



ELON
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR THE
Advancement of
Teaching and Learning



2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues:

The 2021-22 academic year posed continued challenges as we continued to teach and learn amid public health and sociopolitical crises. Simultaneously, the year provided increased opportunities to reconnect and recommit to the importance of engaged, equitable teaching and learning built on mentoring relationships. It's been another year of navigating the tensions that emerge in a time of disruption – tensions between exhaustion and the need for continued innovation, between compassion and accountability, between grief and hope.

This report summarizes ways the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) worked to support Elon colleagues during this complicated time. As you will see, CATL faculty and staff continued to enhance scholarly, inclusive teaching and engaged learning at Elon, while trying to be responsive to changing faculty and student needs in different contexts.

CATL played a key role in supporting the university educational community as it continued to navigate pandemic teaching. This report highlights a few of the special projects, initiatives, and collaborations accomplished over the past academic year.

I am exceptionally proud to work with this team of talented colleagues who value curiosity, empathy, persistence and equity. In particular, I'd like to thank CATL team members, Mary Jo Festle, Kelsey Bitting, and Christina Wittstein, for whom 2021-22 was their last year at CATL, as well as to thank colleagues Olivia Choplin, Jen Uno, Vanessa Drew-Branch (and yet to be discovered others) who will be bringing new ideas and energy to the center's work in 2022-23. Next year brings changes to the team, but changes founded on the mission, values, and objectives described in this report.

I would also like to thank Elon colleagues for trusting CATL to provide needed resources and support and for letting us know what you'd like to learn more about. At times over the past two years, we have been all learning together, making the best decisions we could based on what we know about how people (both instructors and students) learn and what they need to thrive. We'll continue to need your input and your feedback to help us be responsive and strategic in our planning. We look forward to collaborating and connecting with you in the upcoming year!

Sincerely,

Deandra Little



*Deandra Little, Ph.D.
Assistant Provost &
CATL Director
Professor of English
(2021-22)*

About CATL

Our Mission

Founded in 2005, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) serves as a catalyst for effective teaching and engaged learning at Elon University. CATL faculty promote intentional, evidence-based, and inclusive teaching and learning practices, contribute to university-wide initiatives related to teaching and learning, and foster the scholarship of teaching and learning at Elon University.

Our Values

CATL faculty and staff work according to shared values. Our services are...

- confidential, voluntary, and formative (not evaluative),
 - grounded in evidence drawn from research and effective practice,
 - responsive to the specific goals and questions of the faculty, staff, and students with whom we work and to ongoing assessment of Elon's local context, and
 - inherently collaborative and responsive to the broad needs, dynamic contexts, and evolving research that frame and surround teaching and learning locally, nationally, and globally.
-

Our Objectives

To fulfill our mission, in accordance with our values, CATL partners with Elon faculty, staff, and students to fulfill the following objectives:

- 1) Foster innovative, evidence-based teaching and learning practices and critical reflection through programs & services designed for faculty working in a range of teaching and learning contexts.
- 2) Develop new programming and services responsive to the needs of individual faculty as well as to the broader community, remaining attentive to the Center's mission and capacity.
- 3) Strengthen and deepen our support for faculty as they develop integrated, purposeful careers as teacher-scholar-mentors, in collaboration with university partners.
- 4) Create, share, and curate resources to advance teaching and learning,
- 5) Contribute to national and international conversations about high-impact pedagogy, inclusive classrooms & pedagogy, educational development, and faculty mentoring.
- 6) Conduct ongoing assessment of the Center's work and impact.

Meet the 2021-22 Team

Deandra Little, Ph.D., Assistant Provost, Director, & Professor of English

Deandra Little teaches courses on US literature and autobiography. Her scholarship focuses on credibility, integrity and identity in educational development practice and on the scholarship of teaching and learning. She regularly facilitates workshops on course and assignment design as well as other teaching and learning topics.



Kelsey S. Bitting, Ph.D., Associate Director & Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies

Kelsey Bitting's research explores the impact of inquiry-based and engaged learning on student learning outcomes. She offers workshops on evidence-based course and program design, inclusive teaching theory and practice, and intentional student mentoring. Her courses in geology and environmental science emphasize community engagement.



