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In the Loop



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

March/April 2025



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

MARCH

[Enhancing Student Learning Using Indigenous Learning Circles in STEM Education \(CTE7700\)](#)

Tuesday, March 11 - 1:00pm-2:30pm, E7 7363

Join us for an inspiring session with Vivian Dayeh, Brenda Lee, Savannah Sloat, and their students as they share their experience implementing a teaching and learning system based on an Indigenous Learning Circle methodology. This [LITE grant project](#) was undertaken with the goal of enhancing student learning in STEM courses during lectures and tutorials.

[New Faculty Teaching Days Winter 2025](#)

Monday, March 17-20 - 8:30am-4:30pm, MC 2036

The March New Faculty Teachings Days allow instructors to complete a variety of workshops

that form the core of our New Faculty offerings. Registration is required for any of the five workshops.

- [Who are Our Learners](#) - Monday, March 17, 1:00pm-2:30pm
- [Course Design Foundations](#) - Tuesday, March 18, 9:30am-3:30pm
- [Assessment as Learning](#) - Wednesday, March 19, 10:00am-12:00pm
- [Course Outline Builder](#) - Wednesday, March 19, 1:00pm-3:00pm
- [Course Dynamics and Engagement](#) - Thursday, March 20, 10:am-11:30am

[Enhancing Accessibility in Teaching and Learning Series #3: Accessibility in Group Work](#)

Wednesday, March 26, 10:00am-11:00am, Online, no registration required

This session will showcase how to design and implement group work with accessibility in mind. It will also give examples of how to navigate common issues that arise when accommodation impacts a student's ability to work in groups.

[Documenting Your Teaching for Tenure and Promotion - Online \(CTE9908\)](#)

Wednesday, March 26, 11:45am-1:15pm, Online

Tenure and promotion are critical milestones in a faculty member's career. You need to collect evidence and document your successes in research, teaching, and service for various individuals and committees to assess. Although many faculty are well-prepared to document their research and even service, evidence of good teaching can be more difficult to provide.

APRIL

[Enhancing Accessibility in Teaching and Learning Series #4: Accessibility in Very Large Classes](#)

Thursday, April 19 - 1:00pm-2:00pm, Online, no registration required

Accessibility in Very Large Classes: This session will showcase how to implement accessibility practices for very large classes. It will also focus on the challenges of making accommodations in very large classes.

[Getting Started in LEARN - In Person \(CTE6656\)](#)

Tuesday, April 29 - 1:00pm-3:00pm, In-person

This two-hour, in-person session will introduce you to LEARN (D2L Brightspace), UWaterloo's learning management system for presenting course activities and resources in on-campus and blended courses.

SPRING/SUMMER READING SERIES: ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

Facilitators: Victoria Feth and Annik Bilodeau

Description: This reading series is intended for people with any level of accessibility confidence and a desire to have deeper discussions about accessible education. Through a selection of short readings from a variety of sources, we will explore how faculty and staff can support and use accessible teaching practices to benefit all students at the University of Waterloo.

When: We will meet once a month in May (90 min.), June (60 min.), and July (60 min.).

How: Meetings will be hybrid or fully online on Teams, depending on the wishes of the group. We will seek input on this via our registration form.

The reading group will be capped at 12 people to develop connections and community and to ensure that every participant has the opportunity to contribute to the conversations.

Registration will open in April. If you have questions or wish to be notified when the registration form is available, please email [Victoria Feth](mailto:Victoria.Feth@utoronto.ca).

FUNDAMENTALS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING BLOCK PROGRAM

Registration has opened for the 2-week [Fundamentals of University Teaching block program](#), open to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars at Waterloo. Participants will receive a certificate of completion and milestone on their transcript after completing the program, taking place from March 24-April 4.

DIGITAL PEDAGOGY INSTITUTE 2025

Save the date(s): [DPI2025](#) will take place August 12th - 14th, 2025.

- We will be online.
- There will be no registration fee this year.
- [Call for Proposals](#) closes April 25.



2025 UW TEACHING AND LEARNING CONFERENCE

DISRUPTION AND UNCERTAINTY AS DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

Wednesday, April 30 & Thursday, May 1, 2025

Registration is now open for the 16th-annual University of Waterloo Teaching and Learning Conference taking place on May 1, with a day of online workshops taking place on April 30.

Last year saw over 550 faculty members, staff, and students gather to learn from and with one another around the theme of student engagement.

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. How do we address challenges and opportunities that arise from crises, whether local or global, individual or collective? How do we deal with these disruptions to our carefully planned terms or programs? What are the key lessons to take into future disruptions? How do we support students and faculty and staff members? How do we partner with colleagues and other units on campus to support each other and leverage each other's strengths? How can we use technology to limit the impact of disruptions? How do we engage with local and global communities to bridge academia and real-world challenges? What new directions are we taking?

The registration deadline is Tuesday, April 15.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

TEACHING EXCELLENCE ACADEMY

April 23, 24, 25 and 28, 2025

CTE's intensive course redesign institute the [Teaching Excellence Academy \(TEA\)](#) is being held in-person this spring. Nominations are currently open, and interested instructors should speak to their Department Chair, Director, or Teaching Fellow. For more information, please contact [Donna Ellis](#).

NEW AND/OR TIMELY RESOURCES

- CTE recently made significant revisions and updates to our [Being a TA in Online Courses Teaching Tip](#).
- Encourage your graduate TAs to check out the new CTE Teaching Tip [How to Plan and Deliver Impactful Guest Lectures](#). Guest lectures are excellent opportunities for experienced graduate TAs to move beyond typical teaching assistant roles — such as grading, office hours, and tutorials — to gain valuable lecture-style teaching experience. This Teaching Tip provides useful guidance for planning and delivering impactful and engaging guest lectures.

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

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

- **Charley Potter**, Special Projects Assistant, Curriculum & Assessment. They have been part of our team for three work terms, and we are grateful for their energy and dedication!
- **Gwyneth Davies**, Special Projects Assistant, Workshops, Reception and Green Office

And we welcome to our team:

- **Yadurshana Sivashankar**, Graduate Educational Developer



CTE PD DAY ON GENAI: INFORMATION, PERSPIRATION, REFLECTION

On February 25th, CTE held its Winter 2025 Professional Development Day for CTE staff.

The agenda included a presentation on the GenAI resources and strategies at the University of Waterloo, followed by a Q&A session.

CTE staff then engaged in a sandbox session with hands-on activities in areas such as AI in resource creation, course and curriculum design support, data analysis, workshop design, and scholarship of teaching and educational development. The session allowed participants to experiment with AI tools, generate and refine prompts, and assess outputs.

The day concluded with a debrief on the effectiveness of the activities and a group discussion on the ethical considerations of using AI in educational development.

This news item was edited using Microsoft Copilot during one of the sandbox exercises.



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