### In this Newsletter:

#### Events & Deadlines

- 1. <u>Save the Date: ITL</u> <u>Conference October 6th</u>
- 2. <u>Stearns Center Fall LYTe:</u> <u>Strategies and Community</u> <u>to Kick Off Your Fall</u>
- 3. <u>Make an Impact on Anti-</u> <u>Racist and Inclusive Teaching</u> <u>Practices at Mason!</u>
- 4. <u>Teaching Squares Return in</u> <u>September!</u>

#### Faculty Development Workshops

- 1. <u>Is Your Online Course Ready</u> <u>for Fall 2023?</u>
- 2. <u>Welcome to Fall 2023 Online</u> <u>Teaching!</u>
- 3. <u>Continuing Professional</u> <u>Development Workshops</u>
- 4. <u>New! Microgrants for</u> <u>Teaching Research</u>
- 5. <u>Participate in a mega-SoTL</u> research project investigating the impacts of AI/ChatGPT on teaching & learning!
- 6. <u>SoTL Project Planning</u> <u>Workshops</u>
- 7. <u>Faculty Learning Community:</u> <u>Teaching Future</u> <u>Professionals in the Era of</u> <u>Artificial Intelligence</u>
- 8. <u>Relate to the Real World:</u> <u>How to Make Your</u> <u>Assignments Relevant</u>
- 9. Course Proposal Workshop(s)
- 10. <u>Important Conversations in</u> <u>the Classroom: Handling</u> <u>Situations in the Moment</u>
- 11. <u>Avoid the Tyranny of</u> <u>Content: How to Make Room</u> <u>for the Good Stuff</u>
- 12. <u>Anti-Racism and Inclusive</u> <u>Teaching: An Introduction to</u> <u>Developing More Inclusive</u> <u>Educational Spaces</u>

### Writing Across the Curriculum

1. Faculty Writing Sprints!

### From Our Partners



Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning Digital Learning | Teaching Excellence

### **From Our Director**

Greetings, Friends,

On behalf of the Stearns Center team, I want to welcome you back to Mason for the new academic year and welcome you to the first of our monthly newsletters. We hope you were able to find opportunities over the summer to engage in projects, connect with friends and family, explore new places or ideas, and just catch your breath a bit from the previous academic year.

Our particular welcome goes to those of you who are connecting to Mason and the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning for the first time. The Stearns Center team uses this monthly newsletter to keep you up to date on good resources, advice, and events that can enhance your teaching, connect you with peers in your area and across campus, and help you grow as a teacher and leader on campus. (If you prefer, you can use the link at the end of this email to unsubscribe).

We are looking forward to reconnecting with all Mason faculty (fulltime, part-time, and graduate student instructors) this fall. Starting this week, we're gearing up to bring you some **Summer LYTe**, as part of our pre-semester **Level-up Your Teaching** weeks, featuring our best workshops and gatherings. These offerings are designed for people just like you: someone who is an engaged and committed teacher looking for great conversation and new ideas about how to connect with students and help them gain crucial strategies, knowledge, and skills in your field or profession.

Please note, too, that **all adjunct faculty** (not just newcomers!) are invited to participate in any of the Adjunct Faculty Success Workshops held via Zoom on Saturday, August 12.

Our online resources also will help you complete your course planning and look ahead to Fall 2023 events:

- You might check our updated <u>Syllabus Guidance</u>, brush up on your strategies for <u>teaching online</u>, or explore our other Fall 2023 resources.
- Definitely take a look at our updated <u>Classroom Guide</u> for information about your physical classrooms.
- Our <u>Innovations in Teaching and Learning</u>
  <u>Conference</u> is back for the 15th year—on campus and

#### Faculty Affairs

- 1. <u>Adjunct Faculty Success</u> <u>Workshop</u>
- 2. <u>New Faculty Orientation</u>
- 3. <u>Opportunity to Join an Affinity</u> <u>Group</u>

### <u>OSCAR</u>

- 1. OSCAR Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship and Impact
- 2. <u>Undergraduate Research</u> <u>Scholars Program</u>
- 3. Research Assistant Positions
- 4. <u>Undergraduate Student Travel</u> <u>Fund</u>

CECIL

Faculty Associate Positions

### University Libraries

<u>1 2 3 University: Reflections on</u> the First Fifty Years streaming—on **Friday October 6**. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Flower Darby, will talk with us about strategies for adapting teaching and learning in an age of Generative Al tools.

