THE PEDAGOGICAL PERIODICAL

Monthly news and updates related to teaching at WSUTC

IN THIS ISSUE

Apply for Grants & Awards

Right now, we are in the thick of nomination season for teaching related grants and awards (for full list, scroll down to pages 4 & 5). So why should you apply or nominate someone for an award?

1. Innovation can be expensive. Want to incorporate new technology into the classroom? You may need help purchasing the hard/software. Want to provide a unique experience for students (field trip, in-class activity, etc.)? You might want the funds to pay for that.

2. **Innovation can be time intensive.** Want to use or develop open access resources? Want to learn a new teaching technique? You might need to spend all summer doing learning the technique or making changes to your classes.

3. Be rewarded for your efforts. You do excellent work in the classroom and with students. You should be able to showcase your excellence to others (and to those reviewing your promotion documents!).

My side of the desk

Musings from someone who loves teaching

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Efficient Teaching

Overwhelmed with grading and the workload that goes along with teaching? Me too. I don't have the perfect answer for you - too often, I still find myself grading or returning student work slower than I would like. I'm constantly on the hunt for ways to maintain excellence in the classroom, but in a way that is efficient and sustainable.

Luckily, I'm part of a national early career in teaching committee and we have been looking at "Teching Hacks" - ways to be more efficient with your time (a faculty member's most precious resource!). Below, I outline some of the suggestions that our committee solicited from professors across the United States (and beyond).

Using your LMS

I've seen faculty give Blackboard sideways glances like it's a snake coiled and ready to strike. And while Blackboard (Bb) can be overwhelming if you haven't had the chance to play around with it, it can also be your best friend in terms of being efficient - it can automate a lot of your tasks!

Here are some ways to use Bb to automate some of your teaching tasks without losing the quality of your teaching!

- **Electronic Assignments.** Written assignments can be turned in through Bb. I do this because a) it's easier to access - I can grade from anywhere and don't have to drag papers around (or risk losing them!); and b) I can give feedback using track changes and the feedback is immediately available to students! No passing out papers in class or lost feedback! Plus, you can copy and paste feedback that is used consistently.
- **Rubrics.** Build your rubrics using Bb - you can save them each semester and when you grade an assignment, the rubric will self-calculate! This has been my favorite Bb discovery!
- **Quizzes & Exams.** Did you know you can set up quizzes and exams in Bb so that the grading is automatic and immediately entered into the grade book?
- **Partner content.** Many publishers have online components that you can link directly to your grade book. For example, in my Intro class, I link the online portal from the book publisher (Norton) to Bb and when students complete their reading activity via Norton's website, it is automatically graded and entered into the grade book. Thus, I can ensure students are practicing the content without it taking up class time or substantially increasing my workload.
- **Akindi.** If you use MC tests, you can use Akindi to score exams, review the quality of your questions, and automatically upload your grades into Bb.

My side of the desk

Musings from someone who loves teaching

Other technology

Blackboard isn't the only technology tool you have at your disposal.

- **Text Software.** If you use electronic feedback, you can make your commenting more efficient. For example, Typeitforme Text expanding software inserts recurring comments using shortcuts (so you don't have to keep making the same comments over and over)
- **Flexible Office Hours.** Enabling students to book their own appointments can reduce email and the number of exchanges in trying to find a time to meet (e.g., youcanbookme.com). It can also help students that have another class during your regularly scheduled office hours.
- **Participation & Attendance.** For participation, Clickers can be synced with Blackboard for automatic entry into your gradebook! You can assign points based on performance (like quizzes) or for participation. Plus, there are lots of low cost alternatives (e.g., plickers; yes that is spelled correctly!).
- **Homework & Low-stakes assignments.** Some colleagues recommended Revel for homework assignments (auto-graded), with the note that these are best for low-stakes student practice (not quizzes, exams, or other high-stakes grading).

