



UNIVERSITY *of*  
DENVER

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OFFICE OF  
TEACHING & LEARNING

2020

# Annual Report

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Prepared by: Leslie D. Cramblet Alvarez, PhD  
Director, Office of Teaching and Learning

# ABOUT US



## Mission

The mission of the Office of Teaching and Learning is to foster innovation and strengthen practices in teaching, course design and curriculum development to improve learning across the university.

### **Alignment with Impact 2025**

The Office of Teaching and Learning supports Transformative Directions and Strategic Initiatives identified in the Impact 2025 Strategic Plan.

#### **One: Students Learning and Leading in a Diverse and Global 21st Century**

*SI 2: Enhancing and Expanding our Learning Environment*

#### **Two: Discovery and Design in an Age of Collaboration**

*SI 1: Faculty Talent, Excellence, and Diversity Initiative*

*SI 4: Knowledge Bridges*

#### **Three: Engagement and Empowerment in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West**

*SI 3: DU as an Anchor Institution*

#### **Four: One DU**

*SI 2: A community of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence*

### **Alignment with 4D Student Experience**

The OTL plays a central role in supporting learning and development which is the core of the 4D student experience. Through programming aimed at inclusive teaching, inclusive assessment, excellence in teaching in learning, and application of best practice to the university classroom, our work supports the faculty's ability to enact the four dimensions.

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Leslie Cramblet Alvarez, Ph.D.  
Director  
Office of Teaching and Learning

Dear DU community,

I began my role as director on January 6th, 2020. At that time it was impossible to know that in a few short months we would be transitioning to remote operations and preparing faculty for an online spring. I am so grateful for the weeks I was able to spend on our beautiful campus, learn from my new colleagues, and experience the warm welcome of the DU community. It is also hard to believe that it has been a year since I arrived thanks to the amorphous nature of “COVID time” in which days, months, and years feel interchangeable.

I am so proud of the accomplishments the Office of Teaching and Learning has achieved over the past year. As we watched the news unfold related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we knew we’d need to move fast to support faculty in a rapidly changing educational landscape. We worked to anticipate and respond to emergent needs while building relationships and forging sustainable, systematic support structures that can live beyond our response to crisis. Our office formed innovative collaborations, developed programming and content, and interacted with record numbers of faculty.

Despite the demands of a rapid response, we continued our good work that was already underway and adjusted where needed to keep DU on the cutting edge while centering diversity, equity and inclusion in curriculum and course design. We are committed to supporting faculty teaching excellence and delivering on the DU promise of a world-class educational experience.

This work could not have been done without the tireless dedication of the OTL team who welcomed me, trusted me, and met the unique challenges of 2020 with optimism and grace. I am grateful for their expertise, dedication, and creative approaches to the challenges of the year. I am excited for a post-pandemic future for both our office and the university. This report highlights not only our response to the pandemic but also our continuing efforts to innovate and provide a sacred space for conversations about teaching and learning.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Leslie Cramblet Alvarez".

Leslie Cramblet Alvarez

# LETTER FROM THE VICE PROVOST OF FACULTY AFFAIRS



Kate Willink, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Faculty  
Affairs

Dear colleagues,

When I first stepped into my newly-created VPFA role during the summer of 2019, I felt excited about the past and potential contributions of the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL). Since that point, my excitement has transformed into tremendous pride about the ways in which the OTL continues to positively impact, lead, and shape the culture of teaching, learning, and assessment at the University of Denver and beyond. Thanks to the leadership and vision of Dr. Leslie Cramblet Alvarez, the individual and collective talents of the OTL team have flourished, growing into a vibrant mission-critical organization within the DU community.

Housed within the Office of the Provost, the OTL is the central hub of teaching, learning, and assessment expertise, support, and development for faculty of all tracks and series across campus. Furthermore, this office serves as the nexus of three critical domains of Faculty Affairs at DU: Teaching and Learning, Faculty Development, and Faculty Lifecycles. This office strives to serve the role of curator, collaborator, incubator of ideas, and sanctuary for all faculty at all points of their careers and across all series.

The confluence of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial reckonings called on the OTL to model what it means to be a learning organization whose actions reflect our commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Transcending the boundaries of DU, our work in these dimensions has been featured in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, Higher Learning Commission, podcasts, conferences, and forthcoming issues of peer-reviewed research journals. The OTL is at the helm of informing the national conversation on teaching, learning, and assessment in higher education: this is important work that is foundational for building the post-pandemic university for many years to come.

In addition to the many accomplishments outlined in this report, the development and launch of the Faculty Institute for Inclusive Teaching (FIIT), is especially notable. At the request of the Chancellor, the Institute was created by our very own in-house experts, and is the first comprehensive, asynchronous faculty development program focused solely on Inclusive Pedagogies. A pride point for the university, FIIT is the first institute of its kind in higher education, and we look forward to launching its latest iteration in the Cornerstone platform.



# LETTER FROM THE VICE PROVOST OF FACULTY AFFAIRS



Kate Willink, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Faculty  
Affairs

Because asking people to learn is asking them to change, the office serves as the fundamental engine of pedagogical and curricular transformation across campus. We engage with faculty on micro-, meso-, and macro-levels to catalyze change across the university. Whether the OTL is cultivating change at the micro-level when faculty shift instructional practices to positively shape student learning, or at the meso-level through peer-to-peer mentoring and program assessment, or at the macro-level through changes in policies and community-building practices, the OTL is an exemplar for kindling organizational transformation.

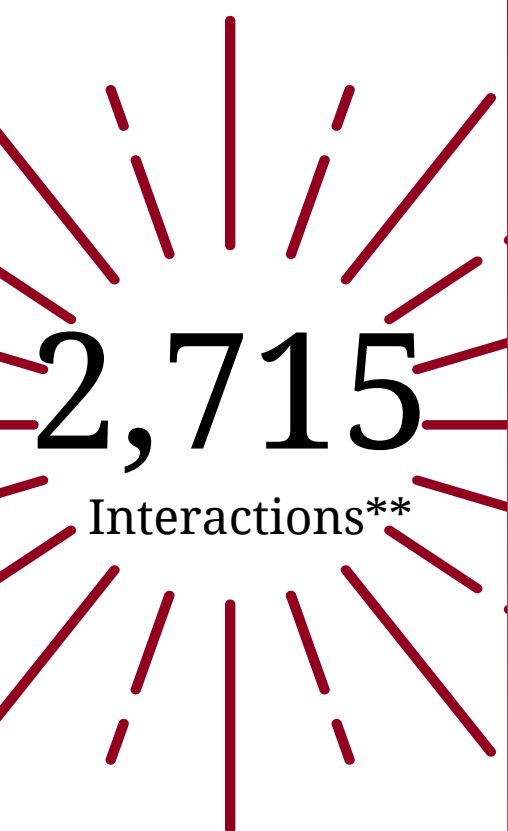
In celebrating the accomplishments of the OTL, we simultaneously celebrate the invaluable contributions faculty make to the very fabric of teaching, learning, and assessment at DU. None of this work is possible without the dedication, commitment, and passion of faculty. We look forward to continued and new opportunities to re-imagine and strengthen teaching, learning, and assessment in partnership with you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Willink". The script is fluid and cursive.

