Weekly Happenings Newsletter

The CIRTL Network
CENTER FOR THE INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH, TEACHING, & LEARNING

Quote of the week:
“There is no magic to achievement. It’s really about hard work, choices and persistence.”
- Michelle Obama

SPRING 2021
March 22-26, 2021

Workshop Series: Exploring and Unpacking Post-PhD Career Possibilities: Recognizing and Articulating the Value of What You've Learned as a Graduate Student
1:00-2:30 PM EST, Tuesdays March 9-30, 2021

Developing Professional Skill Sets in Communities and Networks, Tuesday March 23, 2021

Putting It All Together: Articulating and Implementing a Career Development Plan, Tuesday March 30, 2021

Can you articulate your graduate skills? Are they related to project management? Leadership? Creative thinking? In this event, we will help you identify the transferable skills you are acquiring as a graduate student that extend beyond your disciplinary specialty. Knowing how to identify and speak to the less obvious, but perhaps more universal, skills you are developing during your graduate studies will help you uncover career options that best suit your interests, goals, and capabilities. By the end of this session, you will be equipped to recognize and articulate your graduate skillset, and to translate that skillset into terms and concepts that are recognizable by a wide range of employers, both in academia and beyond.

We encourage participants to attend all workshops, but you may choose to register for individual workshops within this series.
Considering the Whole Self in Teaching and Learning: Mental and Physical Wellbeing in the Classroom
1:00-2:15 PM EST, Fridays March 12 and 26, 2021

It is no secret that stress, anxiety, and other mental health challenges are prevalent in higher education. In fact, in recent years, more students have reported experiencing negative academic impacts from stress than from the common cold and flu (c.f., NCHA, 2019). Yet the standard mental health policies we include in our syllabi often frame these experiences as something to be addressed solely outside of the classroom. This two-part workshop takes a different approach, recognizing that instructors and TAs have the power to support and prioritize students’ (and our own) physical and mental wellbeing in the classroom, and that doing so can foster student learning. This recentering of health and wellbeing is crucial now more than ever, as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic intersect with and amplify pre-existing stressors for teachers and learners, including but not limited to anti-Black racism, political turmoil, and increasingly common climate disasters.

In this two-part workshop, participants will explore the relationships between mental and emotional health, the human body, and learning. Through a combination of asynchronous modules and synchronous workshop and discussion sessions, participants will frame the literature of mental health and bodily awareness in the classroom with their lived experience and leave with concrete methods of incorporating new insights into their own practice, with a particular focus on creating learning objectives and designing assessments that consider and support the whole student. These novel approaches will help students and teachers to experience more positive, rewarding, and healthy class spaces, and to support each other in working toward this vision.

Becoming an Anti-Racist Educator
1:00-2:30 PM EST, Tuesdays April 13, 20, and 27, 2021

Discuss and crowd-source possible solutions to the challenges of bringing anti-racist teaching into a STEM community and classroom in this three-session workshop. The first session will emphasize the importance of self-reflection and participants will practice discussing their identities and privileges as a basis to begin anti-racist work. Participants will also discuss their experiences with racial inequities and bias occurring both inside and outside academia. In the second session, participants will discuss and practice ways to address bias and interrupt microaggressions that may occur during conversations around race. The discussion will then move to ways to implement anti-racist teaching into course curriculum and participants will consider and explore ways to use evidence-based strategies to create an equity-based, race-conscious classroom. The final session will be centered on discussing the challenges of facilitating online workshops on anti-racism. At the end of this series, participants will take away an action plan of how they can engage in anti-racist work on their campuses.

CIRTL Network Teaching-as-Research Presentations
3:00-4:30 PM EST, Thursday April 15, 2021

Hear graduate students and postdocs from across the CIRTL Network share the results of their Teaching-as-Research (TAR) projects in this online presentation session. TAR projects investigate questions about teaching and learning, including assessing the effectiveness of specific learning activities and tools, examining the learning process about a specific topic, or characterizing the student experience in the classroom.