Course Design

Sometimes being efficient means an intentional approach to the way that you design the course, such as giving feedback. Providing feedback can be extremely challenging - we know good feedback is important for learning, but it's time consuming and can be discouraging when students don't use it. Below are several ways to manage the process.

- **Low-Stakes.** Assignments used for practice can be graded on a "competency" or "good faith effort" basis. For example, students can earn 3pts (Excellent effort, through, correct, shows critical thought), 2pts (Acceptable, student did exactly what was asked and did it well, little or no additional critical thought), 1pt (Poor, incomplete, incorrect, didn't follow directions, no critical thought)
- **Multi-tiered feedback.** In multi-tiered feedback, everyone gets the rubric grade and general comments (Tier 1). If a student wants personalized/detailed feedback, they can request it (Tier 2). After this, they can also request individual meetings (Tier 3).
- **Rubrics.** Developing rubrics can improve your instruction (they can provide focus, emphasis, and attention to the most important aspects of an assignment) and can also make grading more efficient.

Final Thoughts

There is no perfect answer on how to be efficient. The degree that these suggestions work for you will vary based on your content area, class size, assignments, etc. You will have to decide what works for you and your students - these are just some ideas!

As always, happy teaching!

Awards & Grants

Smith Teaching and Learning Grant

- **Due March 18**
- WSU faculty with innovative ideas to enhance student learning for a Smith Teaching and Learning Grant of up to $7,000.
- Faculty from all campuses, including clinical-track and instructors, are eligible. They must have instructional responsibilities and a half-time or more appointment, with continuing employment in 2019-20.
- Applicants must be endorsed by their chair, and need to provide a wide variety of information in their proposal. They must answer questions such as: What identified pedagogical or curricular issue will be addressed? To what departmental undergraduate assessment data does your project respond? What work will be undertaken within a defined budget and timetable?
- Those selected to receive the awards will get word in late April. The funds can be used as summer salary. Awardees must submit a final project report by Aug. 15, 2020
- Link to more info: https://vpue.wsu.edu/FacultyGrants/SmithTeachingLearningGrants/

Oaks Academic Technology Award

- **Due March 18**
- Recognizes a faculty member's innovative application of an existing technology to transform teaching and learning in their classroom (face-to-face, online, videoconferencing)
- Faculty on any WSU campus wishing to be considered for the Oaks Award are invited to submit an application. You may nominate others or encourage deserving colleagues to apply. Nominations will be accepted until March 18, and the winner will be notified April 1. The winner will receive $3,000 in faculty development funds, distributed to the award winner's academic department.
- Link to more info: https://li.wsu.edu/teaching-awards/oaks-academic-technology-award/

Awards & Grants

Affordable Learning Grants for Faculty

- **Due March 18**
- Grants are intended to support transitioning away from expensive commercial textbooks and instead explore new curricular strategies that employ the use of freely available digital course material of equivalent or higher quality.
- WSU faculty are invited to apply for Affordable Learning Grants to offset the time and expense required to develop and/or implement high-quality freely available digital material in classes. (For example, material may include WSU library-licensed material students can access for free, instructor developed content, openly available Web content, etc.) In addition, all grant recipients will receive assistance from WSU Libraries and AOI staff in locating, adopting, modifying, and implementing new curricular strategies and zero cost course materials.
- Criteria for assessing proposals will include: Potential cost savings for Washington State University students; Number of students impacted by the proposed project; Breadth of impact across the WSU system, by the proposed project; Sustainability of the course material, once developed (its potential use in future courses); Innovativeness of course materials and proposed pedagogical practice; Feasibility of completing the project prior to the start of the following fall semester.
- Anticipated grant awards range from $1500.00 for exploration and adoption of existing material to $4500.00 for development of new materials. Funds are typically used for items such as support for faculty time, summer stipend, graduate student assistance, 3rd party OER research, copyright purchase, etc.
- Link to more info: https://provost.wsu.edu/teach/funding-opportunities/affordable-learning-grants/

