



Toward the end of the semester, our intrepid Graduate Assistant (thanks Kelechi, we miss you!) walks around campus with QR code bearing cards asking students to "thank a teacher". It is always wonderful to see the glowing comments of gratitude from students come in, and as you can imagine the lucky teachers appreciate the love and feedback as well! Looking over the comments, some common sentiments emerge which in turn may suggest some applications in practice.

- 1. Support and Encouragement:** Our students appreciate instructors who provide personal support, encouragement, and understanding. Getting to know students, their name, their background and motivation for study and checking in with them periodically throughout the semester makes a significant impact on students' success and well-being.
- 2. Engagement and Enjoyment:** Students don't just want to have fun, but creating an engaging and enjoyable learning environment does help them stay interested and motivated. Use a variety of teaching methods, tell stories, use humor, and real-world examples.
- 3. Feedback and Guidance:** This is how students know you actually care. Providing detailed feedback and guidance helps students improve their understanding and skills. Encourage drafts and revisions to help students improve their work.

## Open Teaching



September 16 - 20, 2024

Open Teaching Week is back! This is an opportunity to go visit classes on campus where the instructors have agreed to host visitors. You can find a class that fits your schedule, go watch some great teaching, and pick up an idea or two. Many of our volunteer instructors are also open to follow-up questions!

*New this year:* We now offer online class observation options, as well. Watch a video "class tour" created by the course instructor to view how their course is organized and how innovative online activities are included. Registration for these observations will get you the video link and reflection form.

# ETSU as a Culture of Thinking (continued)

Our teaching development cannot happen in a vacuum. Please join us at our numerous events and begin building cross-campus communities of collegial support that share diverse and innovative teaching ideas. And don't forget – our offerings are open to ALL who teach at ETSU – full-time faculty, part-time instructors, and teaching graduate assistants.

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at ETSU! I am excited to begin another year of teaching and learning with you, and I look forward to growing our community of teaching excellence.

*Alison Barton, CTE Director*

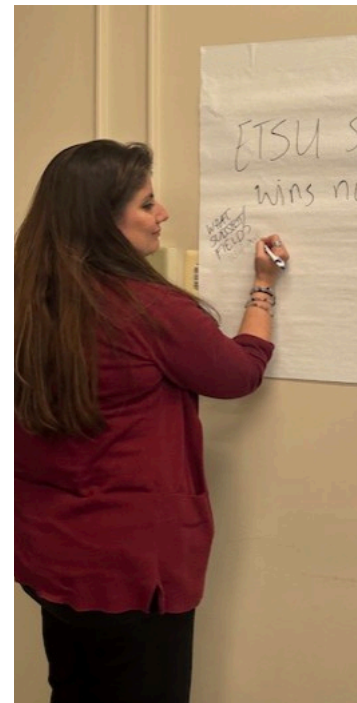
## Highlights from the General Education Instructors Institute

As many were leaving for break in May, a small cohort of dedicated instructors of general education courses gathered on campus at the Sherrod Library and online to take a deep dive on how high-impact teaching practices can best be applied to their courses as we roll out the new general education Compass Core Curriculum this fall.



The workshop spanned several days and was filled with engaging sessions, deep discussions, and hands-on activities which the educators can apply to their classes. They explored a range of high-impact practices, including active learning techniques, collaborative projects, and service-learning opportunities, all aimed at enhancing student engagement and success.

CTE staff and fellows facilitated the institute and shared insights and real-world examples of how these practices have transformed learning experiences in diverse settings. Participants were encouraged to share their own experiences and challenges, fostering a supportive community of practice. Look for posters and panels from these intrepid educators at upcoming CTE conferences and events!



### Project Zero's Thinking Routine Toolbox

Welcome to Project Zero's Thinking Routines Toolbox. This toolbox highlights thinking routines developed across a number of research projects at PZ. A thinking routine is a set of questions or a brief sequence of steps used to scaffold and support student thinking. PZ researchers designed thinking routines to deepen students' thinking and to help make that thinking 'visible.' Thinking routines help to reveal students' thinking to the teacher and also help students themselves to notice and name particular 'thinking moves,' making those moves more available and useful to them in other contexts. If you're new to thinking routines and PZ's research, please click here to explore more about thinking routines. For tips for using Thinking Routines Effectively, click here. For an overview of the Thinking Categories, click here. For an alphabetical list of thinking routines, click here.

#### Types of Thinking Categories



# Welcome New Fellow and Associates

This Fall we welcome some new collaborators in teaching excellence to the team! Faculty Fellows serve ETSU and the CTE by applying their pedagogical expertise and experience to new programming and initiatives. CTE Associates and Affiliates develop and deliver instructional support to colleagues in a variety of ways.



## New Faculty Fellow: Brittany Butler



We are happy to welcome **Brittany Butler** in the role of Faculty Fellow! As a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry, she has been a dedicated member of the ETSU community for 10 years. In this new role, she will focus on gathering and utilizing student feedback to enhance teaching practices, as well as explore innovative ways to support adjunct faculty campuswide. Brittany is also a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA), working towards an Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership. Brittany's experience and commitment to excellence in education make her a valuable asset to the CTE and its mission to "foster equity and success for all students by nurturing excellence in teaching".

