



Alliant International University

Center for Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

December 5, 2022

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



On Demand

Digital Accessibility in Online and On Ground Teaching

Dr. Jeremy Bond presented a webinar designed for instructors who wish to be proactive in designing and teaching courses that are more accessible to students. The workshop introduced resources for improving student accessibility to course materials in any teaching modality. It covered the use of four specific resources for making material universally accessible: (a) the immersive reader in Canvas, (b) the accessibility checker in Microsoft Office, (c) autogenerating video captions via OneDrive, and (d) adding captions in Zoom.

Dr. Jeremy Bond, Director of Online Learning at Alliant, is responsible for overseeing and developing online teaching at the university, including supporting the development of courses that incorporate inclusive pedagogy and respond to the needs of diverse learners. He also is responsible for supporting all faculty to integrate technology into their teaching. Dr. Bond has training and expertise in educational technology, online teaching, and instructional development.

[Click here to view the recording.](#)

Center for Teaching Excellence Upcoming Events



Upcoming

Disability Research: State of the Science and Future Directions

Date and time: January 9, 2022, 12:00 - 2pm, PST

This workshop will provide an overview of cutting-edge psychological research on disability and what is needed next. Best practices of psychological research on disability, including disability representation and participatory research, will be discussed. Key social psychological theories and findings related to ableism and disability identity will be introduced. The workshop will conclude with future directions focusing on key research gaps.

Dr. Kathleen Bogart is an eminent social psychologist who specializes in disability research. She earned her PhD from Tufts University and currently is an

Associate Professor in the School of Psychological Science at Oregon State University. As a member of the disability community, she has been especially interested in stigma, barriers, hidden and rare disabilities, facial disabilities, disabilities identity and pride, and changing perceptions and attitudes of persons with disabilities. She has over 60 publications and presentations, has been a principal investigator on several grants, and has received numerous awards.

Psychologists can earn 1.5 CE credits.

CSPP Lecture Series

Gender, Power, and Global Justice: The Healing Power of Psychotherapy

Date and time: Thursday, January 19, 2023, 10:00 - 11:30am, PST

This presentation is based on a book of the same title written by the presenter, Dr. Manijeh Daneshpour, analyzing how practitioners can use psychotherapy as a healing mechanism, focusing on the intersection of gender, power, and social justice within the global context. The concept of social justice is examined before examining men's and women's issues from biological, sociological, contextual, and ecological perspectives. The presentation covers individual, couple, and family therapy and training and supervising for heterosexual and homosexual individuals from a social justice standpoint.

Dr. Manijeh Daneshpour is the systemwide couple and family therapy director and distinguished professor of marriage and family therapy at Alliant International University. She is also a licensed marriage and family therapist with more than two decades of academic, research, and clinical experience. She is from Iran and identifies herself as a third-wave feminist. Dr. Daneshpour's main areas of research, publications, and presentations have been centered on issues of gender, multiculturalism, social justice, postmodernism, third-wave feminism, and premarital and marital relationships.

Psychologists can earn 1.5 CE credits.

Resources from the Department of Online Teaching



Group Work: Creating Student Contracts as a Foundation for Success

Melissa Vervinck, D.E.T.

Creating a sense of community, stimulating creativity, exposing students to a wide variety of ideas, increasing comprehension, and preparing students for the workplace are all reasons for incorporating group work into on ground and online courses (Burke, 2011).

Unfortunately, for some students the benefits of working with others are overshadowed by the drawbacks. One way to mitigate these drawbacks is to begin with having each student group create and sign a contract establishing group expectations for the completion of the project. In this way, each student in the group knows what the expectations are as well as what to do if they encounter problems or issues along the way. Some of the documented negative experiences students have had when working with others in a group include experiencing pressure to agree with others in the group while not having the confidence to express differing opinions or having one person complete most of the work while other students do not fully participate or contribute to the group

project (Burke, 2011). It is important to address these possible areas of conflict proactively at the beginning of the project. To do this, each group should create a group contract. The specific items to include in the contract will vary; however, possible items to incorporate include:

- Contact information: list each person's contact information (phone numbers and/or AIU email addresses).
- Preferred methods: share how each person would like to be contacted (e.g., via email, text, or Microsoft Teams).
- Participation expectations: establish standards that all group members agree to (e.g., attending all meetings, avoiding plagiarism, and respecting ideas shared during discussions).
- Timeline for project: determine the tasks or steps needed to complete the project and a timeframe for completion. It may be helpful to create the timeline by working in reverse, starting with the due date.
- Division of labor: after the steps to complete the project have been determined, decide who will be the leader for each task, who will help, and who will provide feedback.
- Peer feedback: agree who, when, and how feedback will be given at various stages of the project, so that problems can be addressed quickly while also providing timeline checkpoints.
- Managing conflicts: determine the consequences for not upholding the group contract or not meeting team expectations.
- Individual signatures agreeing to follow the contracted decisions

Once the group contract has been discussed, completed, and signed, it should be submitted to the instructor, either in person or via Canvas. Group members should be encouraged to revisit their contracts during the project to ensure that all group members are following what they agreed to do.

By taking the time to prepare for group work, students will create a solid foundation so that they may benefit from working and learning together.

