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OSCAR

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY | Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning
Digital Learning | Teaching Excellence

From Our Director

Greetings, Friends,

Did November sneak up on you? Us too! So we're here to tell you that you're not alone. In the midst of all your teaching, meetings, grading, writing, and "projects that need to be done before Thanksgiving," we hope you will also find time to track some "glimmers": tiny beauties, brief moments of peace, or small wins that can cheer you up and reenergize you for the final stretch of the semester.

Maybe we can be one of your glimmers here at Stearns Center! We still have some opportunities for you to connect with this fall: We're particularly excited about these events, which you can find out more about below or on our **full Fall Calendar** events page, along with our full calendar of offerings:

Our Inclusive Teaching series continues: Our workshops on Syllabus Design (11/8) and overall course planning for Inclusive Educational Spaces (11/10) can help you with this semester and looking to next spring and see below to apply for one of our Spring Mini-Grants!

Our Scholarship of Teaching and Learning support continues on 12/1: This is your last chance this fall to join one of our ChatGPT inquiry projects for Spring or to get some tips to design your own project (maybe on an idea you'd like to share at next year's ITL?)

Our support for STEM faculty continues with our November 30 workshop on Academic Integrity

Our partners in CECiL support community-engaged teaching with **new course proposal workshops** and faculty communities

We're also starting to look ahead to spring events and opportunities, particularly since **spring semester starts so early!**

Apply by Monday, December 11 to participate in **Course ReDesign Academy on January 3-4**: We'll have some new support for redesigning key assignments to adjust to Generative AI tools, teaching hybrid courses, and managing collaborative projects

1. Undergraduate Research Scholars Program
2. Research Assistant Positions
3. Undergraduate Student Travel Fund

University Libraries

1. University Libraries AI Fall Salon Series 2023

Mark your calendar to join our Winter Faculty Writing Retreat, January 8-9

Register for (one more) one of our GenAI Workshops or Communities starting in January

Along with our partners (including the Office of the Provost, Faculty Affairs and Development, Writing Across the Curriculum, Mason Impact, OSCAR, CECiL, Mason Core, Graduate Education, GradLife, University Libraries, Classroom and Lab Technologies, and Information Technology Services) we wish you light in the darkness, patience in the midst of frustrating times, the support of friends and colleagues on stressful days, and energy to celebrate your November achievements large and small.

Shelley

E Shelley Reid, Ph.D.
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Events & Deadlines

On-demand resources from the 15th Annual ITL Conference

If you're looking for ways to build upon what you learned at ITL and to stay engaged with Mason's teaching community, the following resources are available to you:

ITL in Action
ITL in Action is a two-part program where participants will have an opportunity to create a plan to implement a small classroom change this semester based on what they learned at ITL this year. If you have not already taken our short ITL-in-Action survey during the conference, please complete it now to be invited to our upcoming October 24th Planning and Sharing Conversations.

Learn more about the Stearns Center Recommendations for teaching with Gen-AI Tools
* Share our AI Text Generators: Resource Page
* Register for our January introduction workshops on Artificial Intelligence Inspired Pedagogies

ITL Conference Proceedings
Check out the On Demand resources and materials from the ITL Conference Asynchronous Sessions. If you missed a synchronous session that interested you, be sure to check back on the Conference Proceedings in the coming weeks as we invite presenters to continue to upload materials from their sessions.

Course ReDesign Academy Comes Early in January!

- Thursday, January 4, and Friday, January 5, 2024 -
Application Deadline: Friday December 8, 2024

Course ReDesign Academy will be mostly online again in January! We'll use a blend of synchronous meetings and workgroups 8:30-5:00 on the two key days, plus some asynchronous pre-course learning, to support your course project. We will also offer options to complete some of the sessions on campus, with colleagues & cookies!

Use our academy as a just-in-time consultation about teaching with new assignments in your Spring 2024 course—or get a jump on a course you want to build or redesign for Summer or Fall terms. Faculty who are adapting to Generative AI tools, (re)designing Mason Core courses, updating community-engaged learning projects, preparing to teach in active learning classrooms, or creating course elements in multiple modalities are especially welcome!

