



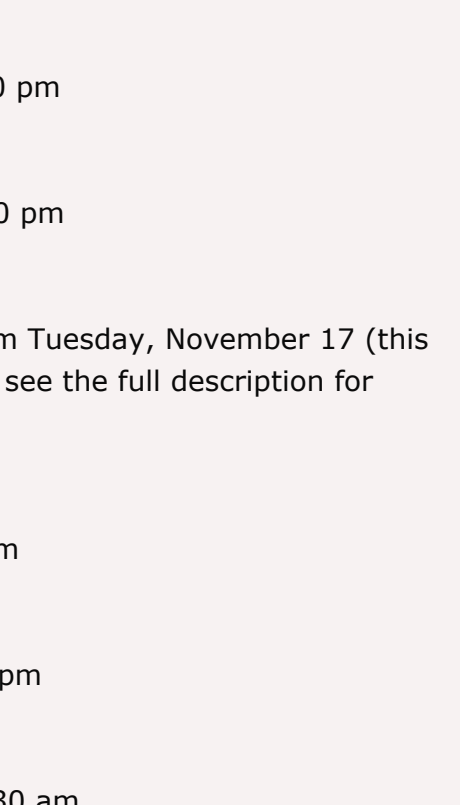
October 2020

Contents

- [Upcoming Workshops](#)
- [Supporting Student Mental Health: A New Self-Paced Module for Instructors](#)
- [Teaching Assistant Training in LEARN](#)
- [New: Online Instructional Skills Workshop](#)
- [New Grant Funding for Research in Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Community-building and peer-to-peer learning in CIVE 230](#)
- [CTE's 2019-2020 Annual Report](#)
- [Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality: Resources and Community of Practice](#)
- [More Fast Facts about CTE](#)

Upcoming (Remote) Workshops

- [Independent Remote Course Design Essentials](#)
Ongoing until December 21 (a self-paced, independent experience)
- [Thirty-Minute Thursdays: PebblePad](#)
Thursday, October 15 from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm
- [Online Instructional Skills Workshop](#)
8:00 am Monday, October 19 to 4:00 PM
Friday, November 27. *See more info about this workshop in the article below*
- [Learning from Our Remote Teaching Experiences](#)
Tuesday, October 20 from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
- [PebblePad Users Group](#)
Wednesday, October 21 from 1:00 pm to 2:00 PM
- [Thirty-Minute Thursdays: PebblePad](#)
Thursday, October 20 from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm
- [Integrative and Experiential Learning Session](#)
Wednesday, October 28 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
- [Thirty-Minute Thursdays: PebblePad](#)
Thursday, October 29 from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm
- [Remote Course Design Essentials](#)
8:30 am Wednesday, November 11 to 4:30 pm Tuesday, November 17 (this workshop includes two synchronous sessions: see the full description for details)
- [Assessment Design Cafe](#)
Friday, November 20 from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm
- [Introduction to PebblePlus](#)
Monday, November 23 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- [ATLAS: Part 1](#)
Thursday, November 26 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am
- [Integrating PebblePad Retreat](#)
Monday, December 7 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm



Supporting Student Mental Health: A New Self-Paced Module for Instructors

CTE has launched a new self-paced online module, [Supporting Student Mental Health \(for Instructors\)](#). This independent experience will explore how to proactively support student mental health and how to respond to mental health concerns that come to your attention in both in-person and online classes. The goal of this online module is to provide you with the resources you need to support student mental health while considering your own well-being. You can complete the module at your own pace and on your own time. The course is available by clicking on "Self-Registration" on the top navigation bar of your LEARN homepage and selecting "Supporting Student Mental Health" from the list of available courses. TAs interested in the topic can complete our TA version of the module, [Supporting Student Mental Health \(CTE2259\)](#).