Kate Willink

# 2020 BY THE NUMBERS



**215** Programs, webinars,  
office hours, and events

**1563** Faculty attendees  
**637 unique\***

**693** Staff attendees  
**387 unique**

**217** Grad & Undergrad  
student participants

**50**  
Blogs published

**87,656**  
OTL website page  
views, 53,728 users  
(with duplicates)

**240**  
Consultations

**11**  
Campus-wide  
committees with OTL  
staff representation

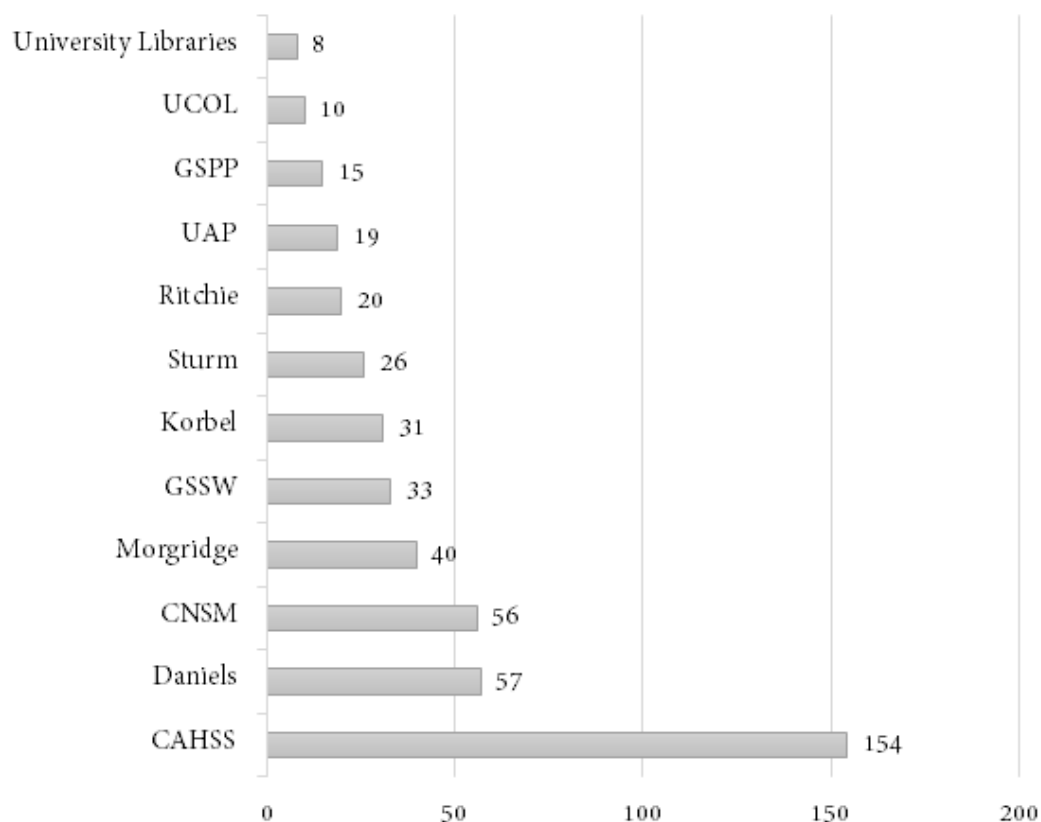
\*"Attendees" does not include participation in Faculty Institute for Inclusive Teaching (FIIT).

\*\*"Interactions" includes all attendance and consultations. Does not include FIIT, student interactions, or asynchronous consultations.

# FACULTY PARTICIPANTS

This table and figure demonstrate the OTL's significant reach across faculty series and unit in 2020.

Series	N
Tenure line	276
Teaching	103
Clinical	28
Visiting	19
Lecturer	5
Research	2
Library	11
Professor of Practice	27
Adjunct	146
GTA	4
Total	637



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## January/February

COVID Response begins

Collaboration with UCOL for training and instructional design support

OTL begins remote operations

SARS System implemented for consultation appointments

Student/Faculty Partnerships Program starts remotely

Inclusive Teaching Series launched

Peer-to-Peer Sessions (pre-cursor to Peer Teaching Mentoring group) start

## May/June

New OTL Director starts

Trans in College FLC in session

Z. Nicolazzo talk-partnership with ODEI

Parenting & Productivity FLC in session

Planning for Success VPFA session

ePortfolio (eFLC) in session

SoTL FLC in session

Rethinking Mentoring-NCFDD speaker, Rosemarie Roberts

## March/April

Spring survey

Assessment Report submitted to VPAA

Inclusive Teaching Practices site launch

Teaching Toolkit launch

IRISE Post-doctoral Fellow joins OTL



# YEAR IN REVIEW

Four sections of Teaching Online Short Course offered

Hyflex Course Design Institute launched

Faculty Institute for Inclusive Teaching launched

Foundations of Teaching and Learning launched

Program Assessment Workshop series

Faculty Developer of Online Learning starts

September/October

Fall section of Teaching Online Short Course offered

Teaching Online Short Course-Advanced Practice launched

Instructional Designers paired with partner units

Self-paced, asynchronous Hyflex Course Design Institute launched

Write a winning book proposal with Dr. Badia Ahad VPFA session

July/August

Partners in Pedagogy Program launched

Instructional Design (ID) Team hired

Fall Survey administered

White Fragility and Our Teaching FLC in session

Canvas Coaching Series launched

Faculty Fellows and Partners identified

Peer Teaching Mentor Program launched

Higher Learning Commission visit

IT-Business Analyst joins OTL team

Course Reviews with IDs launched

November/December

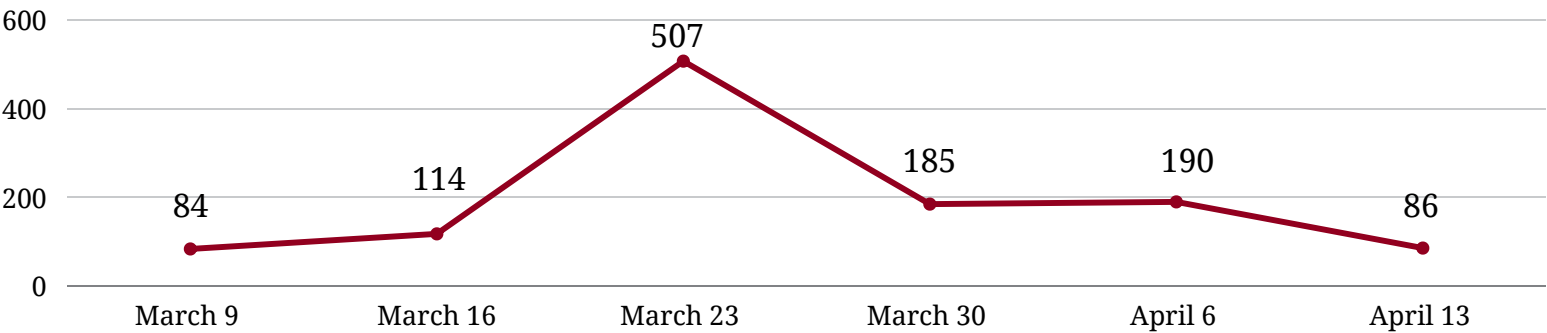
# RESPONDING TO CRISIS

As the global pandemic was declared, the OTL navigated simultaneous pivots—expanding externally-facing services and transforming our internally-facing practices.