References

- Beebe, S. A., & Masterson, J. T. (2003). *Communicating in small groups*. Boston, MA.
- Burke, A. (2011). Group work: How to use groups effectively. *Journal of Effective Teaching*, 11(2), 87-95.
- Kaner, S. (2014). *Facilitator's guide to participatory decision-making*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Smith, K. A. (1996). Cooperative learning: Making "groupwork" work. *New directions for teaching and learning*, 1996(67), 71-82.

Teaching Tips



Universal Design in Student Assessment

Dr. Rhoda Olkin, Distinguished Professor in the CSPP Clinical Psychology PsyD Program in Emeryville, has developed a series of fact sheets on accessibility in teaching. Below is the fact sheet on moving toward universal design in assessment of student learning: **untimed, open book tests**.

There are different reasons students respond well to this type of testing. This includes students with various disabilities, those not native English speakers, students with high test anxiety, and others.

What is the purpose of testing? Is it important that you:

- Differentiate the A from the B student?
- Weed out those who score below the standard?
- Assess learning?
- Reinforce learning?

One surprising finding is that untimed, open book tests generally yield the same array of scores as you would find with timed and closed book tests. Those who have read the materials before the test know where to look for the information. Those who have not done the prerequisite work will stumble.

By using untimed, open book tests you do not have to have separate procedures for students with disabilities, and you reduce anxiety for all students.

We as professionals rarely are called upon to memorize formulas, diagnostic criteria, wording of laws—we look things up by knowing where to look. This is one of the fundamental skills we want for our students (i.e., knowing where information is housed and how to access it). Application of that information generally is more important than memorization.

What is an allowable *cheat sheet*? This can only be answered by each program and by those with some expertise in the subject matter.

It is strongly recommended that programs develop allowable *cheat sheets* prior to the need, rather than after being asked for one by a specific student. This way the development is untainted by any impressions of the specific requesting student.

Example 1: Allow use of the DSM-5 in assessing diagnosis and focus questions on making differential diagnoses or making fine distinctions among diagnoses.

Example 2: Allow a page of formulas in assessing statistics and focus questions on applying the correct formula and understanding the results of a derivation.

Example 3: Allow a list of curriculum requirements and focus questions on development of lesson plans and application of activities.

Other Resources




Articles

[The Deadline Dilemma](#)


In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, the author summarized instructors' thoughts about allowing students flexibility regarding assignment deadlines. Late-work policies were often adjusted during the pandemic, becoming more flexible and responsive to students' struggles. Although on-ground classes are back in the physical classroom, the context of teaching has changed: The pandemic made student stressors more widespread and harder to ignore. As instructors contemplate which pandemic-era accommodations to keep, they must decide what is the right amount of flexibility regarding assignment deadlines – how to achieve “a balance between accountability and compassion.” The article

	<p>provides examples of innovative policies instructors have introduced as well as reflections on their utility.</p> <p>Podcasts Rigor as Equity In this <i>Dead Ideas in Teaching and Learning</i> podcast, sponsored by the Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning, the host interviewed two faculty members at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center. They addressed two questions: What does rigor look like in a healthcare setting? How can instructors achieve both excellence and equity in teaching in healthcare education? The instructors discussed “how they and their colleagues have been transforming their instruction and medical care by embracing values such as humility and collaboration, while also maintaining standards and evidenced-based, scientific practices”.</p> <p>Blogs Alternative Forms of Assessment In this Grading for Growth guest blog post, Chris Creighton discussed why instructors should consider alternative forms of assessment. He argued that although exams are a mainstay of teaching, they are also problematic. Because they are high stakes, student performance is often negatively affected by anxiety. They have bias against women, students for whom English is not their first language, and students with some disabilities. Additionally, they sometimes lead to cheating, do not call for skills needed outside of school, and limit creativity and divergent thinking by students. He suggested that “the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework provides excellent scaffolding for flexible assessment practices. Relevant to assessments, the UDL framework states that one must provide multiple means of engagement, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of representation.” He argued for using authentic tasks that answer the questions “what does learning look like in this field?” or “how would this idea be applied?”.</p>
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Shared Resources

	<p>Strategies for Inclusive Teaching The Eberly Center for Teaching Innovation and Excellence at Carnegie Mellon University has added a page to its website that highlights the information it provides on strategies for inclusive teaching. There are 14 topics, including (a) establishing guidelines for interactions; (b) being transparent about expectations; (c) giving students choices, where appropriate; (d) examining content for diverse perspectives; (e) promoting a growth mindset; and (f) acknowledging hot moments if they arise. Each section contains a narrative as well as references.</p>
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Faculty Success and Well-Being

	<p>7 Tips for Scholars on Writing for Nonacademics In a <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> advice column, Rachel Toor wrote about how academics should proceed if they want to write for audiences that are not academic. She gave the following advice (a) read the publication you want to write for; (b) study submission guidelines; (c) learn to write a pitch; (d) flesh out your angle before your query; (e) don’t expect a response; (f) get to know a publication’s/editor’s taste; and (g) use sources in publication-appropriate ways.</p>
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Beating Yourself Up Is Labor, but It's Not Work

In her column in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dr. Rebecca Schuman answers questions from faculty members and graduate students about scholarly motivation and productivity. In this column, she offered advice “on how to extinguish self-defeating talk about research abilities” and reframe reactions in a more value-neutral way that is not self-defeating.

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