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Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning
Digital Learning | Teaching Excellence

From Our Directors

Greetings, Friends,

Suddenly it's October! This happened so fast that we've extended our deadline to nominate a colleague for a Teaching Excellence Award to Friday October 15.

It really seems like just yesterday that we were hanging out with you in a Zoom call during our Innovations in Teaching and Learning conference.

If you didn't get to attend as many sessions as you'd hoped—and trust us, we know how that goes!—there's still time to give yourself the gift of a little ITL energy.

- Watch: Take 5-10 minutes to review one of our On-Demand sessions
Connect: This is a great week to send a two-sentence email to a colleague you met or reconnected with
Act & Ask: That great idea you heard someone explain?

Along with our partners (including the Office of the Provost, Faculty Affairs and Development, Writing Across the Curriculum, Undergraduate Education/Mason Impact/OSCAR/CECIL, Graduate Education, GradLife, University Libraries, and Information Technology Services)

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Events & Deadlines

Teaching Excellence Awards

Full-time TEA Nomination Deadline: Extended to Friday, October 15

Adjunct TEA and Online TEA Nomination Deadline: Friday, December 3, 2021

- The 2022 George Mason University Teaching Excellence Awards are open to faculty with significant teaching experience at George Mason.
Our TEAs for full-time faculty (term and tenure-line) offer recognition for excellent teaching overall, and special recognitions for excellence in teaching General Education (Mason Core) or High Impact Learning.
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 in faculty members who have been teaching fully-online courses at Mason.

INNOVATIONS in Teaching & Learning conference

Thank You for a Great 2021 Innovations in Teaching and Learning Conference!
In September, we had a great week of learning and community-building at the ITL Conference. In case you missed it, you can watch a recording of Dr. McNair's keynote speech, "Intentionality By Design: Strengthening and Sustaining a Culture of Equity."

Stearns Center Events Calendar

Never miss an event! Bookmark our Event Calendar to stay up to date on all Stearns Center trainings, workshops, webinars, and deadlines.

Faculty Development Workshops

Online Teaching and Learning (OTL) Webinar Series

Stearns Center Digital Learning team will be facilitating online teaching and learning (OTL) series webinars in the fall. Our experienced QA team and instructional designers will share examples from designed courses with tips and strategies to make an online course highly effective.

November 1, 2021, 1:00 - 2:30 pm | Exploring OER

- Facilitator: Jade Geary
Register for this webinar

November 17, 1:00 - 2:30 pm | Inclusive Course Design and Teaching:

- Facilitators: Laura Todd and Darlene Smucny
Register for this webinar

Continuing Professional Development Workshops

The Stearns Center will offer the following workshops in October and November for new and continuing faculty as well as instructional TAs. These workshops will be offered through Zoom. Registration closes 24 hours before the workshop and will not be recorded.

Balancing Content Coverage and Experiential Learning in Mason Impact Courses
October 12, 2021 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Facilitator: Crystal Anderson

In this workshop, you will learn how to reorganize your course to include experiential learning, including undergraduate research and community engagement. Register here.

Efficient Grading for Assignments and Activities
October 19, 2021 | 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. | Facilitator: Crystal Anderson

In this workshop, you will re/design an existing assignment or activity in order to increase grading efficiency. Register here.

Providing Feedback to Support Student Revision
November 2, 2021 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Facilitator: Tom Polk

Participants in this webinar will learn more about how students revise and gain some strategies for providing feedback to support more substantive student revision. Register here.

Improving Student Performance on Assignments Using the TILT Framework
November 3, 2021 | 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

In this workshop, you will learn how to redesign an assignment to be more transparent, which can improve student confidence, persistence, and retention. Register here.

Creating and Grading Experiential Learning in Mason Impact Courses
November 9, 2021 | 11:00 p.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Facilitator: Crystal Anderson

In this workshop, you will re/design an existing assignment or activity by aligning the assignment's purpose and assessment in order to increase grading efficiency. Register here.