As an office, we made our own rapid change to working remotely. Flexibility and frequent communication were crucial in the early days. Office staff served as Zoom co-pilots for “just in time” programming, held 1:1 consultations to get faculty started with Zoom and Canvas, and produced blogs on common issues and pain points.

Our monthly newsletter transformed to a weekly lifeline of communication as we added programs and shared resources. **A grassroots cadre of faculty (35 in all) volunteered to be peer-to-peer mentors,** holding coffee hours and being booked for consultations, and we worked closely with our University College colleagues to help manage our overload consultations and tap into instructional design expertise.


Weekly Interactions with Faculty During Height of COVID Response



## COVID response snapshot: March 9-April 13, 2020

523 

Unique faculty were served and we logged over 1,200 faculty interactions in a 6 week period as we transitioned to emergency remote teaching

30+ 

Programs including webinars on Zoom, Canvas, and transitioning to remote teaching

26 

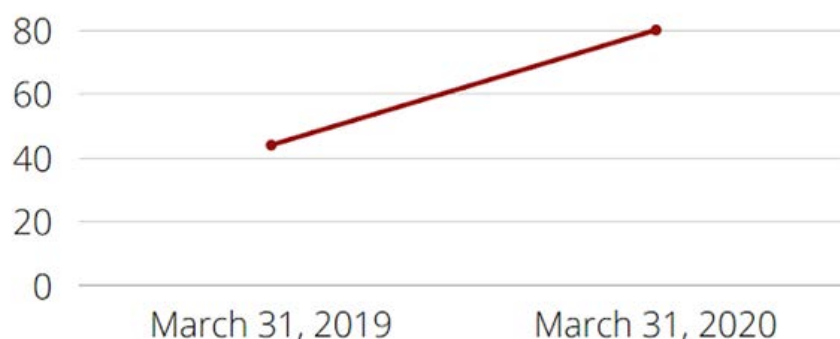
Blogs were written by OTL staff and faculty guests responding to emergent needs during the height of the pandemic

14+ 

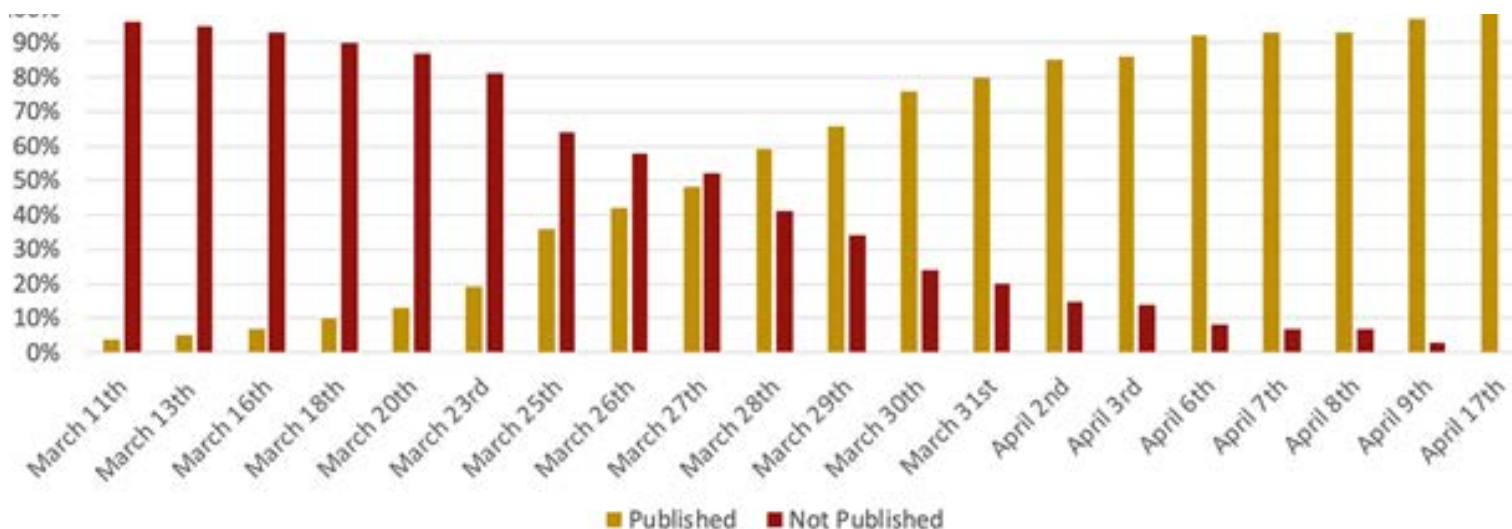
Website changes including new pages, links among services, online content added to keep the DU community up to date and support faculty needs

# RESPONDING TO CRISIS

In March 2019, only 44% (2,859 of 6,484) of all available courses were published in Canvas. This indicated low rates of overall Canvas use that would need to be increased for the launch of the spring 2020 term.



The OTL had a critical role in supporting faculty through this transition. IT provided daily Canvas reports which allowed us to chart the progress toward all courses being published in time for spring. DU achieved 100% course publication by the end of the second week of class.



In response to COVID-19 the OTL and VPFA developed strategic partnerships for more systemic, longer-lasting collaborations.

## Teaching and Learning Support Strategic Leadership Team

Originally a weekly crisis management meeting, this evolved into standing meetings comprised of the leaders from Faculty Affairs, IT, and the OTL. This team now meets regularly to consider structural supports for campus-wide issues at the confluence of technology and teaching support.

## Creation of Liaisons to Faculty Affairs Associate Deans

Two OTL staff members worked closely with the director to become office liaisons to nine of our university's academic units. Each liaison communicates regularly with their assigned associate deans which allows for both the transmission and gathering of information.

# SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

Signature programs that have supported faculty for many years were adapted to meet current needs both with regard to content and delivery.

## Student-Faculty Partnership Program

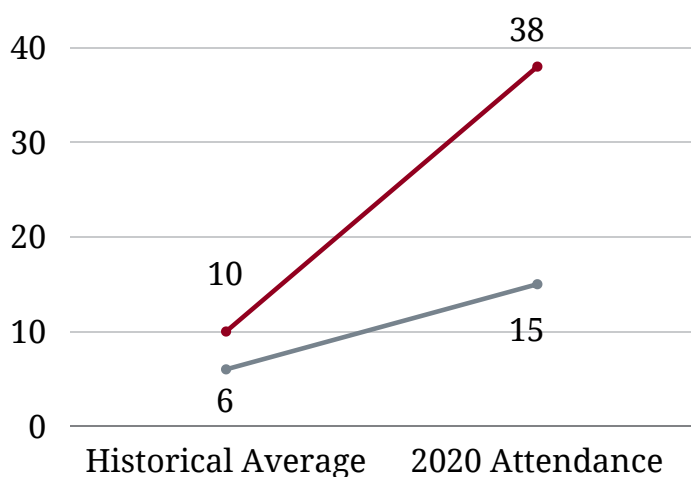
In the Student-Faculty Partnership program, students and faculty members learn and work together as partners in addressing the question of how we can create more engaging, inclusive, learning-rich environments for every student.