Richard G. Law Teaching Excellence Award

- **Due March 22**
- Recognizes outstanding teaching on all campuses by faculty who teach courses in the University Common Requirements (UCORE). Recipients of the award are described as educators who inspire curiosity into, and understanding of, an area of study. Through their teaching, they encourage development of the lifelong learning skills of integrating and synthesizing concepts to solve real problems.
- Eligibility includes all instructors of record — that is, instructors and clinical faculty as well as tenure-track faculty — on all campuses, whose teaching has included at least one UCORE class annually for at least the past three years.
- Link to more info: https://vpue.wsu.edu/LawAward-UndergraduateTeaching

Upcoming Trainings

Trainings on WSUTC Campus in Red
Trainings that count towards AOI certificate in Blue

April

How to Use Sorting Tasks to Engage Students & Support Learning April 2; AMS
Sorting tasks are activities that require students to sort a set of stimuli (often presented on cards) into piles. Sorting tasks can be used flexibly by instructors a) to reveal, diagnose, and provide feedback on students' developing ideas; b) as a rapid assessment of student learning, and c) to scaffold development of deep conceptual understanding. A brief introduction to key design principles for developing sorting tasks will be presented followed by opportunities for participants to apply these principles in designing their own sorting tasks. Participants are encouraged to come with a topic or concept for which they have been wanting to improve student engagement and/or learning and to bring a pen/pencil/tablet.
Register for Sorting Tasks: https://li.wsu.edu/trainings-workshops-tutorials/register-for-faculty-led-workshops/

Perusall: Ensure Your Students are Reading April 3; AMS
This tool engages students in reading, annotating, and text discussions. Annotations are automatically graded. In a quick scalable way identify students' questions and misconceptions. This tool is also a strong candidate for a flipped classroom.
Register for Perusall: https://li.wsu.edu/trainings-workshops-tutorials/register-for-educational-technology-tools/

AVID: Disrupting Deficit Narratives Through Equity-Minded Practice
On April 5th, AVID for Higher Education (AHE) will be hosting a workshop on our campus where participants will have an opportunity to reflect on how educator mindset affects perceptions and shapes institutional culture, assess campus climate and understand conditions needed to foster a positive learning environment for diverse students, and practice AVID culturally responsive strategies which can be used in the curriculum and co-curriculum to support all students. Please see next page for more details.

Strategies for Enhancing Student Success April 17; AMS
Creating activities tailored to your class.
Attend all four sessions to receive an AOI Teaching Series Certificate! For more info, visit AOI Certificates.
Register for Enhancing Student Success: https://li.wsu.edu/trainings-workshops-tutorials/register-for-enhancing-student-success/

Blackboard Grade Center April 18; AMS
We'll explain different setup options, show how to grade and comment on student work, and demonstrate how to use the electronic rubric.
Register for Blackboard Grade Center: https://li.wsu.edu/trainings-workshops-tutorials/register-for-blackboard-learn/

Upcoming Trainings

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April Continued

Special Event! - WSUTC is hosting a special Event: Disrupting Deficit Narratives Through Equity-Minded Practice

As a precursor to student engagement, motivation matters. The literature is overrun with deficit thinking about diverse students, their families, cultures, socioeconomic background, abilities, and communities. Educators frequently lament about how to motivate students to "care" about their learning. Yet, very few have the opportunity to participate in the work needed to foster the equity mindedness to disrupt these deficit narratives.

Workshop leaders will model equity-based, active teaching and learning practices. Participants will have an opportunity to: 1. Reflect on how educator mindset affects perceptions and shapes institutional culture; 2. Assess campus climate and understand conditions needed to foster a positive learning environment for diverse students; and 3. Practice AVID culturally responsive strategies which can be used in the curriculum and co-curriculum to support all students.

Register!
The registration fee for this event is $150, which includes lunch and the AVID for Higher Education Engagement Practices for Teaching and Learning book.
Link:
https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/4767f8bd670b47e6b3001d4a0f4cf953