Olivia Choplin, Ph.D., Associate Director & Associate Professor of French

Olivia Choplin's disciplinary research focuses on contemporary French and Francophone theater and Haitian diaspora literature, particularly in Québec. Her SoTL interests include intercultural development and student reintegration to campus after study abroad, "ungrading," and "students as partners" work for intentional course and assignment design.



Mary Jo Festle, Ph.D., Associate Director, Maude Sharpe Powell Professor, & Professor of History

Mary Jo Festle's scholarship focuses on U.S. women's history, oral history, medical history, and social movements and teaching history. Festle received the university's 2011 Daniels-Danieley Award for Excellence in Teaching, and in 2014 was named the Maude Sharpe Powell Professor of History.



Christina Wittstein, MBA/MHA, Program Coordinator

Christina Wittstein is the Program Coordinator for the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning and the Center for Engaged Learning.



Executive Summary

June 2021

17th Annual Teaching and Learning Conference, held virtually, draws 573 registrants.

Writing Residency, co-sponsored by the Center for Engaged Learning, hosts 12 Elon SoTL scholars.

August 2021

CATL welcomes 59 new full- and part-time faculty at our Course Design Institute & New Faculty Orientation sessions.

October 2021

Fall 2021 Teaching & Learning Grants Awarded.

December 2021

2022 Winter Term Engagement Grants Awarded.

February 2022

Slay Your Semester workshop, co-sponsored with the Black Lumen Project and the Office of Leadership and Professional Development.

April 2022

Spring 2022 CATL Teaching & Learning Grants and 2022 Diversity & Inclusion Grants Awarded.

Celebrate SoTL, co-sponsored by the Center for Engaged Learning and the Center for Research on Global Engagement, on Today@Elon.

July 2021

85 summer reading participants receive copies of *Ungrading*, *Teaching About Race and Racism in the College Classroom*, and *What Inclusive Instructors Do*.

September 2021

2022-2024 CATL Scholars Announced:

- Chris Richardson, Astrophysics
- Ketavan Kupatadze & Elena Schoonmaker-Gates, Spanish
- Katie Baker, Education



Jen Uno, new CATL Associate Director



Vanessa Drew-Branch, new CATL Pedagogy Fellow

March 2022

New CATL Associate Director announced: Jen Uno, Associate Professor of Biology.

New CATL Pedagogy Fellow announced: Vanessa Drew-Branch, Human Service Studies.

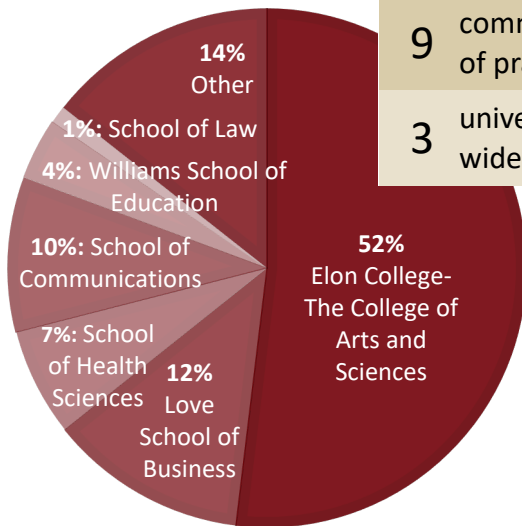
May 2022

CATL celebrates the 10-year CATL tenure of Mary Jo Festle, departing Associate Director.

Workshops & Programs

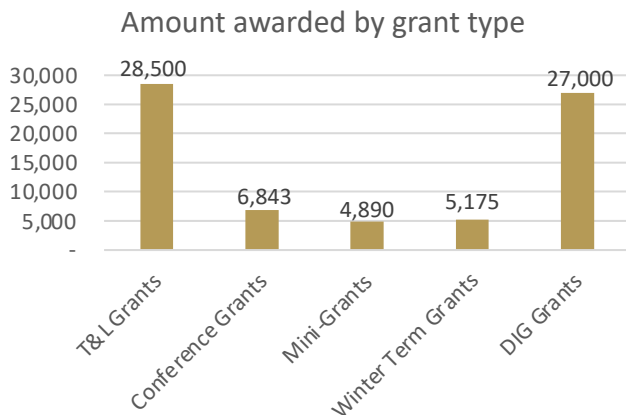
In 2021-22, CATL offered a total of **57 workshops and programs** serving a total of **445 participants** across all Elon schools.

