



TEACHING AND LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

Newsletter of Eastern's Center for Teaching, Learning, & Assessment

Issue 9 • October 2024

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Upcoming Teaching and Learning Conversations (TLCs)

TLCs are faculty-led conversations about specific teaching strategies over lunch at Hurley Hall. They are designed to provide faculty with an opportunity to explore new pedagogical ideas while building community among teaching faculty and showcasing innovation. TLC sessions feature a brief presentation on a specific teaching strategy, followed by time for participants to reflect and engage in small group discussions about how the strategy might be adapted and utilized in their own discipline. *No registration is required.*

The fall schedule is posted on the [CTLA website](#). The next sessions are:

Increasing Student Engagement and Understanding Through Perusall

Tuesday, November 5, 12:30 – 1:30 pm

Miriam Chirico (English) and Lyndsey Lanagan-Leitzel (Psychological Science)

Perusall is a social learning platform currently integrated with Blackboard that allows students to collectively annotate readings and videos. Incorporating the tool into course assignments may be one way to increase students' motivation to complete course readings, improve their connections with their peers, and lead to deeper understanding of content. Perusall can assist when faculty find that students are not consistently completing course readings or are not able to demonstrate deep engagement with and understanding of what they've read—or when Blackboard discussion boards aren't eliciting the type of interactive and meaningful conversations that lead to transformative learning. This session will give examples of how to incorporate Perusall into coursework to benefit student learning and engagement.

Strategies for Building Classroom Community to Enhance Student Learning

Monday, November 18, 1 – 2 pm

Tanya Moorehead (Education)

When students feel a sense of belonging and community in the classroom, they are more able to actively participate in class, take risks, and engage in deep learning with their peers. As

professors, we can intentionally design experiences that help build positive classroom communities where students can engage and learn. This session will explore how a sense of community in the classroom affects learning and will provide strategies for building classroom community.

Learn About Generative AI – for free!

Are you interested in learning more about the basics of generative artificial intelligence and how to incorporate AI in the classroom? Many institutions are offering free opportunities to hear from faculty who are using AI and/or thinking about the ethics of AI use—these webinars are often listed in this newsletter under [external faculty development opportunities](#). In addition, three free online trainings have been recommended by Eastern faculty and/or faculty developers at other institutions as especially helpful for better understanding AI:

- [Essential Guide to AI for Educators](#) is a two-hour course by AI for Education that provides a guide for getting started with ChatGPT, an introduction to writing good prompts, and tools for discussing the appropriate use of AI with students. A faculty member in the music department recently completed this course and found the tools for students to be especially helpful (see a partial screen shot of one of those tools to the right).
- [Generative AI for Everyone](#) is a 4-hour course developed by Andrew Ng from DeepLearning.AI. Modules include an introduction to generative AI, generative AI projects, and generative AI in business and society. A faculty member in the English department completed the course over wintersession and earned a certificate.
- [Elements of AI](#) is a series of courses developed by the University of Helsinki and MinnaLearn. The resource includes an introductory course on what is and is not possible with AI, as well as a separate course on the algorithms that make creating AI methods possible (basic Python programming skills are recommended for the second course).



Tech Tip (A periodic column from CIT)

Mastering Blackboard's Full Grade Center (Original View)

Contributed by Mauricio Calpa, Instructional Design Coordinator

Blackboard's Full Grade Center can help you manage multiple students, customize your gradebook, and use tools that make grading easier, faster, and more organized. From quick access to assignments and tests on the *Needs Grading* page to smart views that help you focus on specific categories, the Full Grade Center is your all-in-one grading solution.

Need to customize it further? You can easily create columns, grading periods, and personalized views to gather the information you need to keep your course on track!

Key Grade Center Features

- **Smart Views:** See only the data that matches your criteria, like tests or specific student groups.



- **Custom Columns:** Organize your grading with custom categories and columns for every type of assignment.
- **Powerful Filtering & Sorting:** Use filters to refine what you see, and sort data to focus on what matters most.

