



Alliant International University

# Center for Teaching and Excellence - Newsletter

November 15, 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

## Center for Teaching Excellence Events



### 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](#)

## Other Events



### Upcoming

#### Decolonized Strategies for Addressing Child Maltreatment: American Indian and Alaska Native Perspectives

On **Thursday, November 17, 2022, 10:00 - 11:00 am Pacific Time, Julii Green PhD and Royleen J. Ross, PhD**, will present a webinar that will discuss the systemic challenges that can lead to child maltreatment among American Indian and Alaska Native populations, as well as issues that can lead to IPV and Missing and Murdered Indigenous women. The panel will reflect on ways to integrate decolonized treatment strategies with survivors of abuse.

Julii M. Green, PhD, is an Eastern Band Cherokee and African American Associate Professor and clinician. She has taught for nine years in the Clinical PsyD department at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University in San Diego. She conducts research and advocates in the following areas: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV); Native American women and social determinants of health; Indigenous feminist focused mentorship; and race-based trauma and navigating the graduate psychology educational experience.

Royleen J. Ross, PhD, currently on the American Psychological Association (APA) Health Equity Committee, served as past Society of Indian Psychologists Secretary, and is involved in other projects related to the intersectionality between mental health and law enforcement in Indian Country. Her professional interests include policy development, social justice, advocacy at the tribal and federal levels, and the advancement of mental health for Indigenous People.

**Licensed Psychologists will be able to earn 1.0 CE units at no charge.**

[Click here to register](#)

## Resources on Center for Teaching Excellence site



### Considering the Last Day of Class

Jeremy Bond, D.E.T., Director of Online Learning

As the conclusions of the October term and Fall semester approaches, now may be a good time to consider how to effectively end classes, bring closure, and say your good-byes. The pandemic highlighted the unfortunate reality that class time may well have been the most stable routine some students experienced (Souza, 2020). Even with normalcy returning to our class environments and beyond, bringing closure is a worthwhile endeavor. Despite more focus in the literature being given to the start of a semester, Eggleston and Smith (2002) identify multiple benefits of “parting-ways techniques” which include:

- emotional and psychological closure reducing awkwardness.
- an opportune time to summarize central ideas and review content.
- wraps up the class in ways that add to students’ entire semester-long experience and sense of accomplishment.
- stimulates interest in the topic area and possibly [the program].
- increases the connection between faculty and students by recognizing the importance of taking time to say good-bye.

With benefits in mind, let’s look to some ideas for closing exercises. While the closing activity suggestions from Souza (2020) lean toward virtual options, many are readily adaptable for classroom delivery as well. Some of the relatively simple ideas are having students co-author a letter to their future class peers, conducting a discussion aimed at identifying the biggest take-aways from class, asking students to reflect on their own learning.

UC Berkeley’s Center for Teaching & Learning (n.d.) offers a “potpourri of ideas” from faculty, such as creating time for concluding remarks from yourself, as the instructor, as well as for students. These remarks should address “broader issues” relating to the discipline and its connections to real life, as perceived by you and your students. My own favorite technique from Berkeley, and something I do with my own students, is taking time for gratitude, thanking the students for their work and contributions. Having taught first classes in a few different programs in my own career, I also invite students to keep in touch and reach out if I can ever be of help.

We would love to hear from you on this topic to possibly put out a list of Alliant’s own ‘best last day of class ideas.’ If you care to share what you do with your final days of class, email us at [onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu](mailto:onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu).

### References

Eggleston, T. J. & Smith, G. E. (2002). Parting ways: Ending your course. *Observer*. Association for Psychological Science. <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/parting-ways-ending-your-course>

Souza, T. (2020). How you approach the last day of class is more important now than ever. *Academic Impressions*. <https://www.academicimpressions.com/blog/last-day-of-class-during-crisis/>

UC Berkeley (n.d.). *Last day of class*. Center for Teaching & Learning. <https://teaching.berkeley.edu/last-day-class>



### Microaggressions

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 a shortened version of the fact sheet on microaggressions.

Students with disabilities may experience frequent microaggressions. The degree to which these microaggressions are noticed will vary across disabled students. The nature of the microaggressions also will vary.

#### Examples of Microaggressions Reported by Alliant Students

"I needed more time for the assignment, but the instructor said they don't take late work."

"The instructor argued with me about the accommodations I requested."

"I need more time to process, and the class goes too fast."