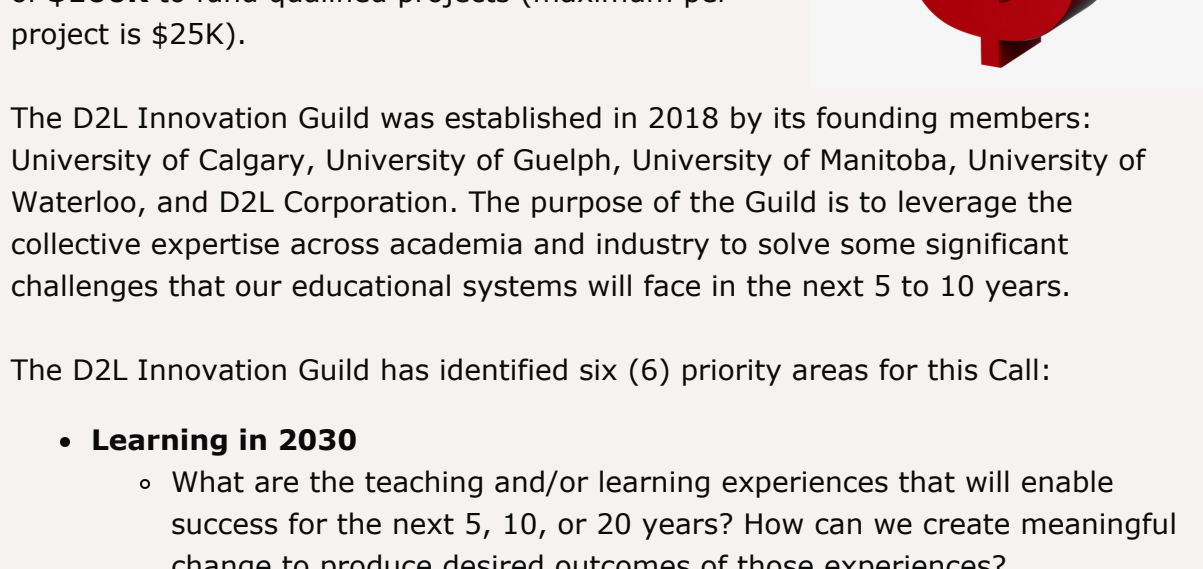
Teaching Assistant Training in LEARN

Every fall term, approximately 1,500 graduate students work as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses. To support TAs in their roles in remote courses this fall, CTE has created a new set of online modules that are available to departments through the [TA Training LEARN site](#). The modules (1.5-2 hours each) address the following topics:

- Preparing to TA at Waterloo,
- Teaching Online: Basic Skills for TAs,
- Supporting Student Mental Health, and
- Giving and Receiving Feedback.

As of late August, interested departments were able to offer self-paced, online modules to their TAs to help them prepare for their teaching roles in the fall. So far, **16 departments from four faculties** have offered CTE training modules to their TAs, with seven departments making all four modules mandatory. In addition to the training offered through the TA Training LEARN site, new TAs could also complete two online modules and join an online panel with experienced graduate TAs, through GSPA's [Grad Ready](#) site for incoming graduate students.

See the image below for the number of TAs who completed the modules as of October 2, 2020. If you are interested in offering your TAs access to these modules through the TA Training LEARN site in Winter 2020, please contact Kristin Brown (kristin.brown@uwaterloo.ca).



New: Instructional Skills Workshop... moving online

This fall, CTE is offering a new online version of the Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW). Since 2008, more than **330 participants** from across all six faculties have completed this workshop at Waterloo. The ISW started in 1978 in British Columbia and subsequently spread across Canada and the US. It is now an internationally recognized and facilitated program, having been offered in multiple regions around the globe. Instructors who have complete the workshop have frequently commented on how it has helped them enhance their teaching practice.

In-Person ISW

The in-person ISW is 24-hours of peer-based interaction and learning that takes place over three or four days. Each participant undertake three cycles of mini-lessons which receive written, verbal, and video feedback from the other participants. The ISW challenges instructors to explore new approaches to their teaching while at the same time being intentional about their lesson planning approach. The in-person ISW is of course not possible at this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moving Online

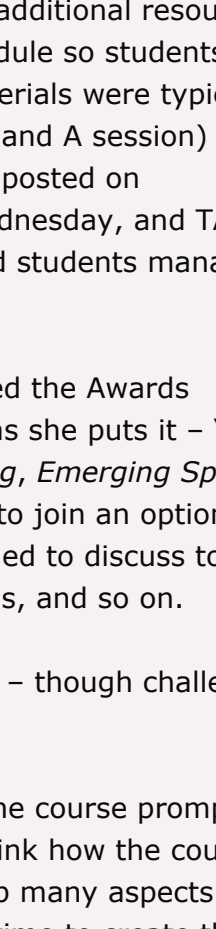
In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Online Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) has been developed to provide instructors teaching online the same opportunity to experiment with creating engaging and meaningful online learning experiences as the in-person ISW affords in-class instructors. This new offering is being piloted this term, **starting on October 19, 2020**.

