2018-19 Faculty Learning Communities

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HOW TO REGISTER FOR A FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY

Registrations are announced through email and on the Faculty Development site on OneStThomas. After you register, your contact information is forwarded to the leader(s) of the community who will be in touch with you about the first meeting.

If you have specific questions about a community, please contact the leader(s) of the community (their email address is in this brochure). For general questions about faculty learning communities, please contact Faculty Development at facdevctr@stthomas.edu.
FALL AND SPRING SEMESTER LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Aligning Teaching and Research: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Led by:
Lance Peterson, School of Social Work, pete2703@stthomas.edu

Tentative Schedule:
This FLC will start in mid-October and meetings will be arranged based on participant schedule.

Description:
At student/teaching-centered institutions such as ours, teaching and scholarship are naturally merged. As teacher-scholars, we integrate scholarship into our teaching and we update our teaching based on evidence of what works. Conducting SoTL formally is a way to better align our faculty development with our daily work as teacher-scholars. As a result of this FLC, participants should improve their understanding of the following:

- definitions, standards, and functions of SoTL
- resources and strategies for integrating SoTL into one's professional development
- how to go about starting, designing, and publishing a SoTL project
- ethical/practical considerations for SoTL work
- applications of SoTL to teaching and learning

We encourage participants to think of a SoTL project they might want to pursue and to bring it to the FLC for discussion and support.
Building Your Online Academic Presence

Co-led by:
Olga L. Herrera, English, oherrera@stthomas.edu
Kari L. Fletcher, School of Social Work, kari.fletcher@stthomas.edu

Tentative Schedule:
We will meet Friday afternoons (approx. every three weeks to once per month) over snacks throughout the 2018-2019 school year.

Fall 2018
9/14: Introductions and inventory/assessment meeting
10/19: Craft a strong online biographical statement
11/16: Where and how to represent yourself—LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Researchgate, etc.
12/7: Posting in a range of online platforms

Spring 2019
2/15: Develop an online portfolio
3/15: Promote your accomplishments
4/19: Be a media presence; write op-eds
5/10: Wrap up, reflections/show and tell (e.g., share how/what you’ve developed this year)

Description:
We propose a learning community in which faculty can explore the concept of the academic professional online presence, develop their own online identities, consider outlets/platforms for them, and discuss using them strategically. Using Linder & Pasquini’s (2018) “Managing Your Professional Identity Online: A Guide for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators” and other exemplars as guides, we will explore various topics with faculty. The overall goal of our group will be to help members develop/increase their online professional presence, and to explore how it can benefit their scholarship, teaching, and service. Smaller goals will be to learn to use one or more new social media platforms; to evaluate examplars; to connect with those who have a notable online professional presence; and to consider how to adapt to fit their professional goals.
Community of Inquiry on Online Teaching

Co-led by:
   Kevin Henderson, Management, hend7407@stthomas.edu
   Colin Martin, Biology, chmartin@stthomas.edu

Tentative Schedule:
   Fridays every 3-4 weeks throughout the academic year (first meeting
   September 21st or 28th), specific timing/dates will be determined by
   participants.

Description:
The basic idea of this FLC is to serve as a resource for faculty interested in or
currently teaching in a blended or online format. Participants will learn about the
Community of Inquiry model and discuss their experiences applying it in their
blended/online courses. Participants will also read a “popular press” book on online
teaching and be encouraged to find and share academic articles on online teaching
topics that interest them. The overall goals are to 1) help instructors at the University
of St. Thomas get more comfortable with teaching online, 2) learn “best practices”
from research and colleagues, and thus 3) improve the overall learning experience for
our students.
Encouraging Quantitative Literacy

Co-led by:
Matthew Kim, Economics, mkim@stthomas.edu
Chip Small, Biology, gaston.small@stthomas.edu

Tentative Schedule:
Fall: We will meet on Thursdays 10-11am approximately every three weeks.
The first meeting will be on September 27.
Spring: Thursdays approximately every three weeks, time TBD