"My disability is real; the instructor implied I was trying to get away with something."

"Someone made an insulting joke about disability and the instructor didn't do anything."

"Disability was pathologized throughout the class."

"I was asked for more information about my disability, and it seemed like it was just the instructor's curiosity."

"I couldn't get priority enrollment; I need to think about my energy levels throughout the week."

"I never received the PowerPoints in advance even though that was on my accommodation letter."

"I was told it was better not to self-disclose."

"Disability was barely discussed as part of diversity."

"Teachers assume there is no one with a disability in the class."

#### What to do if you commit a microaggression:

If you are aware of it, apologize and move on. Don't make the recipient have to make you feel better.

If you are made aware of it by the recipient, try not to be defensive. Do not explain that "it was just a joke" or that "I didn't mean anything by it." That just compounds the microaggression.

If you are unclear why it was a microaggression you can (a) ask the recipient; (b) look it up; (c) talk with a knowledgeable colleague. Which of these you do might depend on how public the microaggression was when it took place, and on the power differential between the aggressor and recipient.

This and additional fact sheets will be available on the CTE site.



## Articles

### [Where's the Wheat?](#)

In this *Inside Higher Education* article, Regan A. Gurung stressed the need to rely on systematic data to determine whether to adopt a new teaching technique. He suggested using three concepts from the area of implementation science to evaluate a technique: Has it been found to be efficacious? Has it been found to be effective? Has it been adequately tested? He also provided references for summaries of the research findings on teaching and learning.

### [How Not to Handle Student Failure](#)

Leslie Bernstein, in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, reflected on what her experiences of failure as a college student taught her about her own teaching. She provided the following tips: (a) recognize that you don't have to teach the way you were taught; (b) design a course that gives students room to stumble and recover; and (c) think of students as people, rather than caricatures. She summed up her philosophy as "Teach the kind of class you wish you would have taken and be the kind of teacher that you wish you'd had - perhaps even the kind that you students who will become professors choose to emulate."

## Course Evaluations



**Written by:** Lisa Ncube, *Associate Provost, Educational Effectiveness & ALO*; Jeremy Bond, *Director of Online Learning*; and Carolyn Cerda, *Assessment Specialist*

Beginning in Fall 2021, Alliant transitioned to a new evaluation software by Watermark®, Course Evaluations & Surveys, formerly EvaluationKIT. The Office of Educational Effectiveness will offer course evaluation guidelines in the coming months.

### When do students complete course evaluations?

- **Fall Semester:** November 20 – December 16
- **Fall Semester (SFLS):** November 20 – December 4
- **October Term:** December 4 – December 16

### When can I see my course evaluations?

- **August Term:** Available now! Click [here](#) to log into your Dashboard
- **Fall Semester:** January 1, 2023
- **Fall Semester (SFLS):** January 17, 2023
- **October Term:** January 1, 2023

### Why should I review my course evaluations?

- Though feedback from students can sometimes evoke some anxiety or fear, Vengrin (2022) reminds us of the importance of having this “look under the hood” of our own teaching. By doing so, we stand to learn what is working well and also discover areas for potential growth – in our practice and the course itself. As you review, consider exploring systematically to identify whatever “key findings” may exist (Manturuk, 2022).


### With whom can I discuss my evaluations?

- If you encounter feedback you want to discuss with someone, consider approaching your program director for a conversation. If your course is online, or relies heavily on Canvas as a supplemental toolset, you might also involve the online learning team at [onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu](mailto:onlinelearningstaff@alliant.edu).