This Spring 2020, **13 faculty members and 13 students** participated in the program, **which was run entirely online for the first time**. Participants' closing reflections, as well as participant comments throughout the program and field notes and observations collected by the program facilitator, indicate that both student and faculty participants found the experience to be extremely valuable/rewarding.

“

*At first, I was a little bit hesitant whether or not the program would be meaningful, with the class's move to virtual ... And I'd assumed that the feedback given in a virtual setting wouldn't be translatable to my own class and maybe would be a waste of time. I couldn't have been more wrong about that assumption. Because the reality is that the opposite was true, which is, **I couldn't have picked a better time to be involved in this program. Because the feedback was especially meaningful when I'm trying to migrate an on-ground class to virtual**, because the things like using zoom polling in place of nonverbal cues and kind of giving mechanisms to still feel like students are engaged, like that feedback was very meaningful in this virtual class.*

”



- Summer Teaching Online Short Course Sessions
- Fall Teaching Online Short Course Session

## Teaching Online Short Course

The Teaching Online Short Course prepares DU faculty to teach online. We re-developed this course to incorporate ideas such as how to balance rigor using both synchronous and asynchronous activities, and how to use the Inclusive Teaching Checklist to integrate communication ground rules. We also added a requirement that participants must meet with an Instructional Designer who will review their course and provide feedback.

Two self-paced sections were offered during July and August. Another session was offered in the fall term where faculty moved through the course as a cohort.

“

*I think **this course would be helpful to everyone during this strange and unprecedented time**, including folks who are scheduled to teach face to face or hybrid.*

*Being able to experience online learning from a student perspective gave me a lot of insight. **Even small things, such as navigating a Canvas page from that perspective, was useful.***

”

# SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

## Course Design Institute: Redesigned for Hyflex

The purpose of the two-week, mostly-asynchronous Hyflex Course Design Institute was to support faculty members in designing Hyflex learning experiences that result in significant learning – that is, learning that has the potential to change students’ lives in lasting and important ways. While the primary focus of the institute was on hybrid-flexible courses (that is, courses that include both face-to-face and online instruction and that allow students to choose between these different modes of participation), the institute was also intended to be supportive to faculty members who were planning any course that included both face-to-face and online elements (including hybrid courses), or who were planning “pivot ready”, fully face-to-face courses in the coming academic year. **We also collaborated with IT to hold sessions in one of the newly updated Hyflex classrooms so faculty members could experience this format like students.**

**73** Summer participants

**12** Divisions represented

**20** Currently enrolled in a self-paced online version

“

*I learned a lot from talking with colleagues, who work in different fields, disciplines, and modalities. It helped me get a sense for the range of experiences my students will be having this fall and how my course fits into that big, complicated puzzle. **I am leaving the Hyflex CDI with greater perspective and empathy for my students’ experiences.***

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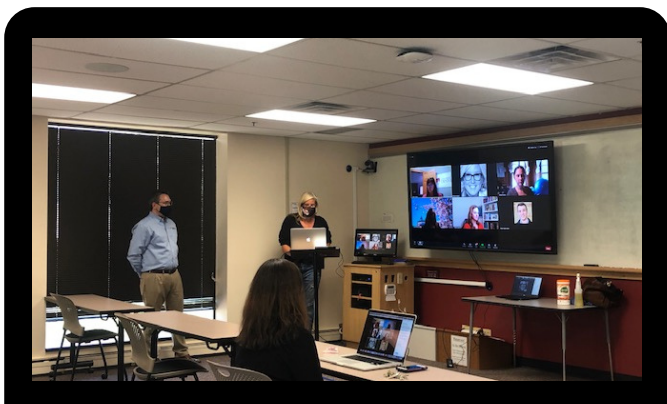
**100%**

of participants who completed the final evaluation said they would recommend this institute to a colleague

The Hyflex Course Design Institute ran twice in Summer 2020 (July 20-31 and August 10-21), with a **total of 73 participants**. Participants noted that some of their most valuable take-aways included:

- more intentionality and confidence in designing their courses around significant learning outcomes
- new, creative ideas for assessments and activities that aligned with these outcomes
- willingness/ability to be more flexible and adaptive and open in their teaching
- a realization of the importance of creating/building community
- a sense of preparedness for the fall quarter

A review of participants’ final deliverables (alignment map and self-assessment rubric) indicates that they achieved the intended learning outcomes.





# INCLUSIVE TEACHING

The OTL is committed to creating a culture of inclusive teaching across campus, aligned with the larger DU approach that diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded in our work, rather than an add-on.

## The Inclusive Teaching Practices

**Website** This open-access site is rooted in an understanding that inclusive teaching practices require us to engage the wealth of intersecting social identities and positionalities that faculty and students bring to the classroom. Whether face-to-face or online, inclusion must not be an afterthought. Growing out of the Community+Values initiative, this project aims to solve complex problems, engage multiple perspectives, foster greater belonging, show compassion beyond boundaries and shape the future of our world.

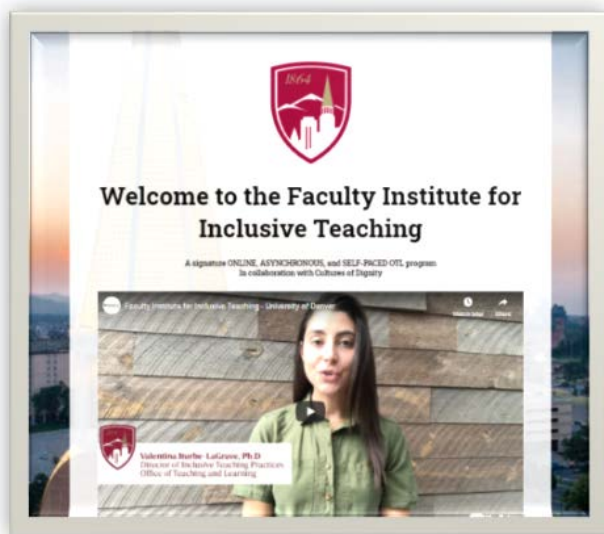


## 6,863 Page Views

June 1-Oct. 13, 2020

## The Faculty Institute for Inclusive Teaching (FIIT)

The Faculty Institute for Inclusive Teaching (FIIT) is an interactive, self-paced, asynchronous online program. In August 2020, the Chancellor made a historic announcement formally requiring all faculty to complete the course by the first day of the academic quarter. While continuing to offer its pre-Covid programming, FIIT became the first formally required course in the OTL's history. This signature program consists of eight content modules, each exploring a specific topic and provides a definition, inclusive teaching content, pedagogical tools, and a critical self-reflection prompt. Through FIIT, faculty revitalize their teaching abilities to ensure the academic success of an increasingly diverse, dynamic, and vibrant student body.



**1,301 total  
enrolled  
learners**

all faculty, adjuncts, and GTAs  
associated with Partners in  
Pedagogy program



# INCLUSIVE TEACHING

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## Advancing Equity in the Online Classroom

Launched in response to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on faculty and students' whole self and wellbeing, this 6-week workshop series focused on providing real-time teaching strategies to ensure implementation of inclusive and equitable learning experiences in the online setting. Designed and facilitated by the OTL's director of inclusive teaching practices in collaboration with the director of the office of diversity, equity, and inclusion, sessions explored: 1) Inclusion Basics in the Online Classroom, 2) Understanding Trauma, 3) Inclusive/Exclusive Language, 4) Using Content and Pedagogy to Promote Student Engagement, 5) Universal Design, and 6) Resources for Teaching Contentious Topics.