Course ReDesign Academy provides a stipend to support faculty from all ranks, levels, disciplines, and modalities as they build or revise engaging, relevant, manageable courses. **See our site for deadlines, dates, details, and FAQs.**

ATEA and OTEA Nominations

Adjunct TEA and Online TEA Nomination Deadline: Friday, December 1, 2023

The 2024 George Mason University **Teaching Excellence Awards** (TEA) are open to faculty with significant teaching experience at George Mason.

The Adjunct Teaching Excellence Awards recognize excellence in the teaching of part-time faculty who have already completed teaching courses in at least six semesters at Mason.

The Online Teaching Excellence Awards recognize teaching excellence for all instructional faculty members (adjuncts, term, tenured and tenure-track) who have taught at least one fully online course -- synchronous or asynchronous--during the past academic year, and who also have at least four semesters completed of teaching fully online courses at Mason. Faculty do not need to teach exclusively online, nor do their online courses need to occur in consecutive semesters. Honored faculty may additionally be recognized for excellence in the design and implementation of online assessment strategies.

Students, faculty members, or administrators may nominate any faculty member for an award (we don't accept self-nominations). See more information on our **website**.

To nominate faculty for any award: Please use our **Qualtrics survey** to provide the information about your nominee and a few paragraphs about your recommendation for them.

Apply for a Spring 2024 Inclusive Excellence in Teaching Mini-Grant from the Stearns Center!

- First Consideration Priority Deadline: Friday, December 8, 2023
- Final Consideration Deadline: Monday, January 10, 2024

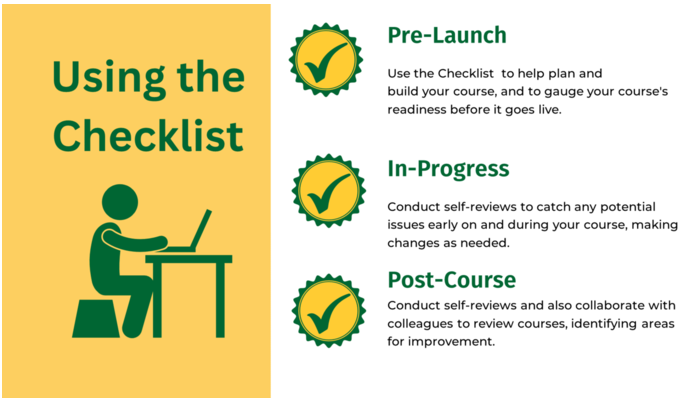
We invite you to submit a proposal for our Spring 2024 Inclusive Excellence in Teaching Mini-Grant! These grants are intended to invest in expanding in-progress projects and aid in scaling-up student support and inclusive excellence in teaching efforts across campus to effectively increase local capacity for faculty learning, course- or curriculum-development, or pedagogy-related programming. Some examples of possible mini-grant projects include (but are not limited to) to following:

- Development of course modules or materials designed for adoption by multiple instructors teaching in a course or curricular area

- Pilot implementation and assessment of course modules or materials designed for multiple instructors teaching in a course or curricular area
- Design of faculty development/training curricula and materials to support a current course, course sequence, or curricular area
- Registration costs for an inclusive teaching-related event, local/regional/national, with a specific proposed local deliverable for the Mason program, department, school/college, or campus community
- Faculty+student learning community or affinity group regarding ARIT principles/issues, to build collaboration and resources that will support curriculum and pedagogy development for a course or area

For more information about mini-grant proposal requirements, deadlines, and the aims of mini-grants, please visit our webpage: https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/student-engagement-classroom-managment/arit-programs/

Digital Learning



Do Your Online Course Design & Online Teaching Show Quality?