Description:
Every day, we are exposed to quantitative and statistical claims from a variety of
sources, including advertising, politics, and the media. Such claims also feature
prominently in many of our disciplines. However, these claims vary in their content,
degree of validity, accuracy, and even honesty. The ability to evaluate quantitative
evidence is an essential skill in our roles as teachers, scholars, and members of
society; our belief is that a wide range of everyday activities—from all walks of life—
can benefit from quantitative literacy. Therefore, the purpose of this faculty learning
community is to improve our quantitative literacy by learning how to better detect,
understand, refute, and avoid generating invalid, inaccurate, or dishonest quantitative
and statistical claims, and explore how quantitative literacy is important in our roles
as teachers, scholars, and members of society.
Faculty members from all disciplinary backgrounds—humanities, natural sciences, and
social sciences—are encouraged to participate. Formal knowledge of quantitative
analysis is neither a prerequisite nor a disqualification for participation in this
community. Our hope is to have a community of participants with a mix of
backgrounds in quantitative methods. While our earlier meetings will likely focus on
basic and fundamental topics in quantitative literacy and its role in society, our
ultimate goal is to learn from each other about the kinds of challenges and concerns
faculty members experience in their own disciplines and contexts.
Professors Practicing Mindfulness

Co-led by:
Vanessa Cornett-Murtada, Music, vanessa.cornett@stthomas.edu
Bill Brendel, Center for Ethical Organizations, wbrendel@stthomas.edu.
Bill will lead the group in Minneapolis, and Vanessa will lead in St. Paul.

Tentative Schedule:
Our goal would be to meet 4 or 5 times per semester on each campus,
depending on participant availability. Bill will lead the group in Minneapolis, and
Vanessa will lead in St. Paul.

Description:
Members of this FLC will meet to practice various forms of mindfulness together, and
to explore various topics associated with contemplative practices in higher education.
Following a model developed by the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher
Education, we will investigate a wide variety of practices which may include forms of
stillness (meditation, centering), movement (labyrinth, yoga), generative
(visualization, Visio or Lectio Divina), relational (dialogue, storytelling, deep listening),
creative (journaling, improvisation, arts), and/or activist (pilgrimage, volunteering,
vigil), depending on faculty interest. The objective is to develop and nurture a style of
education that enables personal introspection, social awareness, student-directed
learning, and a reflective and compassionate learning environment. Participants will
be encouraged to consider two goals: to develop and/or sustain a regular mindfulness
practice during the academic year, and to apply various contemplative practices in
their teaching, research, or service.
This FLC will be somewhat different in focus than the one offered in 2016-2017
(Contemplative Practices in Higher Education). We would like to place a greater
emphasis on direct experience with mindfulness practice, and slightly less emphasis
on reading, analyzing, and discussing the research and trends in contemplative
studies. Ideally, participants will develop the confidence to lead mindfulness activities
in the classroom, and/or develop more contemplative course curricula.
Strategic Scholarship

Co-led by:
Lesley Scibora, Health and Exercise Science, lscibora@stthomas.edu
Kari Zimmerman, History, kezimm@stthomas.edu.

Tentative Schedule:
This FLC will meet twice monthly in the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters.
Schedule to be determine by participants.

Description:
In this FLC, participants will learn strategies to help enhance their scholarly productivity while simultaneously balancing other responsibilities. Facilitators will explore different strategies for scholarship productivity including increasing awareness and challenging resistance, strategic planning and goal setting, accountability, and work-life balance. This FLC specifically focuses on scholarly strategies that are in harmony with teaching and service. Though all are welcome, this FLC is particularly useful for pre-tenure faculty in their 2nd year and beyond. In order to stay consistent with our strategies, we will meet once each month to explore specific strategies with an optional mid-month meeting centered on writing for those who would like the accountability, during the academic year.
Toward and Beyond Sustainability

Co-led by:
Elise Amel, Psychology/Office of Sustainability Initiatives elamel@stthomas.edu
Maria Dahmus, Office of Sustainability Initiatives, medahmus@stthomas.edu
Amir Nadav, Office of Sustainability Initiatives, Amir.Nadav@stthomas.edu

Tentative Schedule:

We would like to meet on Thursdays during convo hour each month which would allow DFC faculty to engage. Here are the dates we think would work given department and curriculum committee meetings.

- September 13-Defining Sustainability and related ideas such as restorative & regenerative activity. Exploring a variety of models including the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- October 11-Connection to Nature-Outdoor activities to understand and discuss human connection to the rest of nature.
- November 8-Environmental Equity and Justice-Understanding ecological privilege inherent in the academic community; elevating the work of marginalized populations who have led environmental justices movements, despite social and political barriers and historic and systemic injustice.
- December 6-What does Sustainability look like at St. Thomas. Review the results of the AASHE STARS report and the Silver rating received July 2018. Discuss areas where faculty can engage their students.
- February 14-Personal Sustainability-Using research and practice to maintain sanity and feelings of hope and empowerment in the face of activism and long-term systemic change.
- March 14-Talking about Sustainability-Communicating with students and peers who don’t want to listen.
- April 18-Sustainability and Expression:-Experiential Engagement through Art sustainability.
- May 9-Stories Exchange-sharing with each other our strategies for engaging our disciplines, peers, and students in the work toward sustainability.
Your Next Chapter? For Faculty Over Fifty

Led by:
Ann Johnson, Assoc VP, Faculty Advancement, Faculty Advancement, a9johnson@stthomas.edu.