Note: some faculty attended more than one session.



## Inaugural IRISE Postdoctoral Fellow

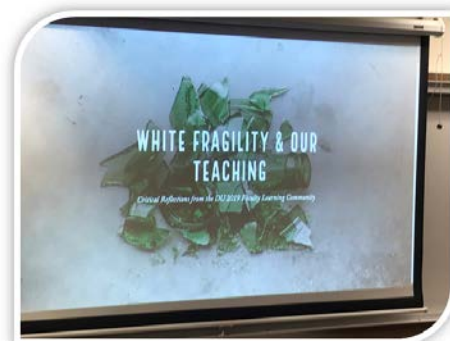
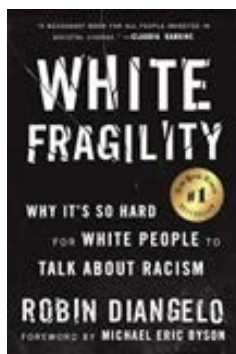
Dr. Christine Vega is currently an Interdisciplinary Research Institute for the Study of (in)Equality (IRISE) postdoctoral fellow at DU, working within the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL). IRISE “was established in 2013 by the University of Denver to serve as an incubator for faculty and students to engage in the development of cutting edge interdisciplinary research on issues of inequality, social justice, and inclusivity” (IRISE Website). Christine works directly with the directors of Inclusive Teaching Practices and Academic Assessment to implement inclusive pedagogies, critical theories in teaching and learning and contribute innovative lenses of analysis and praxis.

# FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) are informal cross-disciplinary groups, facilitated and run by faculty and/or OTL staff, that meet regularly to explore teaching topics in depth. Participants in FLCs learn from each other, investigate and assess teaching methods within a supportive cohort and reflect and become more purposeful about their current practice.

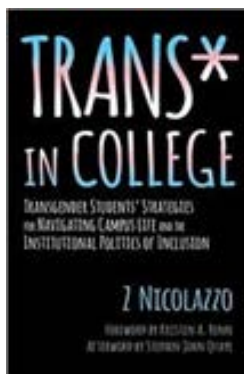
## ***White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism (2018) DiAngelo***

This book study was led for the 3rd year at DU and for the first time by our new addition to the OTL, IRISE Postdoctoral Fellow. The OTL provides faculty facing services, support, and pedagogical tools and resources to support the success of students and staff across the university. Part of these efforts are by providing Faculty Learning Communities offered and facilitated by the OTL staff and Faculty Fellows each quarter. **A panel of participants along with OTL leaders shared their experiences at the 2020 Diversity Summit.**



## ***Trans\* in College***

Centered around Dr. Z Nicolazzo's book *Trans\* in College: Transgender Students' Strategies for Navigating Campus Life and the Institutional Politics of Inclusion* (2017). Facilitated by the Director of Inclusive Teaching and the Director of Faculty Learning Groups and Scholarship, community members read the text alongside critical pedagogy scholarship to develop a deep understanding of students' needs and best practices in responsive curriculum design, classroom management and assessment of teaching and learning.



Author Z  
Nicolazzo visits  
DU in February  
2020 in a  
collaboration  
between OTL and  
ODEI



322

FLC Attendees  
184 unique

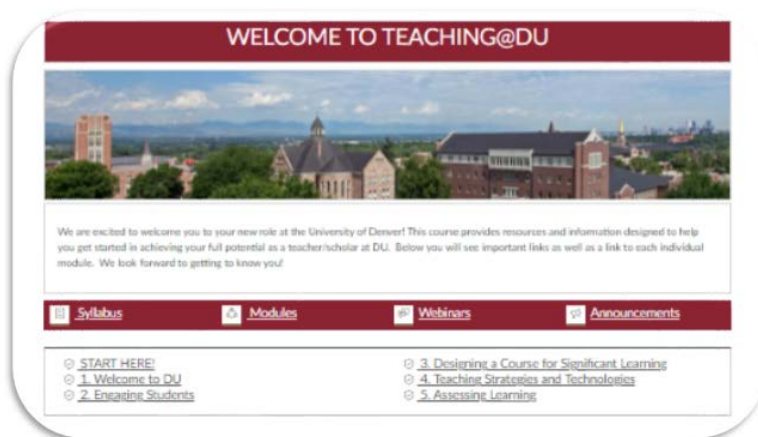
## **Other FLCs from 2020**

Parenting and Productivity  
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)  
eFLC--ePortfolios-Led by faculty member, Kara Taczak

# FACULTY ONBOARDING

## Teaching@DU

The OTL engages with new faculty each summer through participation in our online course. This course includes content focused on engaging students, designing a course for significant learning, teaching strategies and technology, and assessment. This course was adapted in recognition of needs related to online learning.



## Onboarding Committee

Members of the OTL participated in a year-long planning committee convened by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. We engaged in thoughtful reflection and planning alongside faculty, associate deans, and Mentoring and Onboarding Across Rank and Series (MOARS) representatives. This group built a year-long onboarding plan and the OTL designed and delivered a synchronous welcome session in August. Moreover, the director of the OTL, along with other campus leaders started a tradition of sending a welcome letter to incoming new faculty in July.



Time (approx.)	Activity
10-10:15	Welcome & opening activity
10:15-10:25	Breakout rooms
10:25-10:40	Debrief breakout discussion
10:40-11:05	OTL virtual tour
11:05-11:20	Q&A and send off to final activity
11:20-noon	Choose your own adventure with OTL experts

# PROGRAM REDESIGN PILOT

The OTL piloted the Program Re-Design Institute during the 2019-20 academic year. Led collaboratively by the Director of Academic Assessment and the Director of Faculty Learning Communities, the pilot aimed to embed program assessment throughout the process of curricular renewal. Too often, assessment is treated as an after-thought to meet compliance guidelines. Alternatively, assessment that informs and supports curricular decisions can grow into an essential tool for faculty.

Adapted from Texas A&M's Program [Re]Design model, the OTL piloted the Program Re-Design Institute in resonance with important milestones in the journey of curricular assessment and evaluation:



DU faculty who participated in the pilot began developing a strategic plan for redesigning curricula and identifying solutions for the common challenges of program assessment. Additionally, the pilot began creating connections between previously siloed processes and stakeholders:

- Academic program guidelines (Office of the Registrar)
- Program assessment (OTL)
- Curricular re-design (individual departments).

Although COVID-19 temporarily paused pilot activities in spring of 2020, the OTL is proud to share that the Marketing department from the Daniels College of Business completed the institute and other departments—Communication Studies (CAHSS), Computer Science (RSECS), Media Film and Journalism Studies (CAHSS), and Spanish (CAHSS)—have continued their curricular renewal activities during the pandemic. The OTL looks forward to consulting with these programs to support their efforts and exploring a potentially new iteration of the Program Re-Design Institute for the 2021-20 academic year.