Use our newly-revised Stearns Center Digital Learning's Online Quality Checklist as your guide, not only while building your course, but also as a tool to reflect on your online teaching practices. Our Checklist is designed to support you at every stage of the online teaching journey: Pre-Launch, In-Progress, and Post-Course.

It is intuitively structured, with columns for tracking evidence and jotting down comments, plans, or ideas. Quality indicators are presented for six areas for designing and teaching an online course. Each area has standards for online course design and teaching:

Designing or Redesigning a Course: 1. Design & Accessibility; 2. Outcomes & Assessments; and 3. Tools & Technologies.
Teaching or Facilitating a Course: 4. Instructor's Role; 5. Community & Engagement; and 6. Continuous Improvement.
If you need to quickly check your online course for quality essentials, check for quality elements tagged as "essential" (#ESSENTIAL) in our Quality Checklist!

Download the Online Quality Checklist (2023 revision) here

Faculty Development Workshops

Continuing Professional Development Workshops

Do you want to improve your assignments, your grading, or your online discussions this fall, but don't have time for a lengthy redesign? Are you completing an evaluation portfolio and want to document your commitment to improving your teaching? Our one-hour, interactive CPD workshops might be just the thing!

The Stearns Center is offering a series of **Continuing Professional Development workshops** throughout Fall 2023. These workshops cover fundamental topics including course design, effective grading, engaging students, and providing feedback for written assignments. Please register via links on our **Events page**; workshops will be virtual or have a virtual option throughout Fall 2023.

Faculty who complete four CPD workshops and our completion survey will receive the Stearns Center Level One Faculty Development Credential.

Workshop: Syllabi That Support Learners and Instructors Follow-Up: A Hands-On Syllabus Workshop

November 8 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Rachel Yoho

This workshop is being offered as a follow-up workshop to the "Syllabi that Support Learners and Instructors" workshop, however interested individuals are encouraged to attend this workshop even if they were not able to join the previous workshop. Register here.

Workshop: Anti-Racism and Inclusive Teaching: An Introduction to Developing More Inclusive Educational Spaces

November 10 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Zoom | CPD Level 1 Engage | Facilitator: Rachel Yoho

Are you ready to integrate inclusive teaching throughout your instructional spaces? Would you like to explore techniques and build tangible plans for your classes? This is where that journey begins. **Register here**.

Course Proposal Workshop

November 13 | 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitators: Laura Poms, Shelley Reid, Rachel Yoho

Mason Core Committee is seeking course proposals for courses in the revised Global Contexts category and the new Just Societies flag. Courses planning to run in the inaugural Fall 2024 semester will need approval by Fall 2023, so it's not too early to start! Faculty interested in proposing a course for QEP-Community Engaged Learning status are also welcome!

See more about **Mason Core courses** or contact Mason Core for more information (masoncor@gmu.edu). **Register here**.

Workshop: Promoting Academic Integrity in STEM classrooms

November 30 | 10:30-11:45 am | Zoom | CPD Level 1 Assess| Facilitator: Laina Lockett

It seems like academic integrity has always been a concern of STEM faculty, but now with so many new technologies available to students, this topic may seem overwhelming. The strategies discussed in this workshop can be applied to in-person and online courses of any size so please join the workshop and join the discussion. **Register here**.

Workshop: Introduction to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

December 1 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Breana Bayraktar

In this introduction to SoTL, you will reflect on how and why you might want to design and implement a SoTL project in your class, and explore SoTL practices, methods and tools to help you get started. Attendees will be eligible for a drawing to win a copy of Nancy Chick's Book, SoTL in Action. **Register here**.

Workshop: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Project Planning Workshop

December 1 | 10:15am-12:15pm | Zoom | Facilitator: Breana Bayraktar

Join us for a 2-hour virtual working session to plan your SoTL study and draft an IRB application for your research! Following a brief review of IRB expectations, attendees will brainstorm potential research questions and methods, draft plans, get feedback from fellow participants, and potentially find collaborators interested in the same topic. **Register here**.

