

## From our Directors

Greetings, Friends,

Congratulations to all of us for making it to May! As a meme that made the rounds last week noted, we all deserve “10,000 points” for our final grade *just for still being here*. And your Stearns Center team knows how much more you’ve done than just show up: y’all earn an A+ from us!

Stearns Center is still here as well: even as we bid most of you “farewell” for a much-deserved break over the summer, we know that some of you will be looking for ways to use some of your summer time to refresh your teaching for your “return to campus” in Fall 2021. We want to invite you, when you feel up to opening Zoom again, to check out our resources and keep in touch.

First, this newsletter has information about a couple of events still this spring:

- [Virtual Celebration](#): 2021 Teaching Excellence Award Winners, Friday, May 7, 12:00-1:00 pm
- New! Finals Week Grading Breaks: [Coffee and Conversation](#) Meet-Ups May 10-14
- Virtual [Faculty Writing Retreat](#): May 18-20
- [ITL Conference](#) Registration is now open – still virtual and free for 2021!

We also have some summer support for you to consider:

- Our Summer Edition of the Online Teaching Coaching Newsletter kicks off June 1
- [Continuing Professional Development](#) (CPD) Workshop Series begins June 10
- Online Course Development Primer and Pivotal Pedagogy Fundamentals [begin June 16](#)
- [Virtual Writing Sprints](#) Continue through the summer

Finally, just a heads-up note about what you can expect to see from us in August:

- Pre-semester CPD workshops
- Resources for faculty teaching in new [Horizon Hall](#) Active Learning Classrooms
- Support for faculty adopting new interaction-supporting software: [VoiceThread](#) and [Harmonize](#)
- Invitations to sign up for a [Teaching Square](#)

Our Newsletter will once again be on hiatus for the summer, though we will continue to reach out through the Provost’s Office and occasional announcements about special events. Along with our partners (including the Office of the Provost, Faculty Affairs and Development, Mason Impact/Undergraduate Education, Writing Across the Curriculum, University Libraries, Graduate Education, GradLife, and Information Technology Services) we wish you time for connection, contemplation, contentment, and conviviality as you finish Spring 2021 and embark on new projects and pathways!!

Shelley & Faisal

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## Events & Deadlines

### 2021 Celebration of Teaching Excellence

Friday, May 7, 2021 | 12:00 -1:00 pm | Zoom

Please join us at the 2021 Celebration of Teaching Excellence awards ceremony. Zoom access information is provided below. Please visit the [2021 TEA webpage](#) for the digital program, to view and sign the 'Congratulations Book' and for additional information about the virtual event. We look forward to celebrating our outstanding faculty with you!

Location: [Zoom \(click for link\)](#)  
Meeting ID: 954 4203 4385 Password: 341303

### 2021 Innovations in Teaching and Learning Conference

REGISTRATION: [Registration](#) is now open for the 2021 Innovations in Teaching and Learning (ITL) Conference. **Registration is FREE!**

DEADLINE EXTENDED: Proposals for On Demand Collection due **Monday, May 31, 2021.**

- *Try something new in your teaching this semester and what to share how it went?*
- *Have new results or outcomes from a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project?*
- *Determined which pandemic pedagogy strategies worked and which you'll continue using?*

While we are no longer accepting proposals for our live interactive online sessions, there's still time to share your teaching experiences and insights by contributing an item to the 2021 ITL Conference's **On Demand Collection**. We are inviting Mason instructors of all ranks and disciplines to contribute teaching artifacts with reflections or annotations, short videos, or digital posters. See our [RFP page](#) for more details.

PRESENTERS: Please register and see your email for directions on how to check your session details (title, abstract, session day/time, author information) and submit any corrections or updates. Didn't receive an email? Please contact [stearns@gmu.edu](mailto:stearns@gmu.edu) with your session number(s) for presenter directions.

### New! Finals Week Coffee and Conversation Meet-Ups

May 10-13, 2021 | 10:30 - 11:15 am or 4:30 - 5:15 pm | Zoom

Are you

- Looking for some friendly encouragement to finish the last lap?
- Interested in meeting some other faculty at Mason?
- Seeking a good excuse to take a break from grading?
- Hoping to find just One More Zoom Meeting to hit your 10,000 Zooms mark?