# PROGRAM INNOVATIONS

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COVID created the need to adapt both training topics and modalities. The OTL engaged in thoughtful programming adjustments and content creation to support faculty as they adapted to emergency remote teaching and the start of the fall and learned new modalities. This section summarizes new programs, content, and major changes to program delivery.

## Canvas Coaching Series

A half-hour session was held each week with “just-in-time” Canvas support targeted to address needs such as midterms, managing the gradebook, engaging in online discussions, and transitioning Canvas courses from quarter to quarter. **A total of 41 faculty attended one or more of these sessions.**

## DU Teaching Toolkit

Our first-ever Teaching Tool Kit created multiple entry points for faculty to engage with online teaching and learning in a self-paced manner. This was launched during the summer to allow for asynchronous options to engage in fall planning.

## Canvas Course Reviews

With the hire of our team of instructional Designers (IDs), we added a new component to our Teaching Online Short Course. Upon completing the course, faculty are invited to share their Canvas course with an ID who reviews the course following an OTL-created rubric. The faculty member and ID meet to discuss areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

## Self Study Hyflex CDI

This course, offered to cohorts during the summer, has been adapted into a self-paced asynchronous course that is being **offered over winter break with 20 registrants.**

## Canvas Basics Webinar

This webinar was offered to assist faculty in launching their courses for fall quarter. Topics included: using the Canvas interface, importing a template and/or previous course content, adding assignments, using the gradebook, and other important things to keep in mind before publishing a course. **A total of 15 faculty participated.**

## Online Teaching and Learning Glossary

Because so many new modalities were being offered in fall, we created an online glossary to assist in understanding the differences and similarities and provide a common vocabulary to the campus.

## Teaching Online: Advanced Practice

In response to faculty requests for a “2.0 version” of our Teaching Online Short Course, our faculty developers and instructional design team have developed a teaching online advanced practice opportunity. This is a two-week, online, self-paced course which launched December 9, 2020. **A total of 18 faculty completed the course over winter break (Dec. 2020-Jan 2021).**



# PROGRAM INNOVATIONS

The pandemic created opportunities for innovative programming to engage graduate students while supporting faculty in the classroom. The new programs summarized here focused on **preparing future faculty**.

## **Foundations of Teaching and Learning Online Course for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)**

This is an asynchronous, self-paced, online course for GTAs. The course is the first of its kind on our campus, prior to this there was no central training for GTAs. The course is anchored in inclusive and critical pedagogies, and introduces students to resources and provides an overview of the latest best practices in higher education and educational technology.

## **Foundations of Teaching and Learning**

An asynchronous, self-paced, online course for GTAs at the University of Denver



113

Graduate students completed this course

Learning goals include the ability to recognize, assess and respond to inequities in real-time through a formative and supportive lens that builds shared understanding of institutional diversity, equity and inclusion frameworks, goals and expectations.



**Partners in Pedagogy Program (P3) for Graduate Teaching Assistants.** This program prepares and supports ten graduate students in instructional support roles in various academic departments while also advancing their professional identity, academic management, and academic leadership skills. These graduate teaching assistants are charged with 1) providing faculty support; 2) providing technical support; 3) and implementing fundamental tenets of inclusive pedagogy.

These students are paired with faculty based on three criteria: 1) Faculty teaching contentious and controversial topics; 2) Faculty teaching large courses; and 3) Faculty under duress. Graduate students in this program meet the faculty's need for real-time pedagogical support. Graduate teaching assistants completed the Foundations in Teaching and Learning Canvas course and FIIT to develop a robust foundation in best practices in teaching, learning, and inclusive praxis. They are overseen and mentored by the Faculty Fellow of the Partners in Pedagogy Program.



# FACULTY FELLOWS & PARTNERS

In 2020 the OTL expanded faculty involvement through salary savings and the institutional investment in teaching supports.

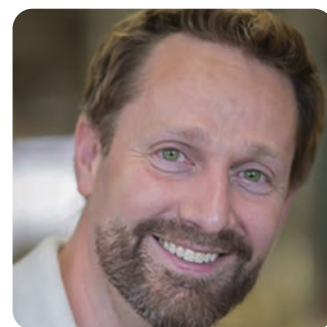


**Dr. Paul Michalec**  
**OTL Faculty Fellow**

Paul spearheads initiatives intended to foster a culture of community-building and greater collegial engagement on our campus. He facilitates the Heart of Higher Education learning community.

**Dr. Michael Caston**  
**Faculty Fellow of SoTL**

Michael was selected to lead a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) focusing on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.



**Dr. Laura Sponsler**  
**Faculty Scholar of Teaching & Professional Faculty**

Laura examines the role of colleges and universities in creating more democratic practices for all constituents and institutionalizing the civic mission of higher education

**Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado**  
**Peer Teaching Mentor Leader**

Lina was selected to identify Peer Teaching Mentors and serve as the campus leader for this work.



**Dr. Keith Gehring**  
**Faculty Fellow of Partners in Pedagogy Program**

Keith was selected to shepherd the pilot of the Partners in Pedagogy program in collaboration with the director of inclusive teaching.

**Dr. Brian Gonzales**  
**Faculty Fellow of Equitable Professorial Experiences**

Brian was selected to lead a Faculty Learning Community on Anti-racist Teaching and Reciprocal Empathy.