The design of this online workshop is based on the same ISW template as the in-person workshop with the activities selected to provide an authentic environment for faculty to learn about and practice skills related to facilitating and assessing learning in the online context. It includes opportunities for peer feedback as well as reflection on one's own experiences as both an instructor and student in the online environment and continues to be strongly peer-based. The Online ISW is also conducted as a small enrolment workshop and requires on-average a **5 hour/week** commitment for a **six-week period** with each participant designing and facilitating three online learning experiences in LEARN. Participants will interact with and learn from other participants both asynchronously and synchronously during the workshop.

[Register for the Online ISW](#). If you have questions, please contact [Monica Vesely](#).

New Grant Funding for Research in Teaching and Learning

The **D2L Innovation Guild** has released a **Call for Proposals** to fund research that will inform teaching practices and technology to solve critical challenges in teaching and learning that we face now and in the future. The D2L Innovation Guild will distribute a total of **\$100K** to fund qualified projects (maximum per project is \$25K).



The D2L Innovation Guild was established in 2018 by its founding members: University of Calgary, University of Guelph, University of Manitoba, University of Waterloo, and D2L Corporation. The purpose of the Guild is to leverage the collective expertise across academia and industry to solve some significant challenges that our educational systems will face in the next 5 to 10 years.

The D2L Innovation Guild has identified six (6) priority areas for this Call:

- **Learning in 2030**
 - What are the teaching and/or learning experiences that will enable success for the next 5, 10, or 20 years? How can we create meaningful change to produce desired outcomes of those experiences?
- **Unlocking Learner Potential**
 - What are some ways that we can leverage learning science, psychology and/or neuroscience to better support learners to achieve better results? What are the ethical implications in leveraging such techniques?
- **Leveraging Learning Spaces**
 - How will learning spaces support teaching and learning for the next decade or more? What role will emerging technologies play in those learning spaces? What role will physical/online environments play in those learning spaces?
- **Supporting Indigenous Ways of Knowing**
 - How can we advance Indigenous ways of teaching, learning, knowing and being in education? How can we ensure meaningful engagement and connection with Indigenous communities to strengthen teaching and learning?
- **Ensuring Academic Integrity**
 - With the ever-changing landscape of technology, means of access, and modalities of learning, what can be done to make sure that academic integrity stays at the core of teaching and learning? How can we evaluate and assess the impact of academic integrity?
- **Improving Mental Health and Well-being**
 - How can we better support the mental health and well-being of faculty, students, postdoctoral scholars and/or staff? How does mental health and well-being impact and/or influence teaching and learning in education? How can the impacts of mental health on learners and educators be better understood?

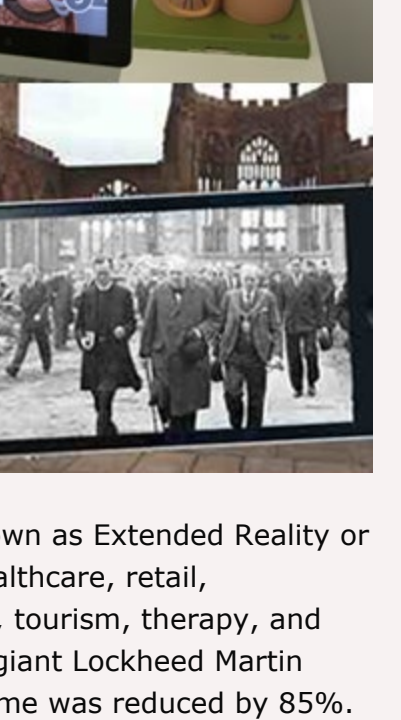
Applicants must align their proposals with one or more of the foregoing themes and in the areas of either emerging research or applied research. **Proposals must be received no later than 11:59 pm ET on November 2, 2020, and any funds awarded must be spent between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021.**

Details on the call and the submission process can be found at d2l.com/innovation-guild-call-for-proposals/

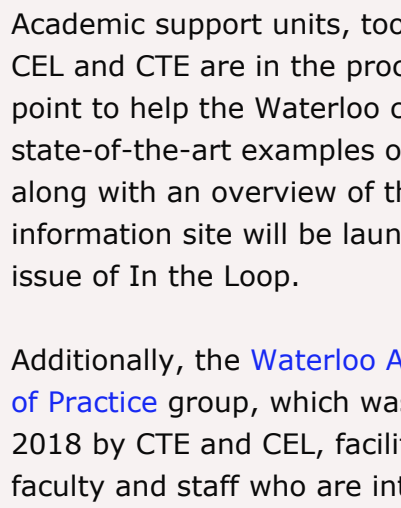
Community-building and peer-to-peer learning in CIVE 230

Here's another story in a series from the Centre for Teaching Excellence to facilitate cross-institutional sharing of strategies for remote teaching.

