Semester in Review

This fall, the CTE continued and expanded many of its most popular projects and programs.

Our classroom in Herring 129 was used by seven different faculty who were teaching courses as diverse as “Introduction to the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality” and “Advanced Experimental Biosciences.” The space has become so desirable that it will be in use for classes or study sessions for over 40 hours a week next semester.

On August 17th, we hosted another successful New Faculty Orientation, followed by an equally successful TA Training on the 22nd. And on September 20th and 21st, faculty again opened their doors to be observed by colleagues for our second annual Faculty Owl Days.

We also continued our popular “What’s New in Research on Teaching and Learning” series with two new presentations. On September 14th, Josh Eyler shared research on “Why Failure is Essential for Student Learning,” and on November 16th, Robin Paige helped us understand “Why Collaborative Learning Works and How to Make it Happen.”

Finally, we hosted an intensive half-day workshop on October 11th. Faculty were invited to learn more about the value of “Collecting, Interpreting, and Utilizing Feedback from Students.”

Treybig Teaching & Innovation Colloquy

Thanks to the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Treybig, the CTE will run its first annual Treybig Teaching & Innovation Colloquy this academic year. 8 faculty were selected through a competitive application process, and each will be awarded a $1,000 stipend to participate in a semester-long pedagogy workshop focused on the theme of "Improving Conceptual Understanding." Participants will be asked to:

1. Meet several times over the course of the spring semester.
2. Read articles from the field of teaching and learning prior to each meeting.
3. Design a pedagogical tool (e.g., an assignment, an assessment of prior knowledge, a concept inventory, etc.) and implement the pedagogical tool in courses taught the following academic year.
4. Share knowledge gained in the colloquy with departmental colleagues by the end of the academic year.
A Spotlight on Exceptional Teaching: CTE Teaching Studio

At the beginning of the fall semester the CTE launched a new initiative called the Teaching Studio to shine a spotlight on the exceptional teaching that takes place throughout the year. The Teaching Studio is a virtual space in which Rice faculty can share their experiments, lessons learned, as well as tried and true practices with course design and pedagogical strategies. The Teaching Studio both honors and celebrates the ongoing process to improve teaching and learning for both new and seasoned faculty. Each course in the Teaching Studio Gallery is profiled as a Feature or a Studio Short. Features in the gallery present an in-depth profile of a course outlining the instructor’s pedagogical approach, teaching goals, the teaching strategies they utilize to address these goals, and future plans for course modifications. Studio Shorts present a brief description of a specific teaching strategy focused on addressing a teaching difficulty. There are currently five courses featured in the Teaching Studio and the CTE will be adding new courses on a regular basis. If you are interested in being featured in the Teaching Studio or would like to nominate a course, please contact Robin Paige.

Grad Certificate

Demand for our Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning has increased significantly since we launched the program in 2014. This semester we had 25 Ph.D. students from across the disciplines enroll in UNIV 500 (Principles of Effective College Teaching) and 8 in UNIV 502 (Teaching Practicum). In addition, UNIV 501 (Research on Teaching and Learning) is almost full for the spring with 26 students. To date, 22 graduate students have completed the entire Certificate program, and several have gone on to accept tenure-track positions at teaching-intensive colleges.