- 16 institutes & seminars
- 16 custom workshops
- 13 workshops & reading groups
- 9 communities of practice
- 3 university-wide events



Grants Awarded

CATL provided a total of **\$72,408** to support SoTL research, engaged teaching projects, and diversity and inclusion initiatives.

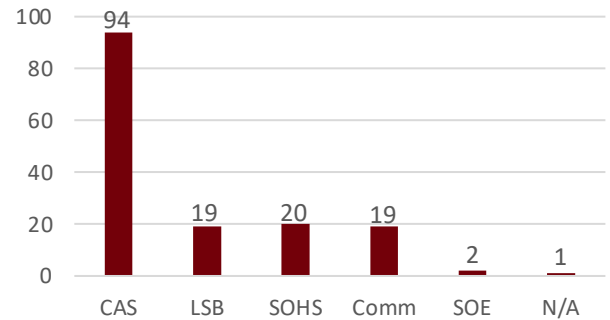


These awards supported a total of **61 unique projects** pursued by **89** faculty members, staff, and students.

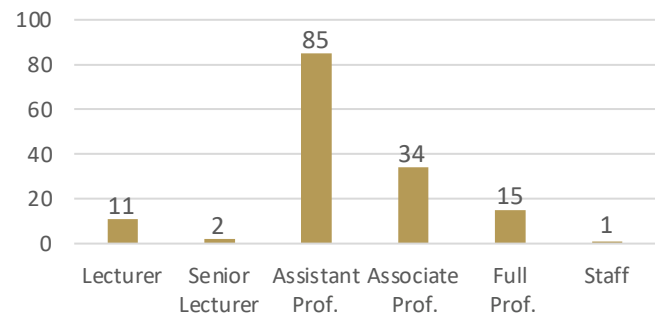
Consultations & Classroom Teaching Observations

CATL faculty completed **155 consultations** reaching a total of **116 individual faculty and staff** across 5 schools and all faculty position types.

Number of consultations by school



Number of consultations by position



On-Campus Collaborations

13 CATL faculty collaborated with campus partners on 13 programs or initiatives this year.

2 Each with the Center for Engaged Learning, the Office of Sustainability, Teaching & Learning Technologies, and the Kernodle Center for Civic Life

1 Each with the Black Lumen Project, Center for Access & Success, Center for Research on Global Engagement, Elon Core, and Office of Leadership & Professional Development

General Teaching Support

CATL offers teaching support in a wide range of ways, including one-on-one consultations, formative classroom observations, and mid-semester focus groups; workshops, reading groups, and institutes; and custom programs for individual departments or for the university as a whole.

Consultations, Observations, and Mid-Semester Focus Groups

CATL consultations are available to all faculty and teaching staff at the institution to support their systematic reflection on any aspect of their teaching practice, from course and assignment design to pedagogy and assessment. CATL faculty also offer resources and evidence from research on teaching and learning to help support faculty in achieving their classroom goals.

155
Consultations &
Observations

Common Topics

DEI & Inclusive Teaching (11)

Assessment & Assignment Design (14)

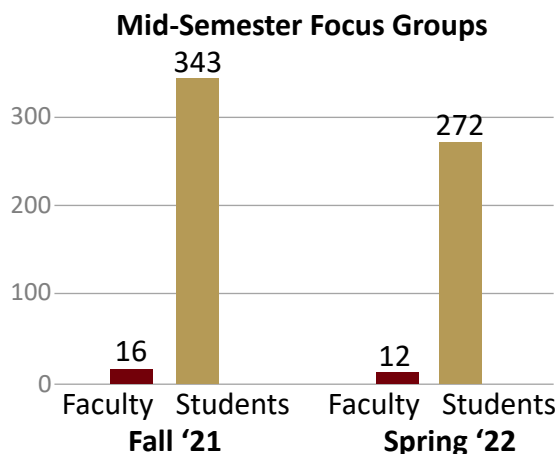
New Faculty Engagement (26)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (30)

Class Observations allow faculty to invite a CATL faculty to join a class session and take notes on pedagogical choices and the effect those choices have on classroom

dynamics or student engagement. The subsequent consultation focuses on the observations, developing strategies for further experimentation and refinement and identifying areas for ongoing reflection.