Online Workshops on Full Grade Center: December 9 or 11

Want to take your grading skills to the next level? Learn how to use the Full Grade Center to your advantage in one of our [upcoming online workshops](#) designed to help you navigate it like a pro! You'll get guidance and tips for creating a grading system that works best for you and your students. The 30-minute workshop will include the following topics:

- How to set up a Weighted Grade Column
- How to create smart views that streamline your workflow
- Tips on customizing your gradebook for efficiency
- Best practices for naming convention
- Best practices for providing meaningful feedback
- Adjusting your grading schema



Don't miss this opportunity to sign up for an online workshop and start making the most of the Bb Full Grade Center today! [Sign up now.](#)

P.S. Need quick help now? Feel free to [book a virtual one-on-one training session with CIT staff.](#)

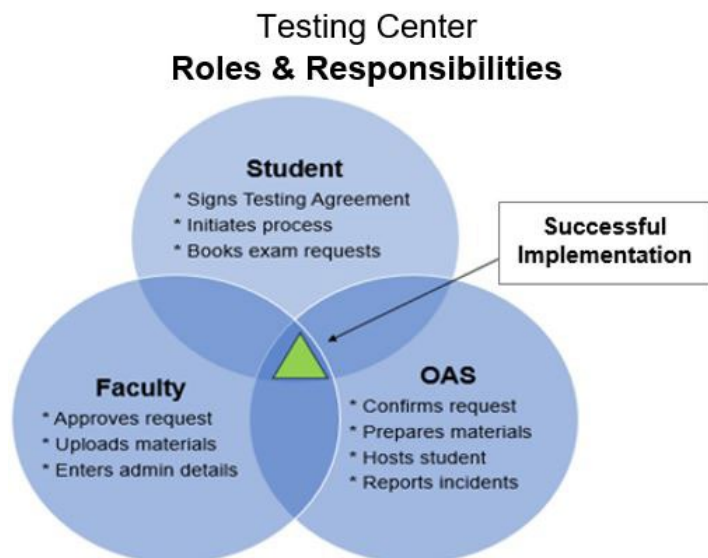
Access Matters (A periodic column from OAS)

Understanding Testing Accommodations

Contributed by Sandra Flores Gonzales, Assistant Director of Office of AccessAbility Services

As this semester continues to unfold, it is a great time to revisit the [roles and responsibilities](#) for students with approved OAS Testing accommodations. This accommodation is for students who are registered with the OAS and utilize the OAS Testing Center for their exams and quizzes. Remember, it takes all three parties (student, faculty, and OAS) to ensure successful accommodation implementation.

The process begins with the student submitting an exam booking request. The faculty member then logs into the [Accommodate portal](#) and approves the request. We encourage proactive pre-planning between students and faculty to determine the requested time and date prior to submitting a request. Keep in mind the OAS Testing Center has 3 testing blocks—8:30, 11:00, and 2:00—and your course time will most likely not align with the testing blocks. Once the exam and all pertinent



administrative details are submitted in Accommodate, the OAS offers final approval and proctors the exam at the scheduled time.



The OAS Testing Center has three testing rooms, and students are placed in rooms that support specific accommodations. Proctors vigilantly monitor through the outside or inside, depending on the number of examinees. All desks are intentionally placed in the rooms for accessible viewing through the door windows. We encourage you to visit our space to get familiar with our staff and testing rooms. We understand the importance of preserving the integrity of all quizzes and exams and ensure they are conducted securely.

Don't hesitate to reach out to any of our staff if you have any questions, would like to schedule a tour, or need guidance on any of our processes. You can email accessibility@easternct.edu to get started!

Assessment Update from the Assessment Coordinator

Thanks to everyone who volunteered to serve as an evaluator. We needed 8 faculty evaluators for this year, and we received nearly three times as many inquiries for these roles! (We will be seeking evaluators again next year when Ethical Reasoning and Quantitative Literacy will be assessed, so there will be other opportunities for interested faculty to get involved.)

We received 36 assignment prompts from faculty teaching an ELAC course with Critical Thinking as the primary learning outcome. The prompts have been anonymized and will be reviewed for alignment with the ELAC Critical Thinking rubric by faculty evaluators over the next 3 weeks.

Next Steps

Faculty teaching an ELAC course with Critical Thinking as the primary learning outcome will be contacted in early December with instructions for submitting student artifacts. Once anonymized, a random sample of the artifacts will be scored by faculty evaluators over Wintersession. Results will be shared with relevant Senate committees and the broader campus community.