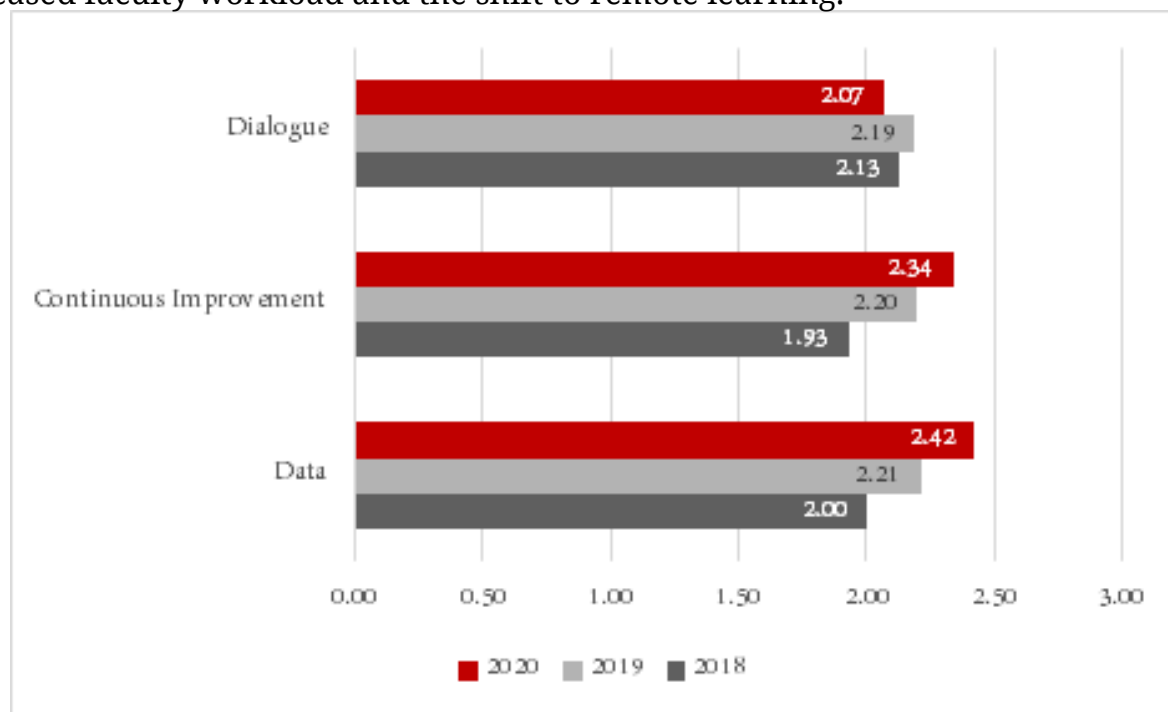


# ASSESSMENT AT DU

The Director of Academic Assessment and centralized assessment efforts are housed in the OTL. While leading new initiatives in 2020, the OTL continued to sustain ongoing program assessment efforts to support Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaffirmation of accreditation. We acknowledged the heavy academic, cognitive, and emotional workload faculty have lifted, and continue to lift, during the pandemic. Subsequently, we streamlined reports and asked professors to submit responses to a brief online survey about their program assessment practices. This helped DU remain attuned to the realities of COVID-19 and our value for excellent education and robust student learning.

## Annual Program Assessment

In 2020 96% of departments/units submitted an assessment report which was rated on three dimensions using a rubric; 1) dialogue about assessment, 2) continuous improvement, and 3) quality of data collected. The figure below indicates improvement over years past in data quality and "closing the loop" or using assessment data for continuous improvement. Dialogue (documented instances of discussing assessment efforts) was understandably lower this year due to increased faculty workload and the shift to remote learning.



Average assessment rubric ratings

## Contributions to Higher Learning Commission Self-study and Visit

Every ten years, the University of Denver undergoes reaffirmation of Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation. The most recent visit occurred in Fall of 2020. As part of the HLC accreditation process, DU must articulate how teaching, learning, and assessment contribute to educational excellence. The OTL contributed to the preparation of the self-study narrative, development of training materials, and preparation of the DU community for the visit.

# ASSESSMENT AT DU

## HLC-related Activities

- Service on a campus-wide DU accreditation committee
- Writing HLC assurance arguments regarding the status program assessment
- Preparing the DU community for the HLC visit through educational blogs, videos and the curation/development of resources for a Canvas course aimed at preparing faculty, staff, and administration for the site visit.
- Delivering an educational session for Faculty Senate to prepare professors for engaging with HLC

## Assessment-focused Programming

In addition to leading assessment efforts on campus, the Director of Assessment is tasked with cultivating a culture of assessment on campus. To that end, **Assessment Virtual Cafe's** were offered in the lead up to the deadline to annual assessment reports. And, a summer series, **Assessment Professional Development Series**, was offered to demystify the assessment process and support stakeholders as they plan for program assessment. **A total of 20 people attended the summer series.**

## Grant Involvement and Support

The following grants and associated assessment activities are currently supported by OTL staff.

- 2017-2022: National Science Foundation: Cultivating Inclusive Identities of Engineers and Computer Scientists: Expanding Efforts to Infuse Inclusive Excellence in Undergraduate Curricula (\$310,215) – OTL, RSECS
- 2019: IRISE Equity and Inclusion in the Teaching Practices of Higher Education: Interdisciplinary and Strategic Research and Praxis DU IRISE Post-Doctoral Fellow (\$105,000)

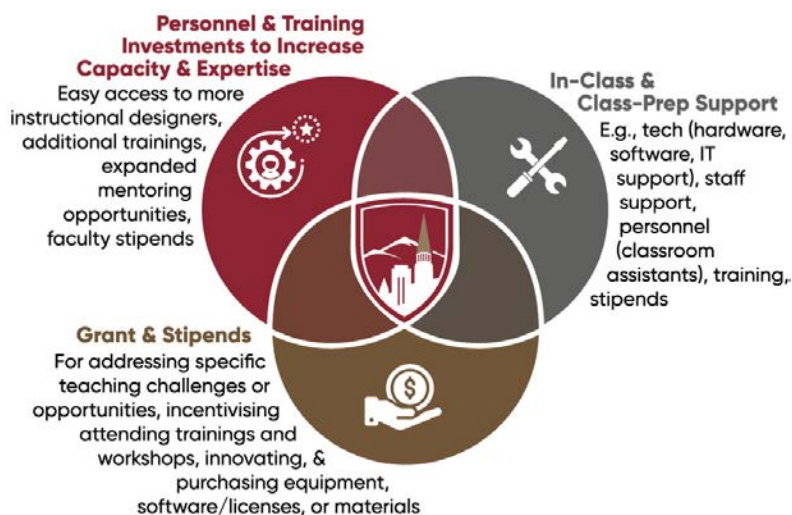
## Collaboration with Faculty: Inaugural Faculty Scholar of Assessment



Tia Quinlan-Wilder, the first-ever Faculty Scholar of Assessment, began her role in January 2020 and plays a vital role in supporting curricular renewal and academic innovation. Her collaborations with the Director of Academic Assessment have contributed to a successful Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation visit and the development of program assessment resources. This faculty partner was funded through a collaboration of the OTL and the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.

# INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

The OTL director served on the Fall Logistics Task Force on the Teaching and Learning Supports Subcommittee alongside the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology, Campus Partnerships. This subcommittee was tasked with articulating recommendations for an institutional investment in teaching and learning for the 20-21 academic year. Taking input from the campus in the form of a survey, and consultation with the Teaching and Learning Support Strategic Leadership Team, a number of recommendations were made and ultimately funded. **The OTL was a beneficiary of this investment which allowed us (in collaboration with IT) to better meet gaps in programming and services.**



## Personnel and training investments to increase capacity and expertise

6

OTL courses and institutes (online and Hyflex teaching) that came with stipends

115

Faculty stipends awarded

83

Classroom Assistants trained

150

Classes supported by Classroom Assistants



## In class and class prep support

5

Instructional Designers hired

21

Peer Teaching Mentors hired

Note: funding for these initiatives became available after July 1

# INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

## **Peer Teaching Mentors and Consultants**

During the rapid shift to emergency remote teaching, a grassroots faculty peer network was assembled to provide faculty-to-faculty support. Volunteer members of this group held virtual coffee hour conversations and fielded 1:1 consultations through our appointment system. It was important to the Fall Task Force to formalize and recognize this invisible labor by creating the Peer Teaching Mentors program. **To date, a Peer Teaching Mentor Leader and 21 Peer Teaching Mentors representing all units on campus have been hired.** This group is currently developing programming and preparing to offer office hours and other opportunities for faculty-to-faculty connections and support.

## **Faculty Stipends**

The institutional investment provided for funding to incentivize participation in our signature programs, Teaching Online Short Course and the Hyflex Course Design Institute, with stipends following completion of the course and submission of select deliverables. Teaching Online Short Course: \$300 upon completion of course review with an OTL instructional designer.

## **Honoraria for Faculty-led Programming**

To provide additional opportunities for faculty to learn from one another, funding was provided for honoraria for faculty-led programming. To date, three faculty have received this funding.