### Accessing Results:

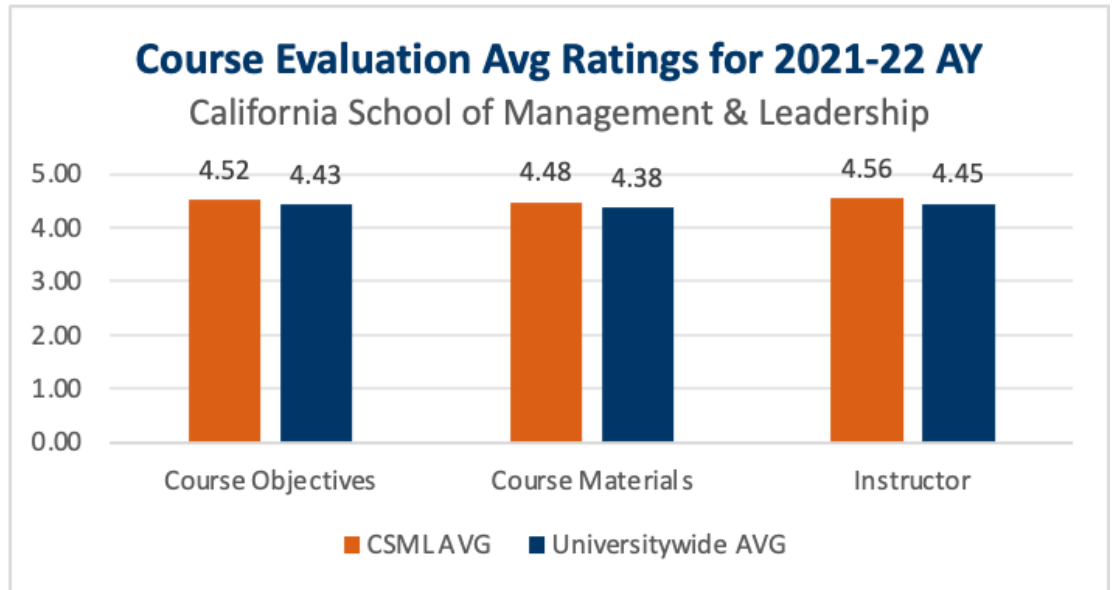
1. Sign in to [Watermark® Course Evaluations and Surveys](#)
2. After a faculty logs into Watermark Course Evaluations, they will first see their **Dashboard** landing page, which houses their course evaluation results for the most recent semester.

**Tip:** *Course Evaluations and Surveys come with an extensive Help Center that anyone with access to the evaluation software can utilize. It contains helpful articles and videos that explain how to use and get*

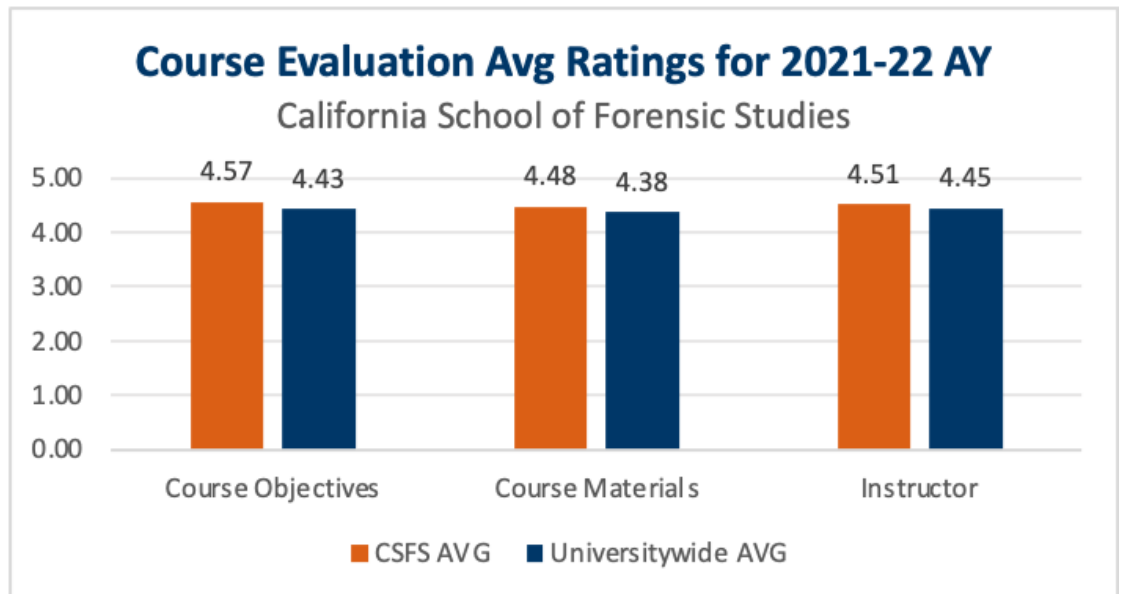
the most from the evaluation process. After logging in, you can check out the Help Center by choosing the question mark icon  on the top right corner of the homepage.