As this is our first semester assessing the new ELAC curriculum, we are taking notes on the process and identifying possible changes for next semester and next year to make things as easy and clear as possible for faculty. Please don't hesitate to contact Assessment Coordinator Suki Grandhi (grandhis@esaternct.edu) with any questions, suggestions, or concerns. You can also visit the [ELAC Assessment page](#) on the CTLA website.

Update on the Teaching Scholars Program

Last spring, Eastern was awarded a \$281,120 Davis Educational Foundation grant to support faculty to engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Six faculty were selected to be part of the

first cohort and are implementing their research projects in fall and/or spring semester. Project titles include:

- From Self to Scholar: The Impact of Autoethnography on Students' Transformative Learning in a Public Health Course
- Making Thinking Visible: Teaching Transferable Thinking Routines in ENG 227: Poetry
- Enhancing Feelings of Belonging and Well-Being in Undergraduate Students
- Teaching Ethics in Women and Politics
- Can Microlearning Enhance Student Engagement and Learning?
- Using a Group Process Intervention to Improve the Implementation of Group Work in a College Classroom

A second cohort of faculty will be selected for the 2025-2026 academic year—information on applying will go out by email towards the end of this semester.

The Teaching Scholars Program is directed by Courtney Broschius. Read more about the program, including abstracts for each project, on the [CTLA website](#).

Spotlight on a Book in the CTLA Lending Library

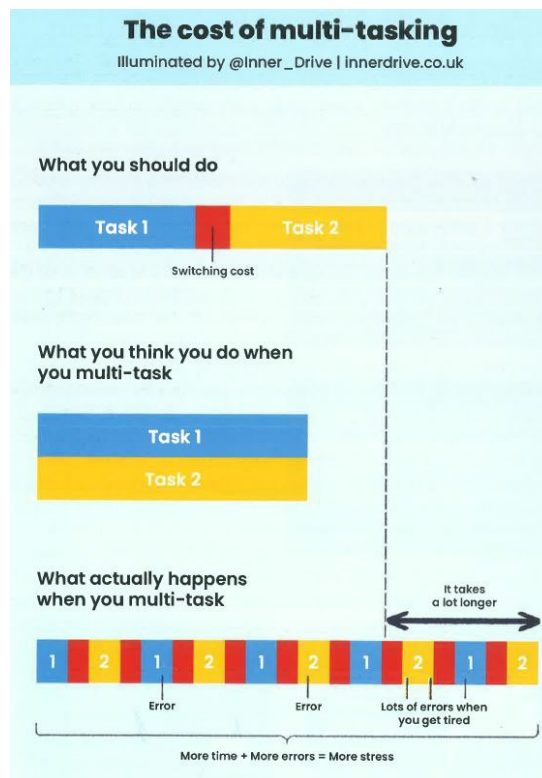
Teaching & Learning Illuminated: The Big Ideas, Illustrated

By Bradley Busch, Edward Watson, and Ludmila Bogatchek
© 2023 by Routledge (see [publisher's description](#))

Written by the authors of *The Science of Learning*, this book introduces complex teaching and learning concepts through easy-to-understand graphics. Each evidence-based concept is concisely described on one page and paired with a full-page graphic to illustrate the idea.

The 137-page book includes concepts helpful for faculty to consider in their teaching, such as the practice of *interleaving*—a strategy where concepts are revisited multiple times and built upon over time to enhance learning (rather than fully covering a concept once and then moving on to the next concept). Other strategies covered include tips for fostering students' retrieval practice, providing feedback to students, and helping students move new information from their working memory to their long-term memory.

The book also includes concepts that are helpful to share with students, such as the disadvantages of multi-tasking (see graphic to the right), metacognitive questions students can ask themselves to enhance their learning, and tips for overcoming procrastination.



To borrow *Teaching & Learning Illuminated*, stop by the CTLA [Lending Library](#) in room 425 of the J. Eugene Smith Library, or [fill out a request](#) to have the book sent to you via interoffice mail (enter **book #143** under question 1).

