



June 2021

Contents

- [Upcoming Events and Workshops](#)
- [UCOI Pedagogy Reading Group](#)
- [New CTE Videos](#)
- [Keep On Keeping Learning!](#)
- [CTE Kudos!](#)

Upcoming Events and Workshops

[WAI Inspired Wednesdays: Integrating Reflection into Your Course \(Waterloo Assessment Institute\)](#)

Wednesday, July 7 — 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

[Faculty of Health Fall Prep Workshop](#)

Monday, July 12 — 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm

[WAI Inspired Wednesdays: Designing Authentic Assessment \(Waterloo Assessment Institute\)](#)

Wednesday, July 14 — 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

[Introduction to PebblePad: What is PebblePad and Why Would I Use it?](#)

Thursday, July 15 — 10:00 am to 11:30 am

[WAI Inspired Wednesdays: Academic Integrity and Alternatives to Final Exams \(Waterloo Assessment Institute\)](#)

Wednesday, July 21 — 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

[Introduction to PebblePad Part 2: Using PebblePad Features](#)

Thursday, July 29 — 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

[Extended Reality \(XR\) as a Learning Technology in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic](#)

Thursday, July 29 — 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

[XR Activities at Georgian College \(a leader in XR technologies at Canadian Universities\)](#)

Friday, August 20 — 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

[Supporting Student Mental Health \(for Instructors\)](#)

An ongoing, self-directed course in LEARN.

[Independent Remote Course Design Essentials \(iReCoDE\)](#)

An ongoing, self-directed course in LEARN.



UCOI Pedagogy Reading Group

Victoria Feth

In the fall of 2020, Carter Neal (Lecturer, English Language and Literature — photo on the right) brought together a cluster of individuals who had two things in common: they were “entering their third pandemic semester in a row,” as Carter describes it, and they were involved to various degrees in UCOI instruction. UCOI, commonly pronounced *you-coy*, stands for the [Undergraduate Communication Outcomes Initiative](#)



This community of inquiry — comprising definite term lecturers, continuing lecturers, sessional instructors, graduate instructors, and staff from academic support units — was loosely structured as a reading group and a virtual community oriented around the pedagogical needs of front-line instructors and staff during the pandemic. Carter says, “I wanted the group to provide a support structure and a sense of community, but I was also interested in formalizing some of the pedagogical experiments that folks were doing during remote teaching, and helping us to share best practices and practical tips.” He adds, “I wanted to find a way to build bridges among those involved in UCOI remote instruction, and to help staff, librarians, and instructors control the flow of information during this high-stress time.”

In fall 2020, the group read and discussed parts of bell hooks’ seminal book, [Teaching to Transgress](#). Carter explains, “As we began conversations about this reading group during summer 2020, those of us working to organize the group became certain that we should also address the impact of race in the unique teaching environment of the UCOI classroom.” In winter 2021, the group next read a book that recently became popular among educators, [UNgrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning \(and What to Do Instead\)](#). For both books, Carter broke down the reading into smaller chunks that were relevant to the group and offered critical reflection and analysis to begin the conversation.

For UCOI instructor Andrea Jonahs of the English department, hooks’ book was “the carrot — it was one I had been wanting to read for a long time.” She was “eager to think more about how power dynamics shape my pedagogical practices” and adds that “Carter did an excellent job in facilitating the group and steering our conversations in a direction that was always critical, compassionate, and equity-focused.”

UCOI instructor Megan Selinger, also of the English department, commented, “The discussions we have in response to the readings provide space where we can interrogate some of our own methods and means of engagement with these topics in our courses, as well as collectively workshop ways that we can employ new (and sometimes ambitious) tactics and practices in future courses.”

As a member of the group, I can attest that Carter and the group made space for important topics that may or may not directly connect to the books, such as challenges the instructors were facing in their own courses, challenges presented by applying what the authors could achieve in their contexts in comparison with what UCOI instructors could achieve in their own — often very different — contexts, brainstorming and offering potential solutions from each other’s experiences, and sharing what instructors are excited to try out in the next iteration of a course or in a new course.

Clearly, Neal and the group achieved their goal of a support structure during unusual times. Megan may have said it best: “There’s something cathartic about the meetings. Yet alongside the feelings of renewal, you also feel engaged and motivated to action.”

What’s next for Carter and this group as we move past the pandemic and emergency remote teaching, but also strive to learn from the difficult yet creative times? The group is looking to grow as well as bring in guest speakers and engage in specific initiatives. Carter acknowledges, “I don’t think the group is finished with our conversations about ungrading and anti-racism, and I hope we can more directly engage with the research on race in the composition classroom.” He adds that “The group has also shown an interest in issues of accessibility and pedagogies of Universal Design, and I think we most certainly will have to address the further development of remote, online, and blended classes as we work to open back up the University of Waterloo.”