Join a 45-minute Finals Week chat about...anything! We're always up for conversations about teaching, but these are open conversations that might consider your pandemic and post-pandemic hobbies, your current tv or movie recommendations, or anything else that's on your mind. For more information, or to [register by May 10](#), please [see our website](#).

## Faculty Development Workshops

### Summer 2021 Extended Course-ReBuild Programs

Course dates: June 16 - August 3

Registration deadline: May 17

Do you need to rebuild your current course for a new modality to meet our post-pandemic students' needs?

Our extended summer courses are open for registration! Our 2021 Online Course Design Primer ("Primer") and Pivotal Pedagogy Foundations ("PPF") Open Courses are enrolling now. Both are seven-week online asynchronous courses that will run June 16 (Wednesday) through August 3 (Tuesday); each course is led by an experienced instructional designer and a faculty co-leader to provide individualized feedback and guidance; all course "assignments" are designed to help you directly ReBuild your own course.

**Our Primer** prepares faculty to convert a face-to-face course into an asynchronous online course, starting from basic course organizational strategies through designing instructional, interactive, and assessment features of the course. **Our PPF Course** prepares faculty to convert a typical face-to-face course into a hybrid, multimodal, and/or pivot-ready course with a strategic blend of in-room, on-Blackboard, and via-Zoom activities, assessments, and assignments.

For more information, or to [register by May 17, 2021](#), please [see our website](#).

### Register now for the Summer 2021 Faculty Writing Retreat!

May 18 -20 | MS Teams

Hoping to start the summer off with a blast of writing productivity? This three-day event—co-sponsored by Writing Across the Curriculum, the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Faculty Affairs and Development—offers an active approach to uninterrupted writing time, a chance to learn from our guest speakers, and a supportive and collegial community of peers to boost your writing productivity. Participants work on a variety of research and creative projects at all stages of completion. Registration is open now through May 10. For more information please [visit our website](#). To register, complete our [registration survey](#).

### Continuing Professional Development Workshops for Summer 2021

Do you want to improve your assignments, your grading, or your online discussions over the summer, 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 CPD workshops might be just the thing!

The Stearns Center is offering a series of [Continuing Professional Development workshops](#) throughout Summer 2021. These workshops cover topics including efficient grading, online course quality and providing feedback for written assignments. Please register using the links on the webpage.

Please [see our flyer](#) for a quick overview of our professional development certification process, and register using the links [on our webpage](#).

## Online Teaching Opportunities and Resources

## Subscribe to the Special Summer Series of the Online Teaching Coaching Newsletter!

Beginning June 1, 2021

Get a jump start for your Fall 2021 online teaching by subscribing to the Special Summer Series of the Online Teaching Coaching Newsletter! This summer we will focus on tips, best practices and strategies for equitable and inclusive online teaching. Starting June 1, 2021, every two weeks you'll receive a newsletter issue with best practices, quick tips and curated resources from Stearns Center's Digital Learning team about facilitating equitable and inclusive learning environments for all online learners. We'll feature topics you can explore in greater depth during the summer as you plan and prepare to teach online this Fall. Whether you're planning to teach synchronously or asynchronously, you'll find valuable information about equitable and inclusive online teaching.

[Subscribe here](#). If you are already a subscriber of Online Teaching Newsletter, you will continue to receive the Newsletter, including the Special Summer Series.

Questions? Please contact us at [stearns@gmu.edu](mailto:stearns@gmu.edu).

### Stearns Center Digital Learning YouTube Channel

Faculty are encouraged to make use of the Stearns Center's new [Digital Learning YouTube channel](#). In addition to the Center's existing resources/information space, the channel's short videos are a good way of learning and reflecting on various "how-to-do" things—such as teaching online tips, instructional design, multimedia, and technology—without spending time on text-heavy documents. Faculty can also use these Mason-specific videos without using or referencing other external links. Faculty will have a quick understanding of various topics relevant to teaching and learning, understand how to integrate and manipulate LMS features specific to Mason, and use these published videos for classes if needed.

