 13, 2021

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) monthly newsletter provides information about events sponsored by the CTE as well as around the university and beyond. We also highlight resources available to Alliant faculty on the CTE site and elsewhere.

Dalia Ducker

## Update from the Center for Teaching Excellence



**October 22, 12 :00 - 1:30PM** Dr. Dana Ferris, Professor and Associate Director of the Writing Program at University of California/Davis, will give a webinar/workshop on providing students with effective feedback on their writing. Dr. Ferris's research areas include responding to student writing and second language literacy. She is widely published and teaches writing courses, writing pedagogy courses, English Grammar, and graduate seminars on second language writing and responses to student writing.

In this workshop, faculty will reflect upon and discuss their students' needs for writing support and their own strategies for assisting them through feedback. Principles and practical suggestions for responding to student writing will be shared and discussed, and participants will briefly examine examples of instructor feedback.

We will discuss principles and strategies for

- assessing student writing,
- responding to student written work,
- providing feedback on content, and
- providing feedback on language and mechanics.

This workshop is approved to 1.5 CE units for psychologists.

### Other

This webinar, sponsored by the Chronicle of Higher Education, will take place on October 20, at 11am Pacific time. Titled "The New Digital Equity," it will present a panel of experts discussion how universities can do to ensure that all students have equitable access to digital education.

## Center for Teaching Excellence on Demand Events



### [Exploring Liberation Psychology: Teaching, Training, and Practice](#)

This is a recording of a presentation by Drs. Thema Bryant Davis, Anneliese Singh, and Carrie Castenada-Sound on the theoretical grounding of Liberation Psychology. The presentation was sponsored by APA, Division 17, Counseling Psychology and its application to teaching, training, and practice.

## Resources from the Department of Online Teaching



### [How to Make Your Teaching More Inclusive](#)

This Article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* offers a comprehensive guide: "How to Make Your Teaching More Inclusive." It focuses on classroom interactions and course design elements aimed at reaching all students and offers numerous practical suggestions.

## Teaching Tips



### **Making Teaching Engaging**

Students' engagement is crucial for learning. Several sources have proposed ideas for creating a positive learning environment and increasing student motivation. They advocate for the importance of showing students the relevance of the course material and outcomes to their personal and professional goals, providing clear and consistent information about the course expectations and requirements, and creating an equitable and supportive learning environment. Additionally, in order to capture and maintain students' attention and enhance learning, it is important to use techniques and strategies that engage them and require involvement and participation, rather than expecting them to be passive recipients of knowledge.

Among the suggestions offered are that instructors

- Communicate enthusiasm and excitement about the topic and the course.
- Provide specific learning objectives and clarify what students will gain from attaining them, relating course outcomes to students' goals. [Developing Student Learning Objectives](#)
- Relate learning activities and assessments to learning objectives and provide rubrics so students know the bases for expectations and evaluation criteria. [Student Assessment](#); [Creating Rubrics](#)
- Create a positive learning environment by learning about the students, including their names, what they hope to get out of the course, and what preparation and background knowledge they have.
- Provide some information about their professional background, which may include stories about themselves and the field.
- Clearly communicate how to be successful in the course, including letting students know what is expected of them with regard to preparation, attendance, and participation in class activities.
- Create a sense of community among students (e.g., assign shared projects, expect and encourage participation by all students). [Facilitating Class Discussions](#)
- Give students regular constructive feedback on their progress. [Providing Effective Feedback](#)
- Make course materials inclusive (e.g., ensure variety of authors and sources, representing a range of perspectives) and accessible.
  - [Integrating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion into Course Content and Assignments](#)
- Articulate ground rules for participation and discussion. [Managing Disruptive Student Behavior](#)
- Introduce variety in learning activities, including incorporating active learning strategies.
- [Promoting Active Learning](#)

- Use technology to supplement course materials (e.g., videos, blogs, or online discussions).
- Be approachable and accessible to students who have questions or seek help.

Literature on increasing student engagement in online courses makes many of the same points. Additional suggestions include:

- Increase instructor online presence by providing an introductory video, sharing still images, and linking to social media and program or school sites.
- Build in opportunities for personal interactions by providing contact information, being available for regular office hours, and reaching out to students with praise or offers of help through one-on-one conversations; use Canvas Inbox for regular checkins.
- Foster interactions between students to create a learning community through icebreakers, team projects, discussion forums, blogs, or other collaboration tools.
- Create online discussion questions that promote higher order thinking, a variety of perspectives, interactions among students, and interactive peer feedback.
- Create short introductions to each module that draw attention to important concepts and clarify their purpose.
- Collect immediate (real time) feedback about student learning.
- Provide students with regular, timely, and specific feedback using Canvas features and/or audio or video formats.
- Establish Netiquette ground rules for civil interactions online.
- Collect regular feedback about the course.

This source provides more detailed information on engaging students in online learning - <https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/teaching-with-technology/engaging-students/>

## Other Resources



### Reports

#### [The APA Guide to College Teaching](#)

This Guide was developed by an American Psychological Association task force and finalized in 2020. Its focus was undergraduate teaching. Nonetheless, it presents information on teaching techniques that are based on research and can also be applied to some graduate instruction.

### Articles

#### [The Sound of Fury: Why to Avoid Giving Feedback in All Caps](#)

This article from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "The Sound and Fury: Why to Avoid Giving Feedback in All Caps," discusses students' perceptions of faculty feedback and points out how they may differ from the instructors' intentions. It also provides specific suggestions for effective ways to provide students with feedback on their written work.


### Podcasts

#### [Academic Minute](#)


*The Academic Minute* is a two-and-a-half-minute daily module that features researchers from colleges and universities around the world, keeping listeners

	<p>abreast of what's new and exciting in the academy. A different professor is featured each day and you'll enjoy updates on groundbreaking research and how it helps us better understand the world around us. It is sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Here are examples of recent modules:</p> <p>Recent examples include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Motivating Teaching excellence and Supporting Diverse Faculty</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sorry (Not Sorry). Decoding Me Too Defenses</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Promoting Innovation Through Policy</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Blogs</b>  <a href="#">Active/Engaged Learning During a Pandemic: Yes, It Can Be Done</a>  This blog post from The Scholarly Teacher is on "Active/Engaged Learning During a Pandemic..." It lists and describes several active and collaborative learning techniques that have been found to be effective in engaging students and facilitating learning.</p>
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**Shared Resources**

	<p><b>Mentoring</b>  <a href="#">Why Don't We Teach Ph.D.s to Be Mentors?</a>  This article in the <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, titled "Why Don't We Teach Ph.D.s to be Mentors?," emphasizes and importance of mentoring and describes a course the author has developed to teach graduate students mentoring skills.</p>
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**Faculty Success and Well-Being**

	<p><b>Support</b>  <a href="#">The Power of Faculty Support Spaces</a>  In this article in <i>Inside Higher Education</i>, "The Importance of Support Spaces for Faculty WellBeing," faculty members from the Columbia University School of Social Work describe the regular online meetings their school established to provide support to the faculty. They found it helpful for providing both emotional and practical support and plan to continue meeting past the pandemic.</p> <p><b>Career Development</b>  <a href="#">How to Make the Most of an Academic Conference</a>  This column from the <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, "How to Make the Most of an Academic Conference," provides advice on navigating professional meetings. It gives suggestions for planning before attending a meeting as well as strategies for what to do and not do during the meeting itself.</p>
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