And please check out some of our NEW fall programming:

- Adapt to teaching with Generative AI tools with our new workshops, seminars, and faculty learning communities
- Leverage your inclusive teaching strengths by proposing a Mason Core course or becoming a Campus Champion
- Inquire about better teaching by exploring our Introduction to Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, applying for a SoTL grant, or participating in a research project about Gen-AI impacts

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 an excellent conclusion to your summer and an energizing start to your Fall 2023 semester.

#### Shelley

E Shelley Reid, Ph.D. Executive Director of Engaged Teaching Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning Associate Professor, English Department <u>ereid1@gmu.edu</u>

# **Events & Deadlines**

# IN/OVATIONS in Teaching & Learning

### Save the Date! Innovations in Teaching & Learning Conference

### Friday, October 6th, 2023

The Stearns Center invites you to the Innovations in Teaching & Learning (ITL) conference on Friday, October 6, 2023. Join us for a day of workshops, panels, teaching-focused presentations, and networking with colleagues -- not to mention a free lunch and our end-of-day reception! This conference will include a variety of in-person activities, a diverse menu of live-streaming options, and on-demand content. <u>Visit the ITL website</u> for more information and registration details.

Keynote speaker Dr. Flower Darby, author of The Norton Guide to Equity-Minded Teaching and Small Teaching Online, will share her insights on Teaching in an Al World: Building Confidence and Finding our Way.

We will also offer a pre-conference workshop: Thursday, October 5th, 3:00-5:00pm.

#### Want to help? We're seeking volunteers!

Volunteers make this event possible! We are currently seeking faculty, staff, or graduate students to "host" the conference breakout sessions to help ensure that sessions run smoothly (introduce the presenter, keep an eye on time, etc.) We also seek volunteers to help welcome participants, to help usher participants for the keynote address, and to provide general conference support. If interested, please complete our <u>volunteer</u> application form.



### Stearns Center Fall LYTe: Strategies and Community to Kick Off Your Fall

You deserve a boost to energize your fall teaching. Whether you have an hour or a day or more, we have options for you! Your October self will thank your August self for investing in strategies that you care about.

All events are open to all Mason instructors!

For workshop descriptions and registration links, see our Events Calendar.

We still have space in our **multi-day bootcamps & seminars**: Join one of our communities to receive guidance, feedback, inspiration, and accountability for course design strategies to help you enhance your current and future teaching:

- Mason Core Teaching Credential (Aug. 7 + Aug. 9, 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m., Zoom)
- Introduction to Teaching with Generative Al Seminar (Aug. 7–10, 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Zoom)
- Mason Core Inclusive Teaching Academy (Aug. 10 + Aug. 11, 9:00-5:00, Zoom or on-campus)

**Short-form workshops**: Join one or more of our LYTe sessions to connect with colleagues, hone your strategies, and spark new ideas for your upcoming courses.

- Introduction to Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching(Aug. 9, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Zoom)
- Introduction to Scholarship of Teaching and Learning(Aug. 16, 9:00-10:00 a.m.)
- Syllabus Design for Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching(Aug. 16, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Zoom)
- Mason Core Course Proposals (Aug. 16, 2:00-4:00 p.m.)
- Exploring Positionality and Intersectionality in Mason Core(Aug. 17, 10:00-11:00 a.m.)

Adjunct faculty workshops: <u>Register</u> to drop by any of our workshops on Zoom on Saturday, August 12:

- 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. sessions: Dynamic First Week, Teaching Online, Designing Assignments
- 1:35-2:20 p.m. sessions: Engaging Students, Blackboard Basics, Inclusive Teaching
- 3:10-3:55 p.m. sessions: Responding to Student Writing, Blackboard Grade Center, Critical & Inclusive Conversations



### Make an Impact on Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching Practices at

Apply by August 31 to join the Anti-Racist and **Inclusive Teaching Campus Champions** Program for AY23-24.

In this program, you can:

- Gain insight about inclusive teaching opportunities
- Connect with similarly invested colleagues across disciplines
- Become part of a network of change agents and leaders

### **Teaching Squares Return in September!**

#### Application Deadline: Friday, September 8, 2023

Teaching Squares: What do other faculty actually do in their courses? How are they adapting to new opportunities, engaging their students, providing feedback, managing their time, and supporting longterm learning? If you joined a Teaching Square, you could find out!