Mid-semester focus groups center the consultation on student feedback. CATL faculty gather anonymous feedback from a class taught by a requesting faculty member, then consult with the faculty member as they analyze and respond to that feedback. This process allows faculty to gather in-depth information about the student experience of the class while changes are still possible (rather than at the end of the semester) and to gauge consensus on student preferences.



These services (like other CATL programs) are **formative**--not evaluative--in nature.

17th Annual Teaching & Learning Conference (co-sponsored by TLT)

Due to the pandemic, Elon's 17th Annual Teaching and Learning Conference was moved to an entirely virtual format. This shift substantially increased the conference's visibility and accessibility: A total of **573 participants** registered for the conference, drawn from over **160 institutions** and organizations of higher learning and across the world.

In addition to live attendance, registrants could access recordings for six months, allowing them to participate flexibly and revisit sessions while planning fall courses.

The conference theme, *Teaching & Learning Beyond the Pandemic*, asked speakers to consider how our collective and personal experiences with COVID-19 may lead us to shape the future of education. The keynote, "Teaching Distracted Minds: Old Challenges, New Contexts," by Dr. James Lang, Director of the D'Amour Center for Teaching Excellence at Assumption College, was the day's best-attended live session. Of the 40 participants who completed the evaluation, **92%** rated the conference as above average.



James Lang, Ph.D.

"Many thanks for the incredible gift that you and your team gave to so many of us today in the form of this year's conference. ... We've found great value in every session we attended and have come away with new ideas to ponder and implement. In ways both large...and small..., I felt inspired and well-cared for." –2021 attendee

Workshops & Other Programming

CATL offers varied programming available to all Elon faculty and teaching staff. This year, we offered:

- 13** Workshops and reading groups (60-75 minutes long).
- 16** Institutes or seminars, such as our annual Writing Residency (co-sponsored by the Center for Engaged Learning).
- 9** Communities of practice, which convene several times to explore a particular topic such as assignment alignment, scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), or alternative grading strategies.

Due to low response rates, we only occasionally administered end-of-workshop surveys this year. Among those asked, **91%** of participants reported sessions were helpful or very helpful in achieving their goals.

"[CATL facilitator] did an amazing job providing resources, leading discussions, encouraging participants to apply the discussion material in their own projects, and fostering a circle of accountability partners." –spring 2022 community of practice participant

Programming for Stages of Faculty Careers

Recognizing that faculty needs and interests shift and grow across the arc of their careers, CATL provides support for faculty throughout their time at Elon with particular attention to transitional moments, such as entering the institution or after receiving promotion.

Programming for new faculty begins with the August CATL New Faculty Course Design Institute, which drew **14** participants, followed during Planning Week by a day-long New Faculty Orientation that welcomed **26** new full-time faculty, and a virtual New Faculty Orientation for Part-Time Faculty that welcomed **33** new part-time faculty. CATL's new faculty orientation program continues with monthly sessions on topics from inclusive teaching and advising to writing a Unit 1. New in 2022 were fall receptions for faculty in their first three years to build connections to each other and to campus resources.

"I taught my first class at 8 AM today, and I incorporated many of the lessons I learned from you and the rest of the CATL team... and it went great! ...So thank you thank you!" –
2021 new faculty program attendee

CATL's **Post-Promotion Orientation Program** happens each May, welcoming newly-promoted Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors, and Full Professors into their new roles and helping them consider short- and long-term professional goals. This year's post-

"Also thanks to you and CATL for everything you've done for me over the years. It's strange to reflect back on the new faculty orientation 6 years ago and how nervous I was, but Elon really does provide so much support for us to grow as professors" –*faculty member promoted in 2022*

promotion orientation retreats drew a cumulative **20** faculty. Finally, our summer **Midcareer Mentoring Program** focused on sustainable and meaningful career planning, had **6** participants in the 2021-22 cohort.