## **Training for Classroom Assistants**

Classroom assistants (CAs) were proposed as a way to reduce the cognitive load demands of the fall teaching modalities, particularly in Hyflex classrooms. CAs assist with in-person classes that also have remote learners, generally in Hyflex courses or large online sections. This program was designed with the intention that CAs attend class meetings, monitor online class activities, bring questions/contributions to the instructor's attention, and be available as an extra resource in the event of technology or other issues. It was ultimately decided that the CA Program would be housed at the unit level with each unit being allocated funding to hire, supervise, and assign graduate or undergraduate students to Hyflex and/or other high-need courses. While assignments and supervision will remain at the unit level, the OTL in collaboration with IT Campus Partnerships, provided required training for Classroom Assistants. An asynchronous course was developed and in-person trainings were scheduled with IT representatives.



# INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENT IN— TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

## Instructional Design Team

Because the use of Canvas is a critical part of every course, regardless of modality, institutional funding was provided for the OTL to hire five instructional designers (IDs) for this academic year. While the OTL has long provided programming to help faculty learn to use these tools, a clear gap at the start of the pandemic was sufficient staffing aimed at working directly with faculty to build and refine the Canvas portion of their courses. **Starting in October they were paired with units as “partners” following the library liaison model in order to provide more targeted support to units and their departments.**



**Christine Hood**  
Partners: NSM & Law



**Jeff Schwartz**  
Partners: Korbel & CAHSS



**Vince Tango**  
Partners: GSSW & CAHSS



**Amelia Gentile-Mathew**  
Partner: GSPP

**Paula Von Kretschmann**  
Partners: NSM & RSECS

**183**

Faculty 1:1s

**51**

Canvas  
Course Reviews

**356**

Asynchronous  
Consultations  
**113 unique contacts**

**26**

Sessions  
Hosted/Co-  
hosted

This team has contributed to OTL programming and initiatives including: assisting in the development of the Teaching Online Short Course: Advanced Practice, creating department specific CIDI labs templates for Canvas, hosting targeted office hours, authoring/co-authoring blogs, and building relationships with their partner units. They have partnered with the Office of Equal Opportunity & Title IX, Disability Services Program, the Digital Accessibility Committee, WCAG (web content accessibility guidelines) to promote ADA compliance.



# OUR STAFF



Dr. Virginia Pitts  
Director of University Teaching



Dr. Leslie Cramblet Alvarez  
Director



Dr. Valentina Iturbe-LaGrave  
Director of Inclusive Teaching



Terri Johnson  
Senior Faculty Developer



UNIVERSITY of  
DENVER

OFFICE OF  
TEACHING & LEARNING



Dr. Christina Paguyo  
Director of Academic Assessment



Heather Tobin\*  
Faculty Developer of Integrative Learning



Karen Weller Swanson\*\*  
Director of Faculty Learning Communities  
and Scholarship



Lexi Schlosser\*\*\*  
Faculty Developer of Online Learning



Alex Martinez  
Academic Technology Specialist-IT



Bobby Baca\*\*\*\*  
Business Analyst-IT

\*through Sept. 2020

\*\*through Aug. 2020

\*\*\*started Aug. 2020

\*\*\*\*started Oct. 2020

# STAFF SCHOLARSHIP & SERVICE

## Publications

Tobin, H. (2020) How to Quickly Convert In-Class Content into a Functional Online Course (personal/professional online blog) -<https://heatherldtobin.blogspot.com/>

Cramblet Alvarez, L.D., Jones, K.N., Leach, J.L., & Rodriguez, J.L. (2020). Unsung pioneers of psychology: A content analysis of who makes history (and who doesn't). *American Journal of Psychology*, 133(2), 241-262. DOI: 10.5406/amerjpsyc.133.2.0241

## Publications featuring OTL Staff

Featuring the work of Valentina Iturbe-LaGrave

Murtrie, B. (July 2, 2020). Teaching: Readers Share Ideas on Inclusive & Anti-Racist Teaching. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, <https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2020-07-02>

Stone, J. (August 13, 2020). Moving the Needle Through Inclusive Teaching. *DU News: Staff profile*. <https://www.du.edu/news/moving-needle-through-inclusive-teaching>

## Presentations

Hood, C., Perez, N., & Swanson, K. (November, 2020) *Dual perspectives: Engaging graduate assistants in a Community of Practice*, Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education virtual conference.

Paguyo, C. (2020). *Creating effective, equitable assessments for online courses*. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Panelists include Paguyo, C.H.; Jankowski, N. and Bandy, J. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/page/creating-effective-equitable-assessments-for-online-courses>

Tobin, H. (January, 2020). *Creating spaces on your campus for an intentional ePortfolio Curriculum*, AAC&U – Washington D.C., WA

Tobin, H. (April, 2020). *Integrative learning in a virtual world*, eLearning Consortium of Colorado (eLCC) – Virtual [https://youtu.be/IPq\\_OkBvg5I](https://youtu.be/IPq_OkBvg5I)

Tobin, H. (August, 2020). *A rubric for high impact ePortfolio implementation*, COLTT – Virtual poster presentation, <https://padlet.com/embed/kmj2n1wpbiirks23>

# STAFF SCHOLARSHIP & SERVICE

## Podcast Interviews

Cramblet Alvarez, L. D. (July, 2020). Invisible pioneers: Adding forgotten psychologists to psychology course content with Leslie Cramblet Alvarez and Nikki Jones. SoTL Psych Sessions Podcast interview by Anna Ropp. Denver, CO. <https://psychsessionspodcast.libsyn.com/2>

Iturbe-LaGrave, V. (October 5, 2020) Trauma Informed Pegagogy: The role of assesement in deep insights and learning. Pedagogo Podcast. <https://pedagogo.buzzsprout.com/1017376/5642248-trauma-informed-pedagogy-the-role-of-assessment-in-deep-insights-and-learning>

Paguyo, C.H. (October 9, 2020). Inclusive assessment: Find out what you might be missing. Pedagogo Podcast. Retrieved from <https://examsoft.com/resources/pedagogo-s2-e4-inclusive-assessment-find-out-what-you-might-be-missing>.

## Committee Service

- Teaching Excellence Task Force (Paguyo & Cramblet Alvarez)
- Fall Logistics Task Force (Cramblet Alvarez)
- Faculty Onboarding Committee (Swanson, Johnson, Cramblet Alvarez)
- 4D FSEM Committee (Tobin)
- HLC Gaps Analysis Group (Paguyo)
- HLC Criterion 4 Committee (Paguyo)
- NSF Advance Committee (Paguyo)
- iChange Network Committee (Paguyo)
- Digital Accessibility Committee (Von Kretchmann)
- Evolve Pathway Co-Lead Community + Values Initiative (Iturbe-LaGrave)
- Heart of Higher Education Conference Planning Committee (Pitts)

## Searches

- Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (Iturbe-LaGrave)
- IRISE Postdoctoral Research Fellow Search (Iturbe-LaGrave)
- Director of Faculty Development and Career Advancement (Cramblet Alvarez)



## Acknowledgements

This document was prepared by the OTL director and utilizes narratives, tables, figures, and data supplied by OTL staff and graduate students. Thank you for the work represented in these pages and the documentation that informed this report!