Building an engaging online community and creating opportunities for peer-to-peer learning can enrich the learning experiences that students have in a remote teaching context. Nadine Ibrahim – Turckstra Chair in Urban Engineering, and a Lecturer in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering – was one of the early participants in CTE's [Remote Course Design Essentials \(ReCoDE\)](#) workshop. That workshop supports instructors who are redesigning a course for the remote teaching and learning environment. In tandem with ReCoDE, Nadine also made good use of the [Remote Teaching Templates](#) available in LEARN. The course she redeveloped was CIVE 230: Engineering and Sustainable Development.



With the unexpected shift to remote teaching, it's necessary to re-think instructional design, assessment strategies, community-building, and all other aspects of a course. Nadine implemented a diversity of low-stakes learning activities to leverage each student's individual strengths, so that everyone had opportunity to excel in the remote setting.



These learning activities included quizzes, oral and visual submissions, and collaborating on a [sustainability contribution project](#). Regarding the latter project, each student was asked to develop and share a single slide in which they applied course topics to real-life, global situations. Nadine explained that the project "encouraged students to explore sustainable cities, infrastructure, solutions, and technologies globally to generate an enriched learning experience" and that it was a "valuable opportunity for peer-to-peer learning – together, they co-created content." The final product was [compiled into a 140-page eBook](#) for the benefit of the Waterloo community.

Following on guidance from ReCoDE, Nadine also created weekly checklists that introduced the week's topic, learning outcomes, and provided additional resources. Course materials were released according to a consistent schedule so students always knew what was coming up. Asynchronous learning materials were typically released on Monday, a synchronous live lecture (including a Q and A session) took place on Tuesday, and the recording of the online session was posted on Wednesday. Office hours for the instructor were always on Wednesday, and TA office hours on Thursday. Having a routine for the week helped students manage their time and expectations.

To encourage student engagement and motivation, Nadine used the Awards functionality in LEARN to provide encouraging incentives or – as she puts it – "pats on the back." Examples of these awards include *Young Seedling*, *Emerging Sprout*, *Soaring Sapling*, and *Tree Hugger*. Students were also invited to join an optional weekly social hour for community-building, and were encouraged to discuss topics outside of the course, such as workspace, study habits, hobbies, and so on.

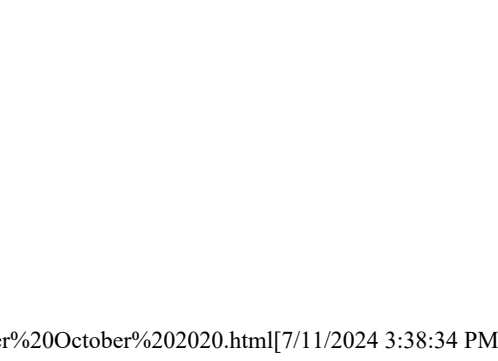
Nadine notes that the necessity of pivoting to remote teaching – though challenging – wasn't without benefits. She says:

"Some of the strategies introduced for CIVE230 were to the course prompted by this online environment. There was real opportunity to rethink how the course is taught and the types of assessments. It will most certainly keep many aspects of this, particularly because it was a huge upfront investment of time to create these learning experiences and will be easier to implement the second time around when it is run a year from now. This experience made me realize that online is not better or worse than in-person, but just different. In-person learning has its shortcomings as well. We can always strive to make the best of both worlds."

Nadine will be featuring her CIVE230 course in an upcoming webinar on course development that she'll be offering through one of the Special Interest Groups on Sustainable Engineering, Leadership and Management for the Canadian Engineering Education Association. Her webinar is scheduled for November 19, 2020 at 1:00 pm EST, and will subsequently appear at [this URL](#) when posted.

CTE's 2019-2020 Annual Report

CTE's 2019-2020 Annual Report has been published! It's our sixth Annual Report, and we're proud of all we accomplished – especially in a fiscal year that came to a close with the unexpected emergence of COVID-19.