Custom Workshops for Departments and Programs

Upon request, CATL faculty are available to create custom workshops on specific pedagogy topics of interest to a department or program, facilitate internal conversations on teaching and learning topics, and provide structure and support to help enable curricular redesign initiatives.

Custom workshops provided in 2021-22 engaged departments in conversations and workshops on topics such as:

- Building foundations for positive, inclusive class participation
- Motivating students toward academic integrity
- Alternative grading and assessment practices

To request a custom workshop or facilitated discussion for your department or program in 2022-23, email CATL@elon.edu.

Grant Programs

CATL offers a number of grant programs to support faculty in a broad range of teaching-related ways, from **CATL Scholars Fellowships** that support two-year inquiries in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) to **mini-grants** and **winter term engagement grants** that support course-related student engagement activities, to **conference reimbursement grants** that allow faculty to attend teaching-related conferences and present the results of their SoTL projects on a national or international level.

Juan Leal Ugalde hosted Sophia Enriquez to speak about the musical traditions of migrant farmworkers in North Carolina.

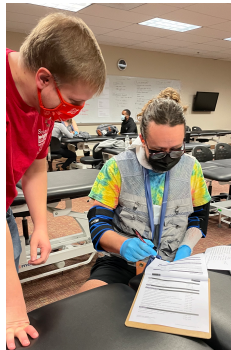


**"Thank you so much for this award!
I really appreciate the support."** –
*Sabrina Thurman, conference travel
reimbursement grant recipient*

Keshia Wall purchased lapas traditionally worn by women to participate in West African dance to enhance her students' understanding of West African Culture and allow them to experience authentic movement dynamics the lapas create.



Charity Johansson used CATL grant funds to develop kits and run an aging simulation lab for the students in her Geriatric Health and Wellness DPT8030 course.



April Post's Global Experience students got to meet one of the change makers they studied in class: Eric Henry, President and CEO of TS Designs, a local B Corp t-shirt printing company.



DEI & Inclusive Teaching

Support for inclusive and equitable teaching has been a cornerstone of CATL's priorities during the 2021-22 academic year, from programs to grants and web resources to support inclusive teaching across the university.

Updated Web Resource: Teaching for Equity & Inclusion

In the fall of 2021, Associate Director Mary Jo Festle led the redesign of CATL's Teaching for Equity and Inclusion web resource. Now divided into sections on Who we Are, What we Teach, Who we Teach, How we Teach, and How we Assess, the guide provides a multifaceted starting point for faculty considering how to make their courses more inclusive and equitable in a variety of ways.

The web resource can be accessed at

<http://elon.edu/u/academics/catl/inclusiveteaching>.



Inclusive Teaching Workshops and Programs

While inclusive and equitable teaching is a theme woven throughout all our workshops, several 2021-22 programs were notable for their focus on this area.

- Copies of the books *Teaching about Race and Racism in the College Classroom* and *What Inclusive Instructors Do* were claimed by **11** and **39 faculty**, respectively, to read over the summer of 2021, followed by discussion sessions in the fall.
- *Supporting Elon's First-Generation Students in our Faculty & Staff Roles*, a workshop co-developed and co-facilitated with the Center for Access & Success' Oscar Miranda, drew **over 50** faculty and staff attendees. **93%** of respondents to the feedback survey said the session was "helpful" or "very helpful" in stimulating ideas about how to better support first-generation students at Elon.
- *Speed Teaching: "DIGging" Diversity and Inclusion* offered funded Diversity and Inclusion Grant (DIG) teams from Exercise Science, Finance & Economics, Education, and Communications to share their ongoing efforts to infuse or deepen the presence of diverse content or inclusive pedagogies.
- *Ungrading Communities of Practice* focused on exploring alternatives to traditional grading structures that can better support student motivation and more equitable learning outcomes. Over **30 faculty** participated in these monthly spring-semester conversations.

