Quote of the week:
"Education is learning what you didn't even know you didn't know."
– Daniel J. Boorstin

Weekly Happenings Newsletter

Spring 2022 Courses

Prep for an Academic Career
*Thursdays, 12:00 – 12:50 PM in 312 Benedum Hall, begins Jan 13th.*
This is seminar series designed for Ph.D. students interested in pursuing an academic career and within 1.5 years of graduating. Experienced faculty provide seminars and discussions on two areas: getting the desired academic position and how to be successful during the early years. Topics include, but not limited to: how to apply for academic positions, preparing for the interview, supervising graduate research, balancing service obligations, the promotion and tenure process, funding avenues, publishing and intellectual property, teaching expectations, and balancing work-life issues.  
*For Graduate Credit:* ENGR 3000-1250 (CRN #21880);  
*Audit (Not for Credit) Registration:* [https://forms.gle/dvHYWRw5Vupj8gBu6](https://forms.gle/dvHYWRw5Vupj8gBu6)

Advancing Learning Through Evidence-Based STEM Teaching
*Thursdays, 4:30 – 5:25 PM in 318 Benedum Hall, begins Jan 13th.*
This course is designed for graduate students and postdocs preparing for academic careers in the STEM disciplines and interested in learning how to apply research principles to their disciplinary teaching. The primary focus of this course is to provide an introduction to "teaching-as-research" (TAR) - defined as "the deliberate, systematic, and reflective use of research methods to develop and implement teaching practices that advance the learning experiences and outcomes of both students and teachers." Participants will learn about effective teaching strategies and the research that supports them in addition to learning how to collect, analyze, and act upon their own evidence of student teaching.  
*For Graduate Credit:* ENGR 3002-1340 (CRN #24062), BIOSC 3002-1340 (CRN #24116), CHEM 3002-1340 (CRN #24071).  
*Audit (Not for Credit) Registration:* [https://forms.gle/ehNwUdc5pgKtB8F5A](https://forms.gle/ehNwUdc5pgKtB8F5A)
Courses

**Research Mentor Training**
2:00 - 4:00 PM, Thursdays, March 17 – April 21, 2022

Work with a community of peers to develop and improve your research mentoring skills in this engaging seminar. Students will develop their personal mentoring philosophy, learn how to articulate that philosophy across a variety of disciplines, and refine strategies for dealing with mentoring challenges. The content of each session in this seminar is designed to address the key concerns and challenges identified by experienced research mentors. In addition to the general content about research mentoring, all of the case studies and some of the discussion questions draw specific attention to issues related to multidisciplinary research mentoring. Seminar topics include:

- Aligning Expectations and Assessing Competencies
- Fostering Independence
- Promoting Professional Development
- Cultivating Ethical Behavior
- Maintaining Effective Communication
- Articulating a Mentoring Philosophy and Plan
- Fostering Equity and Inclusion in the Research Context
- Fostering Independence

This course is built on the evidenced-based Entering Mentoring curriculum course that is offered by the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER). For more information on CIMER, the research base of mentorship, or to request a CIMER training for your institution, visit [https://cimerproject.org/](https://cimerproject.org/).

**Advancing Learning Through Evidence-Based STEM Teaching**
Asynchronous, January 31 – March 27, 2022

Advancing Learning through Evidence-Based STEM Teaching is an open, online course (MOOC) designed to provide graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and other aspiring faculty in STEM disciplines with an overview of effective college teaching strategies and the research that supports them. This course is also suitable for other interested university staff, faculty, and administrators. The goal of the eight-week course is to equip the next generation of faculty to be effective teachers, thus improving the learning experience for the thousands of students they will teach.

**Postdoc Teaching Practicum**
1:00 – 3:00 PM, January 12, February 2, March 2, March 23, and April 20, 2022

Work with an experienced instructor in your discipline to enhance your understanding and experience of teaching a university course in this semester-long mentorship program designed for postdoctoral fellows. In this practicum, postdocs will observe mentors in their teaching, teach guest lectures and receive feedback on their teaching, discuss teaching approaches with their mentors, and engage in group discussions of teaching with peers in the practicum. When applying for the practicum, postdocs also have the opportunity to identify specific areas of teaching development where they would like additional instruction (on topics like lesson planning, teaching portfolios, equity, diversity, & inclusion, and teaching-as-research); practicum instructors will plan sessions around the most demanded topics.
The CIRTL Network
CENTER FOR THE INTEGRATION OF RESEARCH, TEACHING, & LEARNING

Check [https://www.cirtl.net/](https://www.cirtl.net/) for updates.