External Faculty Development Opportunities

Free (or very low cost) opportunities

- October 23, 11 am: [Raising Our Expectations: Practical Actions for a Better Academia](#). Hosted by the Maple League Teaching and Learning Committee, this free event will feature the University of Guelph authors of *Higher Expectations: How to Survive Academia, Make it Better for Others, and Transform the University*.
- October 25, 12 – 1 pm: [AI vs. Academic Integrity: From Bans to Best Practices](#). This free webinar by AI x Education will focus on best practices for creating AI course policies.
- October 29, 12 – 1 pm: [Harnessing Gen AI in the Undergraduate Classroom](#). This free webinar from Harvard Business Publishing Education will provide strategies for coaching students to use AI effectively, designing assignments that require students to go beyond AI-generated answers, and integrating AI tools into group work.
- October 30, 1 – 2:30 pm: [Contemplative Pedagogy](#). This free virtual workshop by Evergreen State College will help faculty explore strategies for slowing down and shaping attention—and develop a plan for implementing these practices in the classroom.
- November 13, 12 pm: [How Faculty and Entrepreneurs are Actually Using Generative AI: “Use Case” Lightning Round](#). In this free online session hosted by the University of Baltimore, five faculty members and entrepreneurs will each spend 5 minutes sharing concrete examples of how they use AI in their work.
- November 13, 12 pm: [Authentic Inclusive Learning through Collaboration Online International Learning \(COIL\)](#). This panel discussion from Stony Brook University will focus on [Collaborative Online International Learning \(COIL\) projects](#), in which students engage in a project with student partners elsewhere (often from other countries). Panelists will describe how COIL creates inclusive, diverse, and global learning environments.

Other opportunities

- November 8: The [New England Educational Assessment Network \(NEean\) Fall Forum](#) will be held in Worcester, MA. The conference will feature sessions that address assessing institutional learning outcomes as well as course-based grading practices.
- November 14 – 16: The [Fall Red Rock Great Teaching Retreat](#) will be held in Bryce Canyon, UT. In this annual retreat, faculty participants are considered to be the “experts” and engage in interactive discussions, share successful teaching strategies and innovations, seek solutions with peers for their own persistent teaching problems, and explore what it means to be a great teacher.
- November 21-23: Miami University is hosting the [Original Lilly Conference on College Teaching](#) in Oxford, OH. This year’s theme is “Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning.”
- December 3-4: Magna Publications is hosting the [Teaching Professor Conference on AI in Education](#), to be held online. Registrants will have on-demand access to all conference sessions through February 17, 2025.

Opportunities to Share Your Teaching and Learning Expertise

- Due October 25: AAC&U is currently accepting proposals for the 2025 [Conference on Learning and Student Success \(CLASS\)](#), to be held April 3-5 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and virtually. The focus of the conference is on transforming student learning and reimagining the undergraduate experience. This conference combines the former GEPA and DESS conferences.
- Due October 25: AAC&U is seeking proposals for their [Forum on Digital Innovation](#), held alongside their CLASS conference on April 4-5, in Puerto Rico and virtually. Tracks include digital innovation, AI, open learning, and ePortfolios.
- Due November 1: The [SOTL Commons Conference](#) is accepting proposals for their annual conference, to be held February 26-28 in Savannah, GA. The conference draws presenters and participants from around the world to discuss the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).
- Due November 18: The [Teaching Professor Conference](#) is seeking proposals for their annual conference, to be held June 6-8 in Washington, DC.
- Due November 22: Goodwin University is seeking proposals for their 2025 webinar series on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), focused on the new UDL 3.0 guidelines. (See their [2024 series focused on the 2.2 guidelines](#)). Each webinar will be 60 minutes and focused on one of the 9 UDL guidelines. *Contact Julia DeLapp if interested—call is not yet online.*
- Due December 1: The Intermountain Consortium of Faculty Developers is seeking proposals for the [Teaching 4 Learning Conference \(T4L\)](#), to be held February 26-28 in Orem, UT. This year's theme is "Reflecting, Rethinking, and Redefining Teaching."
- Due February 14: Eastern Kentucky State University is accepting proposals for the [2025 Pedagogicon](#) conference, to be held virtually May 20. This year's theme is "Teaching and Learning Durable Skills."



Autumn colors as seen from the CTLA office