**If you are interested in presenting your completed TAR project in this event, sign up here: [http://bit.ly/TARSpeakerSignup](http://bit.ly/TARSpeakerSignup) **
**dB-SERC Lunch (virtual)**  
12:00-1:00 PM, Monday, March 22, 2021  
The discussion will be virtual, so please sign up using the link below to receive the Zoom link. During the lunch, Dr. Kathy Koenig from the University of Cincinnati will give a talk titled Making Appropriate Instructional Design Decisions to Motivate Students to Engage. The abstract is below:  
Many of us have experienced putting in long hours designing what we believe to be the perfect “lecture”, activity, or homework assignment, only to find that our students didn’t learn as much as we had hoped. An important part of instructional design that is often overlooked is considering students’ motivation for engaging in a given task, which is naturally related to how much they learn. This presentation will showcase several strategies implemented in a large enrollment face-to-face introductory physics course that led to increased student engagement and learning, when compared to parallel sections of the same course. In addition, given that many of us are teaching online due to the pandemic, this presentation will also showcase an online learning tool, developed under NSF funding, that was designed in part around specific strategies to engage students in their own learning. The strategies that will be discussed are general such that they can be transferred to both in-person and online courses across multiple disciplines.

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"**Authors and Anecdotes**" Book Club: Featuring Toi Derricotte  
12:00 PM, Thursday, March 25, 2021  
“I”: New and Selected Poems shows the reader both the closeness of the enemy and the poet’s inherent courage, inventiveness, and joy. It is a record of one woman’s response to the repressive and fracturing forces around the subjects of race, class, color, gender, and sexuality. Each poem is an act of victory as the author finds her way through repressive forces to speak with beauty and truth.

**Epi Seminar - Lucile Adams-Campbell**  
12:10-1:10 PM, Thursday, March 25, 2021  
Black Women’s Health Study  
Lucile L. Adams-Campbell, PhD. Associate Director for Minority Health and Health Disparities Research, Senior Associate Dean for Community Outreach and Engagement, Professor of Oncology, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Georgetown University.

**Liquid Stars: Translation, Digression, Transformation**  
7:30 PM, Thursday, March 25, 2021  
(in partnership with the Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series)  
Voices: Celebrating the Beauty and Diversity of America's Literary Landscape
8:00 PM, Thursday, March 25, 2021
All Pitt campuses are welcome to participate in Pitt-Greensburg's new reading series, Voices: Celebrating the Beauty and Diversity of America's Literary Landscape.
This free virtual event will feature a group of accomplished authors and poets from diverse backgrounds that celebrate the richness of human lives and stories. Pitt-Greensburg student-writers will join these award-winning authors in sharing their work, too.

Developing a Teaching Philosophy Statement
10:00 AM-12:00 PM, Thursday, March 25, 2021
A teaching philosophy statement is a concise, compelling illustration of an instructor, a useful exercise in reflexive examination of teaching, and a necessary component of many academic job applications. This workshop will provide the fundamentals of writing a teaching philosophy statement. We will look at previously developed teaching philosophy statements and implement effective revisions.

Flex@Pitt: Using Classroom Technology
10:00-11:00 AM AND 1:00-2:00PM, Friday, March 26, 2021
B26 Alumni Hall
The Teaching Center's Classroom Services team will offer training sessions to faculty, staff and TAs who want to gain experience with the Zoom Room hardware used in the Flex@Pitt model. Attendees will have the opportunity to use equipment that is identical to the equipment in classrooms. By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to operate Zoom Room hardware and schedule Zoom meetings for Zoom rooms (starting from Canvas.)
ALL ATTENDEES MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING AT ALL TIMES.
Please bring the mobile device (laptop, iPad, etc.) that you will be using for teaching to this session.

Intermediate Canvas: Tests and Quizzes
11:00 AM-12:00 PM, Friday, March 26, 2021
Take a deeper dive into delivering assessments online with the Canvas Quizzes tools. This webinar will take a more detailed look at the differences between the default Classic Quizzes tool and the optional New Quizzes tool. We will focus on a more in-depth discussion of Classic Quizzes settings, item types, question banks and analytics. This is an excellent next step if you have attended our Introduction to Canvas series and want to know more about delivering online tests and quizzes.
Maximizing Mentoring Relationships
3:00-5:00 PM, Wednesday, March 31, 2021
Mentoring is well recognized as contributing to career success across disciplines. Like any other interpersonal interaction, mentoring relationships take time and effort to flourish. You will acquire practical guidance for expanding your mentoring networks, improving your cross-culture communication, navigating power dynamics, and leveraging institutional resources.
This workshop will help you develop vital strategies to cultivate and manage productive mentoring relationships that will contribute to your professional success and personal satisfaction throughout your career.

Interviewing Tips and Strategies for Success
3:00-5:00 PM, Wednesday, April 14, 2021
This workshop will provide practical interviewing tips for job seekers making the move from academia to industry, including specific advice for phone, Skype and face-to-face interviews. In addition, participants will learn how to prepare for an interview, how to address specific questions during an interview, and what steps to take after the interview to leave a lasting impression.

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