Series

*Writing an Effective Teaching Philosophy Statement*

1:00 – 2:30 PM, Thursday, January 27, 2022  
1:00 – 3:00 PM, Thursday, February 3, 2022  

Draft a peer-reviewed statement that reflects your teaching beliefs and experiences in this interactive, two-part online workshop. Participants will work to draft and edit a teaching statement, which is often required for US academic job applications. We will discuss elements of teaching statements, evidence of effective teaching tailored for different academic jobs, and strategies to get started or polish existing teaching statements. Participants from all disciplines will become better equipped and prepared to communicate their teaching practice through this workshop's collaborative, peer-review process.


*dB-SERC Lunch Discussion*

12:00 – 1:00 PM, Monday, January 10, 2022  

The next dB-SERC lunch discussion will take place Monday, January 10 from 12 – 1 pm. The discussion will be virtual, so please sign up using the link below to receive the Zoom link. During this dB-SERC lunch discussion, Dr. Chandralekha Singh from the Physics Department will lead a discussion focusing on some of the important issues related to teaching and learning that all instructors should reflect upon at the beginning of their courses and throughout.
Check https://teaching.pitt.edu/workshops-events/ for updates.

**Better Grading and Feedback with Gradescope**  
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Wednesday, January 12, 2022  
Gradescope can help you organize and grade hand-written assignments, or other "respond in the given space" type questions by either scanning paper submissions or accepting them directly from students. With Gradescope, you build a rubric while you grade for consistent grading and easy regrading.

**Using Digital Accessibility Tools**  
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Thursday, January 13, 2022  
Whether you teach an in-person or online course, any course content you offer digitally must be accessible to students with disabilities. This workshop explains what accessibility looks like in the context of Canvas and other methods of digital content delivery, why accessibility is important, and how accessible design can help all students, not just those with disabilities.

Check https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/ or https://calendar.pitt.edu/department/office_of_diversity_and_inclusion for updates.

**Vigilantism and White Supremacy: The Power of the Courts to Defend and Disrupt**  
12:00 – 1:30 PM, Thursday, January 20, 2022  
The verdicts in the trials involving Kyle Rittenhouse, the 2017 Charlottesville Rally, and the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, have brought the judicial system’s response to vigilantism, claims of self-defense, and liability for protest-related violence into public focus. The outcomes of each trial challenge the development of a shared understanding of the scope of accountability for actors whose conduct results in foreseeable harm. That the defendants in each of these cases were white and predominantly male adds a racial and gender element to these outcomes, that politicize the verdicts in ways that further complicate their impact. For whom and when is the use of force in a self-defense claim valid? What is the responsibility of protesters and protest organizers to reduce the risk of harm? Are these cases a referendum on gun rights, white supremacy, or both? Bring your questions and your curiosity to this panel discussion, led by experts from across the University of Pittsburgh to discuss this important moment.
See [https://www.oacd.health.pitt.edu/content/professionalism-series](https://www.oacd.health.pitt.edu/content/professionalism-series) for more info.

**Financial Wellness (for postdocs and faculty only)**
3:00 - 4:00 PM, Tuesday, January 18, 2022
Worried about finances? You are not alone. In this workshop, presented by Cynthia Grindel of LifeSolutions, we’ll explore the habits and attitudes that drive our financial decisions, discuss how to develop a budget, share tips for saving and review additional resources available through the Employee Assistance Program.

**Introduction to the Faculty Role**
3:30 - 4:30 PM, Wednesday, January 26, 2022
Being a faculty member is about more than just doing your own, independent research. Attend this informational session to learn foundational knowledge about what being a faculty member is all about, the different types of faculty positions, the different responsibilities that feed into the role, and the importance of institution type when considering a career in academia. April Dukes, PhD, coordinator for Pitt’s Center for Integrating Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL), whose expertise is in training the next generation of faculty, will answer all your questions.

Apply for a SPRING 2022 course

**Introduction to Grant Writing**
6:00 - 8:00 PM, January 24 through April 11, 2022
Deadline to Apply: Friday January 21, 2022
Enroll in this one-credit graduate course to develop the skills needed to effectively communicate your scientific discoveries and to successfully compete for research training support. Course meets for 5 lectures and 6 small group sessions over 12 weeks. Enrollment is limited.

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**Additional Resources:**

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