CTE Recognized at International Conference

The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education hosts an annual, international conference that brings together faculty and staff working to promote teaching excellence at their home institutions. Our senior staff regularly attend this conference, and the work we have been doing at Rice was visible in a variety of ways this year.

CTE Director Josh Eyler participated in two well-attended, cross-institutional panels where he shared the work we have done to establish Faculty Owl Days and our new Umbrella IRB for teaching related research at Rice.

But most significantly, The CTE received a substantial honor when we were selected as the winner of the network’s 2017 Innovation Award.

The Innovation Award was established to recognize the development of original ideas that contribute to the improvement of teaching, learning, and the general effectiveness of higher education faculty throughout the world. And we were selected from a competitive pool of finalists for the work Betsy Barre and Justin Esarey did to develop our widely-used, open-source Course Workload Estimator.

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5th Annual Symposium on Teaching and Learning

Friday, January 5, 2018
11:00AM-1:30PM
Brockman Hall, Room 101

This year’s Symposium will focus on using discussion to facilitate learning. Our featured speaker will be Dr. Jay Howard from Butler University, who will be presenting a keynote titled, “Why Won’t They Talk: Using Discussion to Facilitate Learning.” Following Dr. Howard’s talk, participants will spend time collaborating with colleagues while enjoying a boxed lunch.

As always, all Rice University faculty, staff, students, and alumnae/i are encouraged to attend. Registration and lunch are free. You can RSVP for the event HERE.
Gathering Mid-Semester Feedback

Collecting feedback from students before the end of the semester has been well documented to positively affect student learning outcomes at the end of the semester, especially when accompanied by a consultation. Mid-semester feedback sessions facilitated by a CTE staff member are among the more popular services we offer at the CTE. Instructors interested in this service are invited to set up an initial consultation after which a member of the CTE staff will come to their classroom to hold a discussion with students about the course. To ensure anonymity, the instructor is not present during the session and the discussion is based on a series of questions that have been formulated in advance. After the session takes place, a subsequent meeting will be held to discuss the results and how best to utilize the feedback to achieve the course learning goals. These sessions can be arranged at any point in the semester, though they are most effective during the first half of the term. In addition, many instructors also choose to design feedback surveys to be distributed in-class or through Canvas. The CTE staff is available to consult on the development of questions as well as the results from feedback surveys. For more information on the value and use of student feedback please check out our blog post "Responding to Student Feedback: An Opportunity to Make Our Teaching Visible."

CTE Teaching & Innovation Colloquy

Thanks to the generous support of Professor Mikki Hebl and the Robert Foster Cherry Award, the CTE will run its 2nd annual Teaching & Innovation Colloquy in the 2017-2018 academic year. Ten faculty were selected through a competitive application process, and each will be awarded a $600 stipend to participate in a semester-long pedagogy workshop focused on the theme of "Using Discussion for Meaningful Learning." Participants will be asked to:

1. Meet 4 times over the course of the academic year.
2. Read selections from two books on discussion-based pedagogies.
3. Share knowledge gained in the colloquy with departmental colleagues by the end of the academic year.
4. Implement a particular pedagogical strategy in a course or courses taught the following academic year and share results to the CTE.

Updates on Graduate Student Programming

Demand for our Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning has increased significantly since we launched the program in 2014. This semester we had our largest enrollments ever, with 29 Ph.D. students from across the disciplines enroll in UNIV 500 (Principles of Effective College Teaching) and 13 in UNIV 502 (Teaching Practicum). In addition, UNIV 501 (Research on Teaching and Learning) is almost full for the spring with 19 students. To date, more than 100 graduate students have participated in the Certificate program, and 28 have completed it. Several Certificate alumnae/i have gone on to accept tenure-track positions at teaching-intensive colleges.

The CTE also facilitated university-wide T.A. training again in the fall, and—for the first time—we ran an orientation session for graduate students who are instructors of record. We’ll be leading another version of this orientation on Monday, December 11th, from 11:00-1:00 in Herring 129 for those who will be instructors of record in Spring 2018.

Teaching Studio

Are you trying a new teaching strategy in your course? Do you have an effective solution to a common teaching dilemma? If so, please consider submitting your course to the CTE’s Teaching Studio. Contact Robin Paige for more details or to make a submission.