This year's Annual Report organizes our activities under the umbrella of our five strategic priorities. The report also provides some "Fast Facts" – such as the number of consultations we provided (3804) and the number of faculty workshops we offered (120) – but also gives more detailed data gathered from surveys regarding the reach of our activities, how well we're meeting instructors' needs, and the extent to which our workshop participants are meeting our intended learning outcomes.

To read the Annual Report, [download the AODA-compliant PDF](#). Please feel free to reach out to [CTE's Director, Donna Ellis](#), if you'd like additional information on any aspect of the report.

Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality: Resources and Community of Practice

If you've ever seen someone doing what the young man on the right is doing, then you've seen someone immersed in virtual reality (VR). To an outside observer, it looks kind of strange. But to the person wearing the headset, it can be an intense and absorbing experience that allows you to see and "do" things you that you can't easily do in the real world.

That's what makes VR so compelling for educators: learners can observe, manipulate, or practice something in a distraction-free virtual space. At the University of Alberta, for example, [Occupational Therapy students are using VR headsets](#) to practice meeting with and assessing virtual clients.

VR doesn't always require a headset. For example, last year CTE and CEL helped the Faculty of Environment develop a [virtual reality version of a field trip](#) to Waterloo's spongy bog by using 360 VR and Virtual Tour technology. The resulting virtual tour can be viewed and explored on a PC's web browser.

Associated with – but distinct from – virtual reality is augmented reality (AR). Essentially, AR is like placing a "layer" of information on top of the world in front of you. The GPS system in your car, for example, is a kind of AR. The four images below are also examples of AR, and all of them are evoked by pointing your smart phone or tablet at a specific target. In the first one, the AR layer is the "fleshed out" version of a dinosaur skeleton; in the second one, the AR layer provides names of organs on an anatomical model; in the third one, the AR layer provides information about the design and history of the painting; and in the fourth, the AR layer renders a historic image of Churchill walking through a bombed area of London over the "live" view of the same area.

Prior to the 2020 pandemic, VR and AR (collectively known as Extended Reality or XR) were gaining momentum across sectors such as healthcare, retail, manufacturing, construction, architecture, conservation, tourism, therapy, and education and research, to name a few. When aviation giant Lockheed Martin introduced VR to optimize employee training, training time was reduced by 85%.

In the current context of remote teaching and learning – but also beyond that to when things return to "normal" – XR is a field that Waterloo could explore to enhance both online and in-class learning, and to help prepare students for future skills and work applications. The possibilities for development and application of XR technologies are myriad, though many challenges – such as cost and usability issues – remain.

Many instructors at Waterloo have already undertaken projects involving XR. Academic support units, too, are spearheading some XR initiatives. For example, CEL and CTE are in the process of developing an [XR Information Site](#) as a starting point to help the Waterloo community learn about the emerging medium through state-of-the-art examples of XR applications and research across subject areas, along with an overview of the opportunities and challenges of the medium. That information site will be launched in November and its URL will be shared in the next issue of In the Loop.

Additionally, the [Waterloo AR/VR Community of Practice](#) group, which was established in 2018 by CTE and CEL, facilitates sessions for faculty and staff who are interested in exploring XR topics and technologies in the emerging field. The most recent session, for example, was devoted to Google Hubs, a free platform for creating virtual meeting spaces that can be "visited" with either a headset or a web browser.

The frequency of the AR/VR Community of Practice sessions diminished after the advent of COVID-19, but efforts are underway to return to a consistent schedule. The next AR/VR Community of Practice session will take place in November, and details will be provided in the next issue of In the Loop. In the meantime, you can join the group or suggest future XR/VR topics by contacting [Gillian Dabrowski \(CEL\)](#) or [Mark Morton \(CTE\)](#), co-facilitators of the group.

More Fast Facts about CTE

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year,

- 8 CTE staff members contributed to 41 committees (25 at Waterloo, 16 external)
- 10 CTE staff members gave invited presentations and workshops at other institutions
- 3 CTE staff members served in leadership roles for provincial, national, and international professional associations

And we received some nice feedback along the way, too, such as...

- *"Thanks so much for ReCoDE – it was amazing – the content, the organization, the parsing of information. I think you struck just the right depth and amount of content. I have taken it further and have mapped out my existing content, assignments, activities and case studies and will be ready to "upgrade" after next week when I have completed the tools part. From the bottom of my heart thank you!" – Jean Richardson Director, Science and Business Program*

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

- [CTE's Facebook page](#)
- [CTE's Twitter](#)
- [CTE's website](#)

The Centre for Teaching Excellence acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinabeg 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.