## New CTE Associates



**Dr. Arsenault** has been faculty in undergraduate programs at the ETSU College of Nursing since January of 2017. During her time at ETSU, she has taught both didactic and clinical courses within the College of Nursing and interprofessional communication and education within the Academic Health Sciences. Amber has been involved with the CTE since 2018 attending many conferences and workshops, as well as leading several flash mentoring sessions. She has also served on the Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Council since 2022 as the CON representative. She is a Family Nurse Practitioner and recently completed a Doctorate in Education with a concentration in Nursing Education. In addition, she currently serves as Vice Chair of the College of Nursing Council and is the co-chair of the CON undergraduate programs Curriculum Revision Taskforce.



**Trevor Chapman** is currently a lecturer and researcher in the Department of Biological Sciences. He began his graduate studies at ETSU in 2015 and joined the department as faculty in 2022. During his M.S. and Ph.D., Trevor instructed biology labs and biometry, and taught animal behavior for our Upward Bound program. He currently teaches various courses within the biology department and advises several graduate researchers. His research interests focus on stress physiology and ecology of woodland salamanders. Trevor is very interested in incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom, and recently received an internal grant to investigate one such tool.

# Affiliates' Corner

## Teachers Team up to Take on Monsters

In the fall, I had the privilege of co-teaching MONSTERS (formally known as "Here Be Monsters: Monsters and the Monstrous in Literature and Film") with **Dr. Josh Reid**, my colleague in Literature and Language. While we have very different areas of specialization, our shared devotion to close analysis was at the core of our class sessions – whether it was the Spenserian stanzas of *The Faerie Queene* or the cinematic depictions of abjection in *Jennifer's Body*, our discussions emphasized returning to the form of the text. One of the best parts of the experience was getting to observe the different ways we could approach this in a class period – while I am a devotee of small group activities, Dr. Reid showed me the power of a thoughtful **large group guided discussion**. While peer observations and activities through the CTE give us ample opportunities to drop in and learn from our colleagues, the semester long experience of sharing a classroom with a colleague whose teaching I admire so much was an absolute gift. From setting up the syllabus and thinking through our policies and assessments together to being in the classroom each day, to our regular debriefs and course corrections, I think we both came away with new ideas for our individual classes and teaching. And, of course, the commitment that we have to do this again soon (or in Fall 2025, when we can squeeze it into our schedules)!

-Chelsea Wessels, Assistant Professor of English, Literature and Language

I had one of my best teaching experiences this past fall because I decided to move out of my comfort zone and co-teach for the first time. I have been hesitant to try co-teaching because having control over what I do in the classroom is part of why I enjoy teaching. Fortunately, I could not have had a better colleague to try it with than **Dr. Chelsea Wessels**, nor a better course: "Here Be Monsters: Monsters and the Monstrous in Literature and Film." The experience completely revitalized my pedagogy and class design. Our brainstorming about the class helped me generate new assignments, like a Bestiary infographic, I would never have tried before. While I tend to default to an open discussion environment, Dr. Wessels demonstrated the power of **small group activities**, whether via a jigsaw approach to dissect the sound, editing, cinematography, and mise-en-scène of the chestburster scene in *Alien*, or a fascinating drawing activity using only abstract shapes to represent the relationship between two characters in *Jennifer's Body*. Her superior organization skills and commitment to swift feedback chastened me to work harder in these areas in the future. And it was such a joy to be in class as a facilitator and student while Dr. Wessels cooked. I learned so much about film and about teaching from her, and I can't wait to co-teach with Dr. Wessels again.

-Josh Reid, Associate Professor of English, Literature and Language



# What We're Reading



I discovered a mini-publication of **Horace Mann's** (1796-1859) treatise, ***On the Art of Teaching***, in a gift shop during my vacation in Sacramento, CA this summer. It's a short read, but I cannot express how validating it is that someone who lived over 200 years ago recognizes the same things we at the CTE say now: "The ability to acquire and the ability to impart are wholly different talents." In other words – just because you know something doesn't mean you know how to teach about it! Knowing how to teach is its own discipline, and that's what we love sharing at the CTE. If you're looking for some quick philosophies on what is needed at a basic level to be a great teacher, look no further than this publication!



**Alison Barton,**  
**CTE Director**



**Phil Smith**  
**CTE Assistant**  
**Director**

## ***Co-Intelligence: Living and Working with AI* by Ethan Mollick**

Thanks to the librarians at Sherrod who suggested this book for a summer read, I recently read this timely book on AI and its many effects on our lives, including in education. If you are looking for an accessible but comprehensive overview of the essential questions and dilemmas raised by AI, I recommend adding this to your list. The book is organized around a number of metaphors for AI: as a person, a coworker, a tutor, a coach. One of the many tips and tricks I found useful is the suggestion to tell the AI who it is in your

prompting. So for example, if you want AI to help you generate discussion questions for a reading, start by telling the AI it is an expert in the field with a knack for explaining complex ideas in easy to understand ways. This is just one good tip in a book full of them!