Workshop: Mason Core ARIT Academy

December 4-5 | ~9am-5pm | Hybrid |Facilitators: Laura Poms, Shelley Reid, and Rachel Yoho

In December, The Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning in collaboration with The Mason Core will be hosting a special two-day Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching Academy designed specifically to support faculty who are revising courses to meet new Mason Core outcomes--with particular focus on supporting faculty who are developing a course for the Just Societies flag. The workshop will have options to participate on-campus (strongly recommended) or live-remote via Zoom; like our Proposal Workshop, each day's activities will include a blend of information, guided individual work time, and collaboration and feedback from peers. A stipend may be available for faculty (any status) who complete the two-day workshop. Coffee, snacks, and lunch will be provided for all on-campus participants. And as a special thank-you for being part of our early cohort, we will also hold a drawing for some giveaways, including books and gear to help with your teaching. Seats are limited, so please register early to reserve your space! **Register here.**

Please reach out to Dr. Rachel Yoho (ryoho@gmu.edu) with questions about the workshop or to Dr. Laura Poms (lpoms@gmu.edu) with questions about the Mason Core.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Faculty Writing Sprints!

MS Teams | Every Friday 9:00-11:00am

Hopefully, everyone is working toward the final stages of your personal fall projects. (How is it November already?) But if you need a boost to get you closer to (or across!) the finish line, then join us online this Friday for encouragement and accountability.

Each Friday morning from 9-11 a.m. the Faculty Writing Community will host both a general Summer Sprint, a bonus extension of the Friday sprints we've hosted during the academic year, and a Women's Accountability Group.

Each meeting is part of the larger Faculty Writing Community Team linked here, and these programs are sponsored by Mason's Faculty Affairs and Development, Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning, and Writing Across the Curriculum.

To participate in the sprints, register here for updates and reminders, then simply connect to our Faculty Writers Community workspace in MS Teams (make sure to sign in with your Mason credentials) and look for the meeting in the General channel.

Save the Date: Faculty Writing Retreat
January 8 and 9, 2024 | Online with limited on-campus availability | Registration required

The retreat offers a supportive and collegial community of peers to boost your writing productivity. Participants work on a variety of research, creative, and scholarly projects at all stages of completion. For more information, click here.

Questions? Visit our website or email us at wac@gmu.edu.

From Our Partners

Office of Faculty Affairs & Development

Navigating Politics in Academia Faculty Matters Workshop

November 28 | 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Zoom | Registration is required

Academic institutions and local academic units can be quite political, and it is not unusual for early career faculty members to land amid conflicts they don't know how to navigate (or get out of). Recognizing that it's not easy to extricate yourself from political conflicts without offending potentially powerful senior colleagues, you are invited to a discussion about navigating academic politics with experienced Mason professors who will share their experiences/ perspectives on how to manage this side of academic life. This is a Zoom workshop. Registration is required. **Please register here**.

Opportunity to Join an Affinity Group

As part of Mason's commitment to inclusive excellence, the Office of Faculty Affairs and Development supports several affinity groups. These groups provide our diverse faculty, doctoral students, and staff with a sense of community, inclusion , and belonging. The affinity groups facilitate connections and professional partnerships and champion strategic efforts to support the success of their members. The affinity groups are open to all faculty (tenured, tenure-track, term, adjunct, administrative, and professional), doctoral students, and staff. **Learn more about Affinity Groups here**. To join these

groups, please contact **Ms. Amy Ayres** or **Dr. Millie Rivera** and we will send you the links for the meetings and add you to the listserv (if you so desire).

- **AAPI—Asian, Asian American, Pacific Islander Affinity Group**
- **BLIM—Black, Latine, Indigenous, Multiracial Faculty**
- **First-Gen Affinity Group**
- **SPARK—Scholars Promoting Access, Representation, and Knowledge**
- **Juntos—Mason Hispanic/Latine Alliance**
- **Disability & Neurodivergence Alliance (DNA)**

SPARK (Scholars Promoting Access, Representation, and Knowledge)

SPARK provides a welcoming and safe space for students who don't always feel reflected or supported on campus or have faced or experienced social, economic, and historical challenges. The mission of the group is to bring doctoral and MFA students together and promote a sense of community through resource and information sharing and access to mentorship and networks that positively impact educational and career outcomes. If you face or have experienced marginalization, this group welcomes you!