Stearns Center Teaching Squares are a kind of professional "pot-luck dinner": a quick way to build your teaching network and learn strategies that will support your teaching. For Fall 2023, we will match interested faculty with a Square of colleagues from across the university (usually four people, but sometimes a little larger or smaller) and guide you through a quick four-part approach:

- Each Square meets once near the middle/end of September for introductions and planning
- Each member of the Square shares some element of a course they're currently teaching
- · Each member provides feedback to the others by late September or early October
- The whole Square meets in early or mid October for a conversation about what they've learned and how they can support one another further

See additional information on our website. To indicate your interest for Fall 2023, please complete our two-minute form by Friday, September 8, 2023.

# **Digital Learning**

### Is Your Online Course Ready for Fall 2023?

Online Quality is Important for the student learning experience at Mason. The Stearns Center Digital Learning Team has adapted



research-based standards and developed the **Online Quality Checklist** to help Mason faculty with online course design or redesign, and to identify quality elements in Mason online courses.

As you prepare for Fall 2023 semester, use the **Checklist** to make sure that your online course is ready to go, checking for elements essential for online

quality.

You may find the **Online Quality Checklist** and more information on online quality assurance posted on Stearns Center website at <u>https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/online-course-quality/</u>

For your questions regarding Online Quality Assurance, please contact Stearns Center Digital Learning's Quality Assurance Team at: **<u>qateam@gmu.edu</u>**.



# **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 <u>Continuing Professional Development workshops</u> 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 <u>Events page</u>; 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.

### New! Microgrants for Teaching Research (applications due August 15)

Apply for a microgrant to study the impact of teaching on student learning! The goal of the Stearns Center Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Microgrants Program is to foster a culture of evidence-based research designed to contribute new knowledge related to teaching and learning at Mason. The program will support faculty examining classroom practice in a scholarly way, researching teaching and learning across programs or student populations, and sharing work through publication. Need help planning a project? Come to one of the SoTL workshops in August: <u>sotl.gmu.edu/connect</u>

# Participate in a mega-SoTL research project investigating the impacts of AI/ChatGPT on teaching & learning!

We are looking for research partners/collaborators to join a multi-institutional research project exploring artificial intelligence (AI) and teaching in higher education. Research teams will be supported by PIs at George Mason, the University of Virginia, and James Madison University to investigate a wide range of possible subtopics.

Potential roles for faculty, staff, and graduate student research collaborators include:

- Participate in the design of the research
- · Contribute to data collection in your courses or colleagues' courses
- · Contribute to analysis of the data collected by the research team
- · Contribute to publication/presentation of findings

We will be holding two short information sessions to provide an overview of the project scope and timeline, and to answer questions. Open to all faculty, staff, and graduate students - please register for one of the sessions below.

#### AI + SoTL Research Project Info Sessions:

- August 24, 11:00-11:30am <u>Register here</u>.
- August 31, 12:00-12:30pm Register here

This is an exciting opportunity to engage in classroom-based research on teaching and learning and collaborate with colleagues across Mason, UVA, and JMU. Learn more here: sotl.gmu.edu/ai-sotl and

email Breana Bayraktar (bbayrakt@gmu.edu) with questions.

#### SoTL Project Planning Workshops:

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

August 16 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Breana Bayraktar

You tried a new pedagogical approach or curricular innovation and it seemed to work! If you had studied the impact of that teaching change on your students' learning, you would have been engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), which invites you to examine your classroom practices systematically, improve your teaching based on your findings, and then share your findings

with others. 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. **Register here**.

### Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Project Planning Workshop August 16 | 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Breana Bayraktar

The Stearns Center is excited to offer a faculty cohort opportunity designed to support faculty, staff, and graduate students in developing and carrying out a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project. Join us for a 2-hour virtual working session to plan an AY 2023-2024 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**.