The Stearns Center plans to publish and update relevant short videos on essential and helpful teaching and learning topics throughout the year. Subscribe to and visit our YouTube channel regularly and often, as we will be expanding our video offerings in the coming months.

### Stearns Center's Office Hours and Consultation

Stearns Center staff are teleworking and will be glad to assist you with any questions related to teaching, managing, and developing your face-to-face, hybrid or online courses; we can respond via email or Zoom. Please submit your questions by clicking [here](#). We work to answer your questions as quickly as possible; however, response times may vary.

## Stearns Center News

### We are hiring a Student Position: Media Specialist

The Office of Digital Learning within the Office of the Provost seeks a student intern Media Specialist to aid in the production and support of online learning materials including short videos, infographics, animations, and presentations. Students will gain first-hand experience working with instructional designers and faculty on media-based projects ideal for creating a compelling portfolio of work for future job searches.

This position is telework only, intended for around 10-15 hours per week. This position is open to undergraduate and graduate students.

[View the full position description and log-in to Handshake to apply](#)

## From Our Partners

### College of Education and Human Development

#### How To Be An Anti-Racist Researcher: A Series of Three Workshops

**Workshop 1:** What is "Anti-Racist" Research and How Do I Start?

**Workshop 2:** How do I Teach and Mentor for Anti-Racist Research?

**Workshop 3:** To Be Determined Based on Participant Interests

Sponsored by CEHD's Division of Educational Psychology and Research Methods

#### Workshop 1: What is "Anti-Racist" Research and How Do I Start?

**May 12, 2021 | 1:00-3:00pm | Zoom (link to be sent prior to meeting)**

Faculty and doctoral candidates will present on what it means to be an anti-racist researcher. The bulk of the time will be dedicated to breakout sessions:

- **Breakout Room 1:** How do I convince my committee? How do I navigate the faculty? How do I claim power? (Reserved for students only, facilitated by Sharrell Hassell-Goodman)
- **Breakout Room 2:** How do I establish a research agenda using an anti-racist or decolonial lens? (all invited, facilitated by Giovanni Dazzo)
- **Breakout Room 3:** How do I pivot my research to be more explicitly anti-racist? (Reserved for faculty only, facilitated by Meagan Call-Cummings)
- **Breakout Room 4:** Workshopping Projects 1 (limited to 3 separate projects or 10 participants, facilitated by Supriya Baily)
- **Breakout Room 5:** Workshopping Projects 2 (limited to 3 separate projects or 10 participants, facilitated by Marvin Powell)

The workshop will conclude with reflections on how to move forward. [Please pre-register and indicate your breakout room preference.](#)

We still encourage you to attend even if you do not pre-register, but pre-registration gives us a sense of which breakout rooms will be most useful to attendees. Breakout sessions will be added or tailored depending on pre-registration information received.

Questions? Contact Meagan Call-Cummings at [mcallcum@gmu.edu](mailto:mcallcum@gmu.edu).

## Libraries Offer Workshops Teaching Essential Data and Computational Skills

The Libraries, in partnership with the Office of Research Computing, is a member organization of [the Carpentries](#), a network of volunteer instructors and workshops that focus on teaching essential data and computational skills for conducting efficient, open, and reproducible research. Through The Carpentries' Data Carpentry and Software Carpentry curriculum, instructors teach Unix shell, version control with Git, Python and R.

To learn more or to request a workshop, email [Libraries' Digital Scholarship Center](#) or Mason's [Office of Research Computing](#). To read more about the program, [click here](#).

## Reminder about the Libraries' course reserve system

Course Reserves, both print and electronic, are now managed through the Leganto platform, which integrates with both the library catalog and Blackboard to streamline Course Reserves for faculty and students. The previous course reserves system will be retired at the close of the Spring 2021 semester, and beginning in Summer 2021, all course reserves requests will need to be submitted through Leganto.