Elon Diversity & Inclusion Grants (DIGs)

Since Spring 2011, teams of up to five Elon faculty and staff from many departments and programs have received grants to develop and implement strategies to infuse their curriculum and pedagogies with best practices related to diversity, equity and inclusion. These two-year awards support research, implementation, and assessment phases of projects intended to meet a range of DEI-focused curricular or pedagogical goals.

New DIG grants awarded in late spring, 2022:

Steve DeLoach, Brooks Depro, and Casey DiRienzo (Economics):

“Developing Repository of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Materials for Principles of Economics Classes”

Lisa Buchanan, Allison Bryan, Mark Enfield, Katie Baker, and Nermin

Vehabovic (Education and Wellness): “Critical Love and Elementary

Teacher Candidates: Aligning Methods Courses and Field Experience

Towards Clear DEI Outcomes”

Lina Kuhn, Patrick Rudd, Shannon Tennant, Heather Lindenman,

Michael Smith, and Ayla Samli (English and Belk Library):

“Investigating Information Systems: Access, Creation, Misinformation, and Privilege”

Cora Palfy, Gerald Knight, Fred Johnson, and Stephen Futrell (Music):

“Music Department Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Student

Perceptions Survey”

Kristina Meinking and Tedd Wimperis (World Languages and

Cultures: Classical Studies): “Diversifying Antiquity: Diversity and

Inclusion in a Classical Mythology Course”

DIG Grants completed in 2022 include several that sought to understand departmental climate in Exercise Science, Political Science and Policy Studies, and Psychology; others that worked toward course and curricular revisions in Performing Arts & Musical Theatre, Poverty and Social Justice Studies, and Strategic Communications; and a final grant examining interprofessional programming and identity in the School of Health Sciences. View final reports for these and other completed CATL DIG grant projects at <https://www.elon.edu/u/academics/catl/inclusiveteaching/what-do-we-teach/diversity-and-inclusion-grants/>.

Applications for DIG grants beginning in fall 2023 will be due in March 2023. Contact catl@elon.edu for help planning your application.

CATL Scholarship

To enhance the “generative culture” (Condon, et al., 2016) of teaching and learning at Elon while also pursuing our own intellectual interests, Center faculty actively contribute to national and international conversations about teaching, learning and educational development through publications, presentations, and professional service (listed below). Because of our reputation nationally, we are regularly contacted by other universities for advice and insights on our structure, planning and programming.

2021-22 Research Publications by CATL Faculty

- **Little, D.**, Donnelly-Sallee, E. and Michael, R. (2021). SoTL and the Humanities: Navigating Tensions, Realizing Possibilities. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry* 9:2.
- **Little, D.** & Green, D.A. (2022). Credibility in educational development: trustworthiness, expertise, and identification. *Higher Education Research & Development*. (Published online: 28 Jan 2021). 41:3, 804-819.
- **Little, D.** & Moore, J. (2021) A typology for catalyzing pedagogical change: Fostering multiple pathways through SoTL. In special issue Catalyzing pedagogical change: Exploring ‘big ideas’ that drive faculty development in international institutional contexts. *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*, 11(3), 262-273.

Published Teaching Activities

- Merricks, J. & **Bitting, K.** (2021). What’s in the Water? A community-engaged inquiry unit exploring PFAS contamination in North Carolina. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Course Description.
- **Bitting, K.** & Merricks, J. (2021). What’s in the Water? Benchmarking Activity. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- Merricks, J. & **Bitting, K.** (2021). What’s in the Water? Community Engagement Project. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- **Bitting, K.** & Merricks, J. (2021). What’s in the Water? Lesson 1: Water Cycle and Watersheds. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- Merricks, J. & **Bitting, K.** (2021). What’s in the Water? Lesson 2: Introduction to Emerging Contaminants. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- Merricks, J. & **Bitting, K.** (2022). What’s in the Water? Lesson 3: The Economic Challenges of Clean Water. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- **Bitting, K.** & Merricks, J. (2021). What’s in the Water? Lesson 4: Drinking Water & Environmental Justice. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- Merricks, J. & **Bitting, K.** (2022). What’s in the Water? Lesson 5: The Health Effects of PFAS. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.
- **Bitting, K.** & Merricks, J. (2022). What’s in the Water? Lesson 6: Drinking Water Quality Regulation in the U.S. *Teach the Earth* Online Activity Collection, Activity Description.