Contact Ms. Amy Ayres or Dr. Millie Rivera for the meetings' links or to be added to the SPARK listserv.

OSCAR

Research Assistant Positions

OSCAR is expanding opportunities for students to learn research, creative, or scholarly methods in their field and giving faculty free support on their projects at the same time. **Learn how you can hire a research assistant.**

Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

URSP supports undergraduate students collaborating on a research, creative, or scholarly project with a faculty mentor. The spring applications are closed. Applications for summer will open after winter break. Fall applications will open in late April. **Find more information on our website.**

Undergraduate Student Travel Fund

The Undergraduate Student Travel Fund (USTF) supports research and scholarly related travel for undergraduates who are presenting their projects via poster, talk, screening, round table, performance, etc. USTF can support costs associated with presentations at virtual conferences. Students must apply 30 days before the start of the event. Learn more here.

CECiL

The Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning (CECiL) in collaboration with the Stearns Center is happy to announce faculty development opportunities for the year!

Course Proposal Workshops:

Course Proposal Workshops are opportunities to work with CECiL Staff members to enhance civic and community outcomes within your course(s). These workshops are intended to help faculty with existing CBL courses or courses with Civic Outcomes. Faculty will learn about current best practices and how to apply for a Mason Impact course designation. Faculty will receive a participation letter for their portfolio when their course has the Mason Impact designation.

Course Development Cohort:

In these meetings, faculty members will work with CECiL and Stearns Center staff members to develop a community based learning (CBL) course. Faculty will learn about CBL best practices, how to find and work with community partners, course design strategies and have time to develop learning outcomes. Meetings will either be 2 half days or 1 full day. Eligible faculty will receive a stipend of $250 and a participation letter for their portfolio after program completion.

Visit the CECiL website to learn more and register for a development opportunity!

Undergraduate Education

Summer Team Impact Project applications open

The Office of Undergraduate Education is calling for proposals for Summer Team Impact Project Grants (STIP) for Summer 2024. Pending funding, these projects will support multidisciplinary summer projects of undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty members. These faculty-led projects will explore a central theme, a research question, or a community identified problem.

We are particularly seeking proposals with a focus on Anti-Racist Community Engagement as defined by the Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning, however all proposals are welcome. **The deadline for submissions is November 17, 2023**. These projects will proceed in the summer of 2024 pending funding. For more information, go to: http://go.gmu.edu/

University Libraries

George Mason University Libraries AI Fall Salon Series 2023

sa·lon

The word salon is French, originally meaning "reception room." In 1800's France, the meaning grew to include a "gathering of elegant people" occurring regularly in said room.

Join Mason Libraries for a series of scholarly discussions regarding artificial intelligence (AI) technologies such as ChatGPT and their effects on higher education and society. We will facilitate open dialog for learning more about this rapidly expanding topic and what it means for Mason and the global community. Mark your calendars!

AI in the Arts and Humanities

- November 15th, 4pm-5pm
- Moderators: Stephanie Grimm (Art and Art History Librarian) and Megan Reichelt (Theater, Dance, and Women & Gender Studies Librarian)

AI in the Social Sciences and STEM

- December 6th, 4pm-5pm

Moderators: Chris Magee (Social Sciences Librarian) and Dr. Heidi Blackburn (Computing Librarian)

All salons will be moderated by Mason librarians and held in the Fenwick Library Main Reading Room (Level 2). In order to promote community, engagement, and thoughtful dialog, a Zoom option will not be available at this time.

All are welcome to attend!

Thank you to the AI Fall Salon series Planning Committee: Chris Magee, Trevor Watkins, and Heidi Blackburn.

Share something for next month's newsletter

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Share this email:

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