Tentative Schedule:
Fall: Convo hour lunch meetings on:
• THURS. Sept. 12
• THURS. Oct. 3
• TUES. Nov. 13
• THURS. Dec. 6

Spring: Will continue through Spring semester at day/time to be finalized later.

Description:
In this FLC we’ll explore how to maintain a positive and curious attitude of engagement with our work, recognizing that later life can be a time of growth, exploration, and finding new projects. Goals/objectives include:
• We’ll clarify what is working and not working in our current work situations
• We’ll explore strategies for finding new pathways and possibilities
• We’ll identify ways St. Thomas could be supporting and recognizing faculty over fifty
Special Topic - Academic Community Engagement (ACE): Engage your Teaching and Scholarship

**Co-led by:**
Jessica Hodge, Center for the Common Good, Department of Sociology & Criminal Justice, jhodge@stthomas.edu
Theresa Ricke-Kiely, Center for the Common Good, tricke-kiely@stthomas.edu
Kelly Sardon-Garrity, Center for the Common Good, garr0033@stthomas.edu

**Eligibility:**
The goal of the community is to provide faculty an in-depth professional development opportunity to learn how to successfully integrate community engagement into their curricula and ultimately serve as advocates for service-learning at UST. Faculty will be encouraged to develop a course that includes a community-engaged component to be taught during the following summer or academic year (AY 2019-2020). Because faculty who complete the entire FLC and complete a community-engaged course that is designated with the Center for the Common Good will be eligible to receive a $1,000 stipend, participation in the faculty learning community is capped at 12 participants.

Faculty (tenured, tenure-track, clinical, 12-month contract, and adjuncts with 3-years continuous experience and a minimum of 6 courses taught per year) are eligible to participate in the faculty learning community.

**Meeting Schedule:**
- Fall semester: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30 pm on September 25, October 16, October 30, November 20, December 11;
- Spring semester dates: TBD

**Description:**
The learning community is designed to benefit faculty who wish to explore service-learning as a pedagogical tool in an in-depth manner, with the intent of implementing it into a specific academic course. It is an opportunity for faculty to discuss teaching, learning, and application of service-learning and civic engagement at UST in an interdisciplinary manner connecting faculty from all colleges on campus. Initial meetings will include discussions about academic community engagement (ACE) and best practices, and as we progress, later meetings will support faculty as they identify
potential community partners and design course assignments/projects so that they are prepared to designate a course with the ACE component.

**SPRING 2019 COMMUNITIES**

**Committing to Racial Consciousness in our STEM Classrooms**

**Co-led by:**
Rebecca Glover, Mathematics Department, rebecca.glover@stthomas.edu
Melissa Loe, Mathematics Department, msloe@stthomas.edu

**Tentative Schedule:**
Meet only in spring semester 2019, roughly every two weeks on Monday or Wednesday at 12:15.

**Description:**
Too often, STEM educators (particularly White STEM educators) don’t acknowledge the link between teaching/learning and racism, believing that our academic fields are “pure” and our classrooms are therefore free of racial biases. However, research on equity in education indicates that students of color are often marginalized in STEM classrooms. Whether intentionally or not, instructors in math/science can create an unwelcoming and inequitable classroom. This Faculty Learning Community will provide an opportunity for STEM faculty members to investigate these issues and how our actions in the classroom can perpetuate a racialized learning environment. We will read, reflect on, and discuss narratives by higher-ed faculty in the collection, *Interrogating Whiteness and Relinquishing Power: White Faculty’s Commitment to Racial Consciousness in STEM Classrooms*, by Nicole Joseph, Chayla Haynes, and Floyd Cobb. Our goal is to challenge ourselves to examine our own racial consciousness and teaching effectiveness and how these are related. In addition, we will work together to develop our teaching in ways that can combat racism and facilitate equitable learning environments for all students. Although this FLC is geared for STEM faculty, we welcome all our interested colleagues.