Conference Presentations

- Berg, J., Haras, C M., **Little, D.**, Mann, D., Moore, C., & Young-Brice, A. (October 2021). Getting Started: Workshop for New Educational Developers. Pre-conference session (4, 2-hour sessions) presented virtually as part of the 46th annual conference of the POD Network.
- **Bitting, K.**, Romulo, C., Turner, R., & Werts, S. (July 2021). Fostering Sustainable Institutions: Engaging Our Universities in the Movement for Change. Earth Educators Rendezvous Conference (virtual round table discussion).
- **Bitting, K.**, & Merricks, J. (July 2021). What's in the Water? A place-based unit investigating PFAS contamination in central NC drinking water. Poster presentation (virtual), Earth Educators Rendezvous Conference.
- **Choplin, O.**, Celis-Castillo, P., & Windham, S. (accepted, Nov. 2022). Ungrading in the World Languages Classroom. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Meeting.
- Davis, A., **Bitting, K.**, Plenge, M., Cornette, K., Teasdale, R. & Ryker, K. (April 2022). Motivational factors that support women's interest in introductory geoscience labs. Oral presentation, National Council on Undergraduate Research Annual Conference.
- Donat, B., Teasdale, R., **Bitting, K.**, & Ryker, K. (July 2021). Changes in TA Beliefs from Teaching Inquiry-Based Activities in Introductory Geology Labs. Poster presentation (virtual), Earth Educators Rendezvous Conference.
- **Festle, M. J.** (April 2022). Teaching Inclusively: An Interactive Workshop. Organization of American Historians Annual Conference.
- Keith, H., **Bitting, K.**, Everson, B., & Fabrey, C. (November 2021). Fostering Institutional Sustainability as Educational Developers. Birds of a Feather session (virtual), POD Network Annual Conference.
- Merricks, J., & **Bitting, K.** (July 2021). Can a local water crisis shift students' frame of reference toward civic engagement? Poster presentation, SABER 2021 Virtual Meeting.
- Merricks, J., & **Bitting, K.** (July 2021). Fostering Agents of Change: Can a local water crisis shift students' values, goals, and priorities? Oral presentation (virtual), Earth Educators Rendezvous Conference.
- Rener, C., Wheeler, L., **Little, D.**, Kaldor, E., Flaming, A.L., Landy, K., Tapp, S. & Grupp, L. (November 2021) Contexts For Agency: Leveraging Fractal Reflection Through And Beyond Crisis. Virtual session, presented at 46th annual, virtual conference of the POD Network.
- Ryker, K., Teasdale, R., & **Bitting, K.** (July 2021). Making Sense of Interest and Learning in Introductory Geology Courses: Teaching Assistant and Student Perspectives. Oral presentation (virtual), Earth Educators Rendezvous Conference.
- Teasdale, R., **Bitting, K.**, & Ryker, K (October 2021). Student and Teaching Assistants' Perspectives on Increasing Student Interest for Learning in Introductory Geology Courses. Oral presentation, GSA Connects 2021, Portland, OR.

Professional Service & Other Scholarship

- **Bitting, K.** Programming Director, Earth-Centered Special Interest Group, the POD Network.
- **Choplin, O.** Reviewer, *Teaching and Learning Inquiry*.
- **Little, D.** & Green, D. (28 September 2021). Episode 7: Keeping the Whys and the Hows in Mind. Laura Baecher, Centering Centers podcast, <https://anchor.fm/laura-baecher45/episodes/Keeping-the-Whys-and-the-Hows-in-Mind-e180mul>

Strategic Planning & Assessment

Each year, CATL conducts ongoing assessment of the impact of our work through workshop feedback forms, end-of-year reports and outcomes shared by grant recipients, and through informal conversations with campus partners and colleagues. CATL's 2016-2022 strategic plan emphasized the following specific strategic priorities:

1. Advancing high-impact pedagogy
2. Fostering inclusive classrooms and pedagogies
3. Supporting faculty growth and development
4. Enhancing the culture of teaching and learning.