### Faculty Learning Community: Teaching Future Professionals in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

August 18, 2023 through April 26, 2024 (Every 4 weeks) | 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Zoom | CPD Level 3, FLC | Facilitator: Laina Lockett

ChatGPT has taken higher education by storm in the last few months because the AI technology has the ability to greatly impact higher education and the way that faculty have taught for years. Have you been contemplating how best to teach in the context of freely available AI? Join your colleagues over the next academic year to reflect on how to modify and update your courses to maintain the teaching excellence that GMU prides itself on. Be on the cutting edge of pedagogical change and be a leader in your department and field as you stay at the forefront of how best to tackle the challenges of teaching with AI by participating in a Faculty Learning Community. Meetings will occur every 4 weeks starting on August 18th. We will meet for 10 sessions, concluding on April 26th. Each session will tackle a new pedagogical topic and its interrelatedness to artificial intelligence. Some topics covered will include strategies for teaching digital literacy, universal design and academic integrity. If you are interested in participating, please <u>Register here</u>.

#### Relate to the Real World: How to Make Your Assignments Relevant

August 31 | 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Zoom | Workshop: | CPD Level 1 DEA | Facilitator: Crystal Anderson Register here

### Workshop: Important Conversations in the Classroom: Preparing Your Course and Yourself

September 1 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Rachel Yoho | Register here.

### Workshop: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence Inspired Pedagogies

September 6, through Wednesday, November 1 (Every other Wednesday) | 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Zoom | CPD Level 2, Seminar | Facilitator: Laina Lockett | <u>Register here</u>.

#### **Course Proposal Workshops**

### September 7 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.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 <u>Mason Core courses</u> or contact Mason Core for more information (<u>masoncor@gmu.edu</u>). <u>Register here</u>.

### September 15 | 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 <u>Mason Core courses</u> or contact Mason Core for more information (masoncor@gmu.edu). <u>Register here</u>.

Workshop: Important Conversations in the Classroom: Handling Situations in the Moment

September 8 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. | Zoom | Facilitator: Rachel Yoho | Register here.

### Workshop: Avoid the Tyranny of Content: How to Make Room for the Good Stuff

September 12 | 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Zoom | CPD Level 1, Design| Facilitator: Crystal Anderson | Register here.

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

September 14 | 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. | Zoom | CPD Level 1 Engage| Facilitator: Rachel Yoho | **Register here**.

# 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 summer projects. (How is it August 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 <u>Faculty</u> <u>Writers Community workspace</u> in MS Teams (make sure to sign in with your Mason credentials) and look for the meeting in the General channel.

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

### **From Our Partners**

### Office of Faculty Affairs & Development

#### **Adjunct Faculty Success Workshop**

August 12 | 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Click here for more information and to register (registration required).

#### New Faculty Orientation

August 14, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Horizon Hall, and Tuesday, August 15, Virtual via Zoom | 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. | Click here for more information and to register (registration required).

### **Opportunity to Join an Affinity Group**

As part of Mason's commitment to inclusive excellence, the Office of Faculty Affairs and Development supports faculty and doctoral students' affinity groups. These groups provide our diverse faculty and doctoral students with a sense of community, inclusion and belonging. The groups also serve as safe spaces for discussion of issues that impact the success and well-being of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Multiracial, Asian, Asian American, Pacific Islanders and First-Generation faculty members and historically underserved doctoral students. Learn more about Affinity Groups here.

### OSCAR

# OSCAR Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship and Impact

The Summer Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship starts August 4, 2023. Undergraduate students from OSCAR Summer programs will have videos available for you to watch, describing



their work this summer. Please come to view the presentations and post comments or questions. Joins us as we celebrate the work of our student scholars. Visit the <u>Virtual Celebration</u> <u>page</u> starting August 4.

### **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

### **Faculty Associate Positions**

### Applications due by Friday, September 1

The Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning (CECiL) is hiring for three faculty associate positions to help advance the missions of CECiL and the Quality Enhancement Plan. Check out our website to learn more about the positions and reach out to CECiL Director, Kristen Wright (<u>kwrigh22@gmu.edu</u>) with questions. Applications are due by Friday, September 1.

https://cecil.gmu.edu/faculty-resources/faculty-associates

### **University Libraries**

### 1 2 3 University: Reflections on the First Fifty Years - George Mason University

As George Mason University concludes its 50th Anniversary year, the University Libraries and Mason Publishing are pleased to announce the publication of 1 2 3 University: Reflections on the First Fifty Years - George Mason University. The content of the book was drawn from the "George Mason University: A History" online exhibit of university archival material, re-arranged, edited and updated for the print book. One unique feature of the book is the reflections distributed throughout the book, including from former Provost Peter Stearns reflecting on his leadership during an important time of transition. See the Mason Publishing site at https://publishing.gmu.edu for details.



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