Designing High Impact Writing Assignments
November 9, 2021 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Facilitator: Tom Polk

This webinar is designed to introduce foundational practices for teaching with writing and designing writing assignments. Participants will learn about what research shows contributes to both meaningful and impactful writing assignments. Register here.

New Applications Help Students Engage Online: VoiceThread and Harmonize

In an effort to continuously improve opportunities for engagement and collaboration in Mason's online and hybrid courses, we are introducing two new tools within Blackboard: VoiceThread and Harmonize. Learn more about these tools, and watch the recorded demonstrations on the Stearns Center's Webinar & Training page.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Fall Faculty Writing Sprints

Every Friday of the semester: 9:00 - 11:00 am

Our virtual Friday Writing Sprints are underway, and all faculty with any kind of writing project are invited to participate. Add it to your calendar, tell your friends, and prepare to marvel at just how much you can accomplish in two hours alongside your fellow Mason writers.

Registration: Sign up here and receive reminders about joining sessions and setting goals.

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: email us at wac@gmu.edu
For more information about this and related programming, please visit our website.

New Resources for Teaching with Writing

The WAC Program continues to add new resources for teaching with writing to our website. As the semester continues, you might find our brief guides on assignment design, low-stakes writing assignments, and feedback helpful. You might also want to consider joining us for one of our upcoming workshops.

Join Us To Explore New Learning Outcomes for Writing-intensive Courses

During the 2020-2021 academic effort, the WAC Committee developed new learning outcomes for WI courses in an effort to more directly articulate the goals of the WI course and to provide additional clarity for course planning and assessment.

Stearns Center News

Stearns Center is hiring! | Educational Developer with STEM focus
Review begins November 8

We invite applications for an Educational Developer with a specialization in STEM education and faculty development. This is a full-time, administrative professional position; applicants must have a PhD, formal study in a STEM field, and at least two years' college-level teaching experience.

Stearns Center Consultations

Stearns Center staff 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.

Want Tips and Guidance for Teaching Online?

Subscribe to the Stearns Center Digital Learning's Online Teaching Coaching Newsletter, whether you are new to teaching online or an experienced online instructor wanting additional guidance.

Subscribe today
Questions? Contact the Stearns Center at stearns@gmu.edu.

From Our Partners

Faculty Affairs

Supporting Faculty Inclusive Excellence Workshop: Equitable Evaluation of RPT Dossiers

October 11 | noon - 1:00pm | Zoom

Supporting Faculty Inclusive Excellence, III: Equitable Evaluation of RPT Dossiers Based on University of Michigan's STRIDE (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence), this series focuses on how certain criteria effectively exclude certain faculty; the role of schemas and implicit bias in the review of a candidate's performance; and bias in a variety of domains (e.g., the grants application process, student evaluations, evaluation letters).

Faculty Affinity Groups: Teaching While X

October 13 | 3:00 - 4:00 pm | Zoom

"Teaching While X: Strategies to help faculty from underrepresented groups mitigate student bias." To thrive, not to survive, in academic teaching, faculty of color and LGBTQ+ faculty need to develop strategies to translate/adapt pedagogical best practices to their unique need.

Interactive Workshop: Building a Responsible Mentoring Culture

October 20 | 1:00-2:30pm | Zoom

Do you want to talk with colleagues about effective practices for mentoring postdocs and students at all levels? Have you questioned how to equitably establish authorship on your projects for conference presentations and scholarly products?

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

Spring 2022 Application Deadline: October 27, 2021

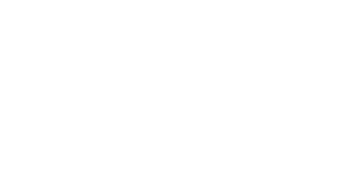
URSP supports undergraduate students collaborating on a research, creative, or scholarly project with a faculty mentor. Find more information on our website.

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.

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