Perhaps most important, he looks forward to the group continuing “to serve as a source of community, connection, and collaboration.”

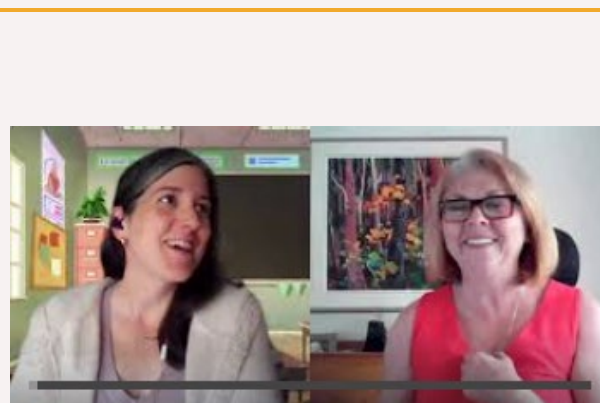
If you would like to connect with Carter Neal about this group, he welcomes you to email him at carter.neal@uwaterloo.ca.

New CTE videos

The following videos were developed by CTE staff members in the last month and are available on the CTE YouTube channel.

[Improving Academic Integrity with Scheduled, Timed Interval Exams.](#)

Rosina Kharal, Cheriton School of Computer Science



[Blended Learning in Organic Chemistry.](#) Julie Goll, Chemistry

[Developing Students’ Reflection Skills Through Assessment and Feedback Strategies.](#) Victoria Feth and Katherine Lithgow, Centre for Teaching Excellence

Waterloo Assessment Institute

Pre-pandemic, CTE offered the annual Waterloo Assessment Institute (WAI) focusing on the assignment as a means of assessing student learning. (WAI) peer feedback and guided work time over a two-day intensive retreat, WAI helped individuals and program teams redesign key assignments in their courses. Whether you are an individual seeking to improve an assignment, or a team seeking to link an assignment or assignments “horizontally” (across courses in a term) or “vertically” (across courses in different terms or years), the WAI provides space, time, expertise, and peer feedback. We do plan to offer this again in the future when we can come together face-to-face.

For Spring 2021, we are offering instead three shorter, modified, online experiences retaining key elements of the WAI, each focusing on one of three themes (you can choose one or more based on your own intentions for your assignment or assignments). By the end of each session, participants will leave with a draft redesigned assignment based on feedback from peers and teaching and learning consultants.

Topic	Dates/Times
Integrating Reflection into Your Course	Workshop: Wednesday, July 7 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Authentic Assessment	Workshop: Wednesday, July 14 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Academic Integrity and Alternatives to Final Exams	Drop-in (for participants from July 7 and 14): Wednesday, July 14 - 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Workshop: Wednesday, July 21 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Optional open work time for all participants	Drop-in (for all past participants) Wednesday, July 28 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Keep on Keeping Learning!

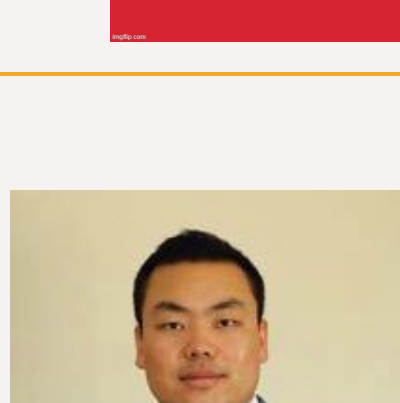
As the Fall term approaches, don't forget about the wealth of resources for remote teaching on the [Keep Learning website!](#)

More than a hundred Waterloo instructors have also registered for the [Independent Remote Course Design Essentials \(iReCoDe\)](#) module that's available in LEARN. iReCoDe is a self-paced, self-guided experience that will take instructors through the steps of preparing a remote course.



CTE Kudos!

CTE congratulates [Richard Li](#), Faculty Liaison for Engineering, for being named the new Vice-Chair, of the Educational Developers Chair (EDC). Full details are available on the [EDC website!](#)



To subscribe to CTE's In the Loop newsletter, [click here.](#)

[f](#) CTE's Facebook page
 [t](#) CTE's Twitter
 [globe](#) CTE's website

The Centre for Teaching Excellence acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.

Copyright © 2018 Centre for Teaching Excellence. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address:
Centre for Teaching Excellence
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, ON, Canada
N2H 3A3
cte@uwaterloo.ca
cte.uwaterloo.ca

Want to change how you receive these emails? You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).