The Libraries has created a guide to help instructors get started with Leganto. Within the [Resource Guide](#) are links to a Quick Guide, video tutorials, and library staff contact information. Training sessions will be offered throughout the summer – you may select a date and [register here](#). Additionally, faculty may [book individual 30 minute appointments for assistance](#).

## Center for the Advancement of Well-Being/Faculty Affairs

### Mindful Mason Moments Online Mindfulness Sessions

Every weekday | 12:00 pm | Zoom

Mindful Mason Moments online mindfulness sessions give you an opportunity to take midday breaks in ways that can deepen your mindful awareness and overall well-being. Sessions run for 30 minutes Monday-Thursday and 20 minutes on Friday.

To learn more, [visit our website](#). To join the meeting, [select this Zoom link](#).



**MINDFUL MASON MOMENTS  
SPRING 2021**

We hold space for a mindful break in your day.

Join us for practices that contribute to self-care and well-being.

Practices may include meditation, gentle movement, sound, silence, or breath work.

Sessions meet from January 25-May 14  
Monday-Thursday 12-12:30 and Friday 12-12:20

Monday with Millie  
Tuesday with Michael and Kerry  
Wednesday with Michael and Kerry  
Thursday with Katie (Arcadia)  
Friday with Julia (Mindful Movement)

Learn more about well-being:  
<https://wellbeing.gmu.edu/>

<https://go.gmu.edu/MindfulMason>

## Writing Across the Curriculum

### Friday Faculty Writing Sprints

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

Our Faculty Writing Sprints are underway, and all faculty invited to participate. Every Friday morning, you can join colleagues from across campus to build some community around your writing and to set the pace for a productive academic year. After a few minutes of check-ins and goal-setting, we spend our time quietly working together.

To participate in the sprints, 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.

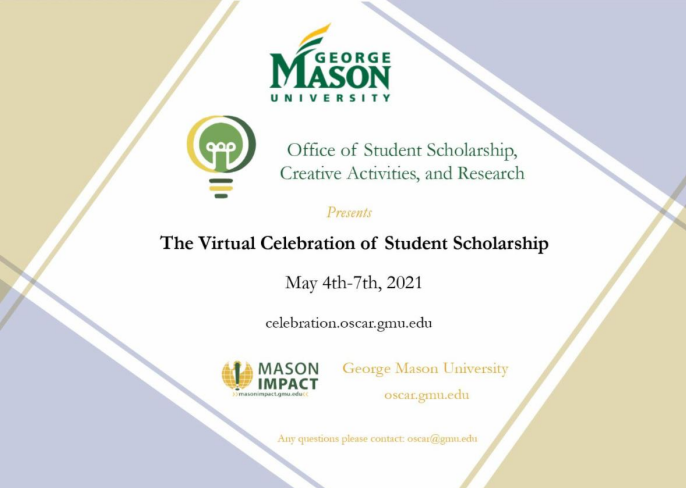
Questions? Visit our [website](#) or email us at [wac@gmu.edu](mailto:wac@gmu.edu).

## OSCAR

### Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship

May 4 - 7, 2021

The Mason community is invited to join the Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR) for the Spring Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship which runs May 4-7. Support the student scholars who worked hard all semester by viewing their pre-recorded presentations and asking them questions. Students represent colleges and programs across the university community.



**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research

Presents

**The Virtual Celebration of Student Scholarship**

May 4th-7th, 2021

[celebration.oscar.gmu.edu](http://celebration.oscar.gmu.edu)

**MASON IMPACT** George Mason University  
[oscar.gmu.edu](http://oscar.gmu.edu)

Any questions please contact: [oscar@gmu.edu](mailto:oscar@gmu.edu)

Registration is not required. To access the celebration, [visit the OSCAR website](#).

## Undergraduate Research Scholars Program

Applications for the fall will open in April  
Deadline: May 26, 2021

URSP supports undergraduate students collaborating on a research, creative, or scholarly project with a faculty mentor. [Find more information on our website](#).

### 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 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. During COVID-19 restrictions, USTF can support costs associated with presentations at virtual conferences. Students must apply 30 days before the start of the event. For more information go to the USTF page.

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Share something for next month's newsletter

Add someone to our mailing list