Please visit the [Course Evaluation](#) SharePoint Site for more information on course evaluations **2021-22 Academic Year Course Evaluation Results**

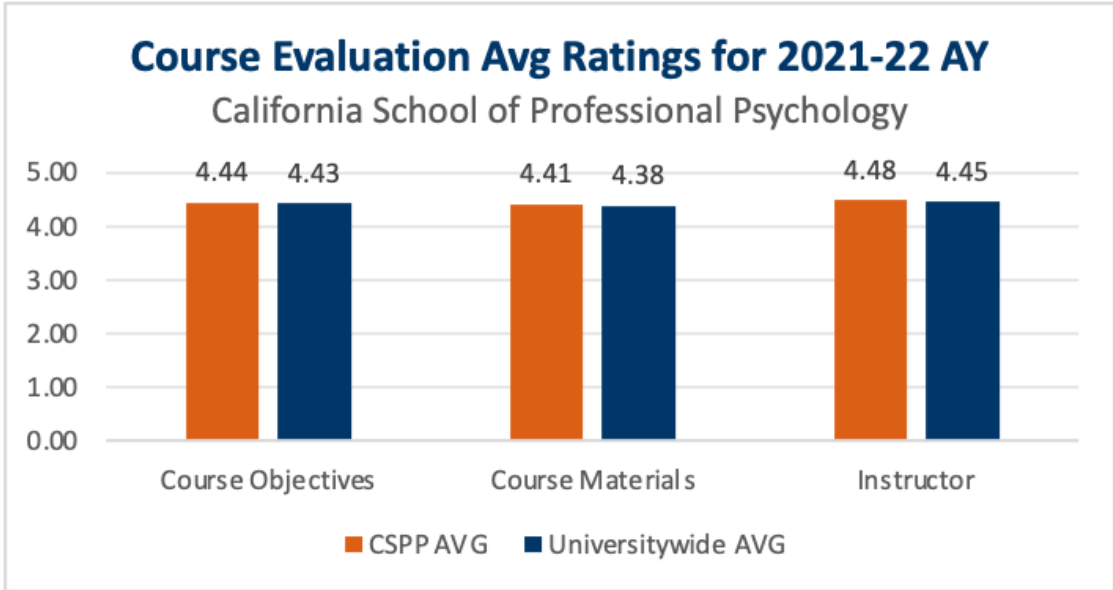
The following charts show each school's average ratings by category (course objectives, course materials, and instructor) for the 2021-22 academic year. The number of courses evaluated in each school is noted below each chart.



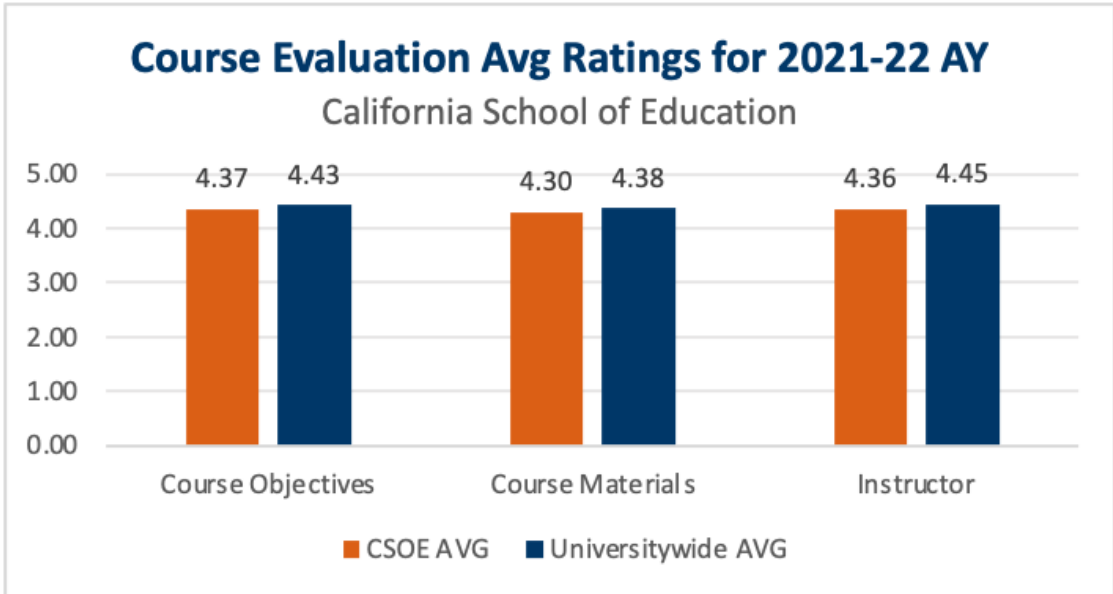
N= 131 (courses evaluated)