## ***Adjunct Faculty Voices: Cultivating Professional Community at the Front Lines of Higher Education* by Fuller, Brown, & Smith (Eds.)**

I have been reading this in preparation for my new role with the CTE. Adjunct faculty are an overworked and overlooked population at many colleges and universities. In 2009, The National Coalition for Adjunct and Contingent Equity was established citing contingent faculty as the New Faculty Majority (NFM). Higher education could not function without adjunct and contingent faculty who are often working in isolation, managing intense workloads, or working at multiple institutions.



**Brittany Butler**  
**CTE Faculty Fellow**

*Adjunct Faculty Voices* highlights stories from adjunct faculty and points out the need for greater institutional support, community building, and professional development opportunities that are accessible. It also includes a description of adjunct faculty: who they are, their shared challenges, and what effective support looks like from administrators and centers for teaching. A survey of adjunct faculty development programs and best practices is included, along with several suggestions and recommendations of ways to support adjunct faculty members. "Timely, responsive, and quality faculty development plays a vital role in the success of all faculty – regardless of employment status – and thus affects the success of institutions of higher education" (p. 4). The information in this book will help guide my and the CTE's efforts to support and build a community among all of ETSU's adjunct faculty members.



[www.etsu.edu/teaching](http://www.etsu.edu/teaching)

# New This Year: CTE Teaching Awards

Our Center for Teaching Excellence is pleased to introduce micro-awards for teaching excellence! Our awards highlight achievements for those teaching in special environments or using special methods. We also have awards for instructors who are new or are not full-time.



We offer two of our six CTE Teaching Awards each year. This year, we will offer awards for:

- **Large-Class Teaching (enrollments of 75+ per section)**
- **Online Teaching**

Future years will feature:

- **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (2025-2026)**
- **New Faculty (2025-2026),**
- **Adjunct Faculty (2026-2027)**
- **Project/Problem-Based Learning or Community-Engaged Learning (2026-2027).**

Faculty awardees of the CTE Teaching Awards will be honored at the CTE's *Exceptional Teaching: Get Inspired* event (Spring), and will receive a \$500 award, up to \$1,000 to cover travel and/or registration at one conference to present their work around their teaching award focus, a plaque, and an invitation to present a digital poster at the *Exceptional Teaching: Get Inspired* event. The annual deadline for faculty award nominations is **November 1**.

In addition to faculty awards, we will award up to **3 Graduate Teaching Assistants** for their teaching **annually**. Awardees of the annual CTE Teaching Award for Graduate Teaching Assistants will be honored at the CTE's *Exceptional Teaching: Get Inspired* event (Spring), and will receive a plaque and letter of recognition, as well as an invitation to present a digital poster at the *Exceptional Teaching: Get Inspired* event. The annual deadline for Graduate Assistant nominations is **January 15**.



Learn more about nomination packet requirements by following the QR code.



## Start of the Semester Checklist



Consider these practices in the weeks and days leading up to the first day of classes.

<b>Open the D2L Shell</b>	<p>Students can best prepare if they have timely access to information about the course objectives, expectations, schedules, assignments, and other details.</p> <p>You may not be able to make all the content visible, but at least post a draft syllabus and welcome message.</p> <p>Begin creating community by opening a discussion board for intros and FAQs</p> <p><a href="#">See the D2L Resources for Instructors guides and tutorials</a></p>
<b>Draft the Course Schedule</b>	<p>Students benefit immensely from knowing what is going to happen in class on a weekly or even daily basis. Your students will feel more respected if you provide them with a schedule that contains as much detail as you can possibly provide them.</p> <p>You may need to have a more flexible schedule or not have all the dates set yet, but at least communicate this to students.</p> <p>See the CTE website for <a href="#">Course Calendar Templates</a> with important ETSU semester dates by M/W/F and T/R</p>
<b>Prepare an inviting syllabus</b>	<p>Rethink the “syllabus as a contract”. The syllabus is also a living document of the class and a great opportunity to engage students before you even meet them. The syllabus is your invitation to students to learn and your promise to help them be successful.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Warm-up the syllabus</a>   <a href="#">UDL the Syllabus</a>   <a href="#">Sample ETSU Syllabi</a></b></p>
<b>Welcome students with a friendly email</b>	<p>Suggestions for this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personalize it by sending it to each student individually (for smaller classes)</li><li>• Go light on the details (save these for the syllabus), focus on the big picture and engagement.</li><li>• Your personality and story: Why do you like teaching this class? What got you into this field? What do you hope students will learn and get out of the class? What advice do former students typically give? Are you more of a dog person or cat person?</li></ul> <p><a href="#">See some examples on this document</a></p>
<b>Share info on how to access or purchase course materials</b>	<p>In the syllabus, on D2L, or in your welcome message, let students know how to acquire required course materials such as textbooks or access codes to online resources. Many students are on a tight budget so be transparent about cost, how to access, and other technical requirements.</p>