The full 2016-2022 strategic plan is available on our website.

Spring 2022 Assessment Focus-Groups

The COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020 to the present has had an extensive impact on many facets of teaching and learning at Elon, ranging from multiple rapid changes in course modality (emergency remote, hybrid or hyflex, online synchronous, and back to in-person), to increased student disclosure of trauma and need for flexibility, to faculty, staff and student burnout and disengagement. To better understand the ways that faculty have experienced these shifts and responded to them in their classrooms, and to determine faculty needs to inform a new, five-year strategic plan, CATL and Teaching and Learning Technologies (TLT) collaboratively held four focus groups with faculty during the spring 2022 semester.

17 early-career faculty (within their first three years at Elon) and 12 established faculty participated in the four focus groups in February and March. Common themes that emerged on how teaching has changed since March of 2020 included:

- Adopting a **pedagogy of care**, including using class time to check in on students' well-being, intentionally reducing extraneous cognitive load, increasing transparency in teaching, exploring alternative grading approaches, increasing their use of formative assessment, and taking steps to humanize themselves as professors.
- Increasing **flexibility** by redefining learning objectives, structuring opportunities to access course content remotely, using technology or otherwise, providing additional learning resources in line with Universal Design for Learning recommendations, teaching outdoors, and continually rethinking the use of different pedagogical contexts according to student needs and the contextual demands of a given lesson.
- Being more intentional about building **classroom community** through strategies such as using collaborative or shared notes documents for each class meeting,

incorporating digital discussion assignments that invite students to connect personally with and beyond the content, thoughtfully re-evaluating group work assignments for the COVID context and their student populations, and seeking out new ways to help students feel that they belong.

- Bringing new emphasis to fostering **student motivation and engagement** by supporting students in taking additional ownership over their work, negotiating student resistance and disengagement in various ways, and attempting to help students navigate substantial increases in stress, anxiety, and burnout.
- Associated with all these changes were substantial **new demands on faculty**, including a dramatic increase in workload associated with the process of adapting to constantly-changing conditions and providing flexibility and options for students to engage with coursework in a variety of ways, compassion fatigue and a lack of self efficacy around providing the kinds of emotional support students need now, and some frustration associated with learning and using the new technologies that enabled (and continue to enable) flexible teaching that meets student needs.

When asked what CATL and TLT should offer in the future or incorporate into our strategic plans, faculty participants offered many diverse suggestions with common threads around **increased support** for re-engaging students and fostering collaboration and discussion across disciplines and **institution-level advocacy** for faculty related to the increased demands of teaching and mentoring at this moment in time.

2022-2024 Interim Strategic Plan

The 2022-23 academic year will be a transitional time for CATL, as three members of the CATL team move out of their roles, four new members join, and Director Deandra Little takes on additional responsibilities with her promotion to Associate Provost. In this context, our interim strategic plan for the next two years will focus on the following priorities:

- **Hiring a new Assistant Director** via an external, international search process to replace Associate Director Kelsey Bitting, who is transitioning in August to a full-time faculty role in Environmental Studies.
- **Hiring a new Program Coordinator** via an external search process to replace Program Coordinator Christina Wittstein, who is transitioning in July to a new full-time role with North Carolina Campus Compact.
- **Onboarding new Associate Director Jen Uno** (Associate Professor of Biology) who fills the role vacated by Mary Jo Festle (Professor of History and Maude Sharpe Powell Professor) who has returned to the faculty full-time after a 10-year stint in CATL.
- **Onboarding new Pedagogy Fellow Vanessa Drew Branch** (Associate Professor of Human Service Studies), the inaugural Pedagogy Fellow focused on critical pedagogies and universal design for learning.
- **Engaging in a full strategic-planning process** in the spring semester of 2023, once all new team members are acclimated to their new roles.