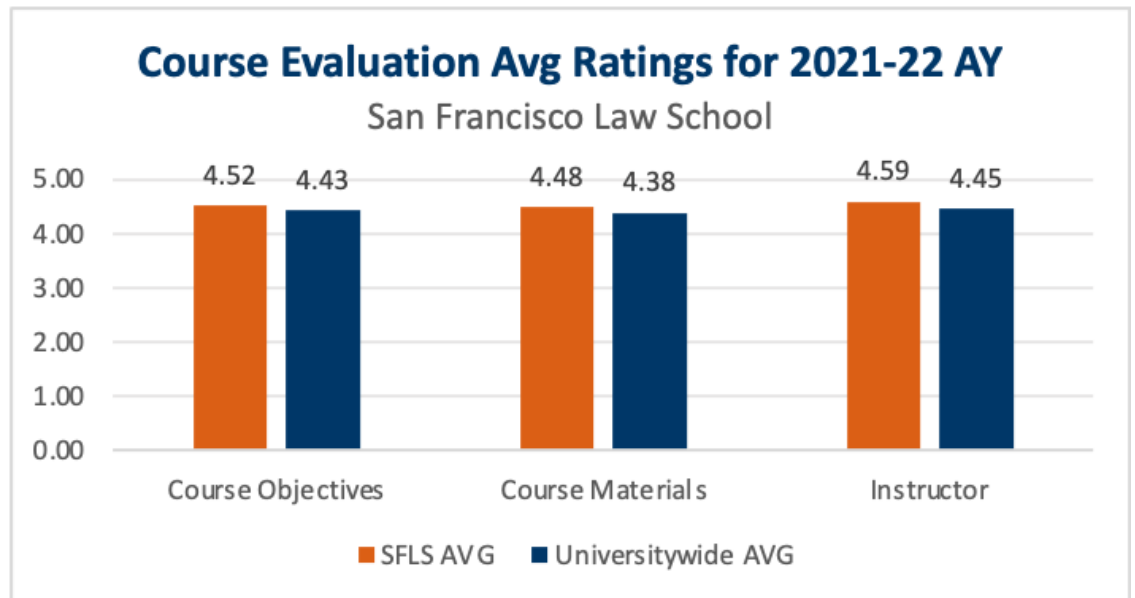
N= 51 (courses evaluated)



*N= 1,224 (courses evaluated)*



*N= 623 (courses evaluated)*



N= 45 (courses evaluated)

Overall, students rated course objectives, materials, and instructors highly for all Alliant programs and schools. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact [Carolyn.Cerda@alliant.edu](mailto:Carolyn.Cerda@alliant.edu) in the Office of Educational Effectiveness.

#### References

Manturuk, K. (2022). Analyzing student feedback. *Learning Innovation*. Duke University <https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/blog/2022/06/analyzing-student-feedback/>

Vengrin, C. (2022). Engaging the Fear: How to Utilize Student Evaluations, Accept Feedback, and Further Teaching Practice. In: Westfall-Rudd, D., Vengrin, C., and Elliott-Engel, J. (eds.) *Teaching in the University: Learning from Graduate Students and Early-Career Faculty*. Blacksburg: Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.21061/universityteaching> License: CC BY-NC 4.0.

## Faculty Success and Well-Being



### [Rating and Gender Bias Over Time](#)

The author of this article in *Insider Higher Education* summarized and discussed the results of two studies on students' evaluations of instructors. According to Colleen Flaherty, "One study surveyed students at the beginning of the semester and after their exam and found that female instructors faced more backlash for grades given than did male instructors. The other study examined how ageism relates to gender bias in student ratings, finding that older female instructors were rated lower than younger women." She concluded that these results suggest that when women are agentic, "they are punished for violating gender norms with lower student ratings."

### [The Worst Career Advice I Have Received](#)

In this *Chronicle of Higher Education* article Aaron Basko described five pieces of poor career advice he has received: (a) not to take an opportunity because "You are not ready"; (b) not to speak up because "You owe me loyalty"; (c) to ignore problematic coworkers because you've been told "Don't worry about them"; (d) to neglect forming relationships because "All that matters is results"; and (e) to make safe job choices because "That's too big a risk". He concluded that it is best not to fear making mistakes and to learn from them.

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