

In the Loop

The monthly newsletter from the
Centre for Teaching Excellence
at the University of Waterloo
January 2025



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

JANUARY

LEARN for TAs
Monday, January 13 – 1:00pm-2:30pm, online
This workshop is a Question & Answer session focusing on the effective use of LEARN for TAs.

Enhancing Accessibility in Teaching and Learning Series #1: Accessibility Basics
Wednesday, January 29 – 1:00pm-2:00pm, online

FEBRUARY

Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW)
February 19 – 21
This three-day workshop is an intensive, collaborative, and experiential learning model that uses video-recorded micro-teaching and peer feedback sessions to support the teaching reflection and development of both new and experienced instructors. The ISW promotes participatory learning and community building and encourages examination of teaching practices, with feedback focused on the learning process rather than on the specific content of the lesson. If you have any questions about the ISW, please contact **Richard Li**.

MARCH

Enhancing Student Learning using Indigenous Learning Circles in STEM Education
Tuesday, March 11 – 1:00pm-2:30pm, E7 7363
Vivian Dayeh, Bren Lee, Savannah Sloat, and their students share their experience implementing a teaching and learning system based on an Indigenous Learning Circle methodology.

Documenting Your Teaching for Tenure and Promotion
Wednesday, March 26 – 11:45am-1:15pm, online
David DeVidi, Trevor Holmes, and Sonya Buffone will provide guidance on collecting and preparing evidence of good teaching.

Authentic Assessment Unveiled

Instructors might be interested in this upcoming session hosted by PebblePad and eCampusOntario's EdTech Sandbox: **Authentic Assessment Unveiled: Practical Insights for Academic Leaders**.



The session is scheduled for January 13 at 12:00 pm, and features Waterloo's Jennifer Yessis (Associate Director of the Professional Graduate Programs in the School of Public Health Sciences) and Katherine Lithgow (Senior Educational Developer, Integrative & Experiential Learning, Centre for Teaching Excellence). Register via the link above.

2025 UW TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE

DISRUPTION AND UNCERTAINTY AS DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Thursday, May 1, 2025

The 2025 University of Waterloo Teaching and Learning (UWTL) Conference invites you to submit proposals for presentations, panel discussions, workshops, and posters that share your practices and research on engaging learning and teaching practices. This year, we will centre our conversation around **strategies for responding to disruption and uncertainty**, and leveraging them as occasions to innovate and improve our educational practices.

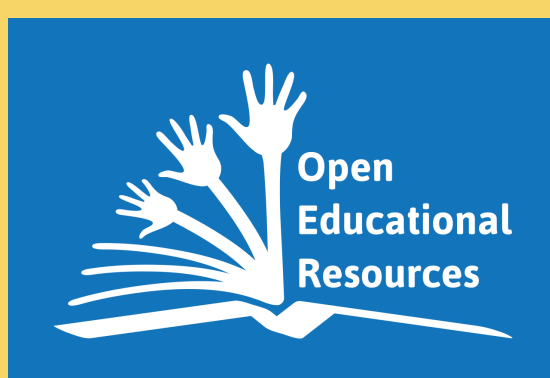
We are excited to welcome **Brianna Wiens** (English Language and Literature) and **Branda Lee** (Physics and Astronomy) as our *Igniting Our Practice* speakers, who will demonstrate a successful instructional approach to showcase some of the excellent teaching being done on our campus.

We also invite proposals for pre-conference workshops which will be held online prior to the conference (that is, on Wednesday, April 30, 2025).

The deadline for proposals is **January 20** at 11:59 pm EST. To read the full Call for Proposals and learn more about the conference, please visit the **University of Waterloo Teaching and Learning Conference website**.

Staebler Insurance OER Fellows Grant

Applications are open for the 2025-2026 **Staebler Insurance Open Educational Resources (OER) Fellows Grant**. \$20,000 in funding is available in amounts of \$5,000 per selected project. To be eligible, instructors must:



- Be working on an OER project for a course at Waterloo.
- Be employed with the University for the length of the grant (until April 30, 2026).

The completed **application form** must be submitted by Monday, February 24. Questions about the grant can be emailed to oergrant@uwaterloo.ca.

LITE GRANTS

Just a reminder that there is no longer a deadline for LITE Grants in February. Deadlines are now in June and October. For more information about these and changes, see CTE's **LITE Grant Guidelines page**.

Teaching Awards: Deadlines

Distinguished Teacher Awards (DTA)

December 31
The Distinguished Teacher Awards (DTA) are awarded to exemplary instructors who have a record of excellent teaching over an extended period at the University of Waterloo. New this year, an **online form** that facilitates the nomination process.



Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student

February 7
The Amit & Meena Chakma Award for Exceptional Teaching by a Student (AETS) is given annually in recognition of excellence in teaching of all kinds by registered students (e.g., teaching assistants, laboratory demonstrators, sessional lecturers).

And from the Centre for Extended Learning:

Online Course Design Award
Students, teaching assistants, instructors, chairs, directors and deans are encouraged to submit nominations for the **Online Course Design Award** for courses that are well organized, contribute to students learning and are highly engaging.

Online Teaching Award
Were you a student in a fully online course this term? If you had an exceptional experience in your course and your instructor helped you succeed, stay motivated and encouraged participation, consider nominating them for the **Online Teaching Award**.

Nominations for both awards must be received by August 31.

New (or Timely) Resources

EEQTs

As the winter term starts up, check out these **Early Engagement Quick Tips (EEQTs)**. These short, timely, actionable tips for Waterloo instructors and Teaching Assistants will help you create an interactive and supportive learning environment, foster positive student-instructor/TA relationships, and cultivate student sense of belonging in the classroom.



Supporting Reflection With Journaling and GenAI
In this new video, CTE co-op students discuss their use a PebblePad workbook and ePortfolio to reflect on their learning and track and showcase their growth and development during their co-op term. Starting in Spring 2024, the co-op students began testing the use of **RIF**. RIF is designed to help deepen the quality and depth of reflections. "While chatbots powered by generative AI are typically designed to answer questions and perform tasks, Riff focuses on asking learners thought-provoking questions to deepen their reflection process.

Möbius
The university's site license with Möbius now allows for an unlimited number of licenses for all Waterloo students. Möbius is a robust online authoring and delivery environment specifically designed for the needs of STEM classrooms. **Möbius** includes a rich suite of tools and features for authors looking to design and develop digital assets for their students or peers, and a delivery environment that enables and promotes deep and active learning for users through the combination of instructional material with hands-on activities

Farewells and Welcomes

CTE bids a fond farewell to the following students, who are completing their terms with us:

- **Sara Agawa**, Special Projects Coordinator, Indigenous Knowledges & Anti-Racist Pedagogies;
- **Luxman Nirumalan**, Special Projects Assistant, Workshops, Reception and Green Office;
- **Naomi Paul**, Educational Developer, Indigenous Knowledges;
- **Karmvir Padda**, TA Workshop Facilitator;
- **Toben Racicot**, Graduate Educational Developer;
- **Blessing Madon**, Graduate Educational Developer.



In the winter term, we welcome to our team:

- **Sonell Malik**, TA Workshop Facilitator;
- **Tara Chen**, Graduate Educational Developer;
- **Gwyneth Davies**, Special Projects Assistant, Workshops, Reception and Green Office.

And we welcome back **Madison Hill**, Educational Developer, Indigenous Knowledges, and **Kristin Brown**, Educational Developer, TA Training and Writing Support, both returning from leaves.



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