



ELON
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR THE
Advancement of
Teaching and Learning

ANNUAL REPORT

- 2024 / 2025 -



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elon.edu/u/academics/catl/

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CATL, 2024-25



What a pleasure it was to join the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning this past year, building on the phenomenal leadership of past directors, Dr. Deandra Little and Dr. Peter Felten. I joined a dedicated, brilliant, and compassionate group of teachers, scholars, mentors, and educational developers in CATL, and I am grateful for their collaboration and thought-partnership as we shaped our first year of work together.

The CATL team for the 2024-25 academic year:

Dr. Jill McSweeney, Assistant Director and Assistant Professor of Wellness

Dr. Olivia Choplin, Associate Director and Associate Professor of French

Dr. Jen Uno, Associate Director and Associate Professor of Biology

Dr. Vanessa Drew-Branch, Pedagogy Fellow and Associate Professor of Human Service Studies and African and African American Studies

Donna Camp, Program Coordinator for the CATL and the Center for Engaged Learning

As I reflect on this year and look forward to the year ahead, I am inspired by the wide-ranging collaborations we had with partners across and beyond campus, and the breadth of programming we were able to support across the year. In the pages that follow, you'll learn about our strategic directions for the years ahead and read about the steps we are already taking in those directions. It's an exciting time to be at Elon and to be working together to advance teaching and learning!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah L. Bunnell". The script is fluid and cursive.

Sarah L. Bunnell, CATL Director and Associate Professor of Psychology

LETTER FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CATL, 2024-25



It has been a privilege to grow along-side inspiring colleagues this last year, and collaborate on meaningful initiatives and projects with students, faculty, and staff at Elon and beyond.

A few highlights include:

- Partnership with Elon 1010, Core, and Living and Learning on a first-year experience Community of Practice to support faculty and staff in their utilization of first-year pedagogies.
- Partnering with Honors Student, Saffie Hollingsworth, and the University of Iceland to design the first-year transition boardgame, *Beyond the Books* to support students during their first semester of college.
- Sharing Elon's reputation and impact as the number one institution for undergraduate teaching across three institutions in United Arab Emirates.
- Continuing to build collaborative programing, like the Spring Course Reboot and Summer Teaching Course Design, with Teaching and Learning Technologies to model thoughtful and evidence-based pedagogy and technology integration.

Each year I am invited into so many of your classrooms to support you and your students in the shared learning that occurs across our campuses. Thank you for continually opening your door to us, and sharing the impactful work you do!

With appreciation and joy,

Jill McSweeney, CATL Assistant Director and Assistant Professor of Wellness

OUR VISION

Founded in 2005, Elon's Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) serves as a catalyst for effective, inclusive, intentional teaching and engaged learning by fostering a community where teaching and learning—and learners and teachers—thrive.

OUR MISSION

Through educational development programming and consultations, the CATL team engages Elon teacher-scholars in life-long learning about intentional, evidenced-based, and inclusive practices and supports University-wide initiatives related to high-impact, engaged, and experiential learning.

OUR VALUES

CATL faculty and staff work according to shared VALUES, in keeping with the [Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers](#) (developed by the national professional organization for centers for teaching and learning).

All programs and services are:

- confidential, voluntary, and formative, not evaluative,
- intentional in their creation of a collegial environment of mutual respect and care for all parties involved
- grounded in evidence drawn from scholarship and effective practice, responsive to the specific goals and questions of the faculty, staff, or students with whom we work and to ongoing assessment of Elon's local context,

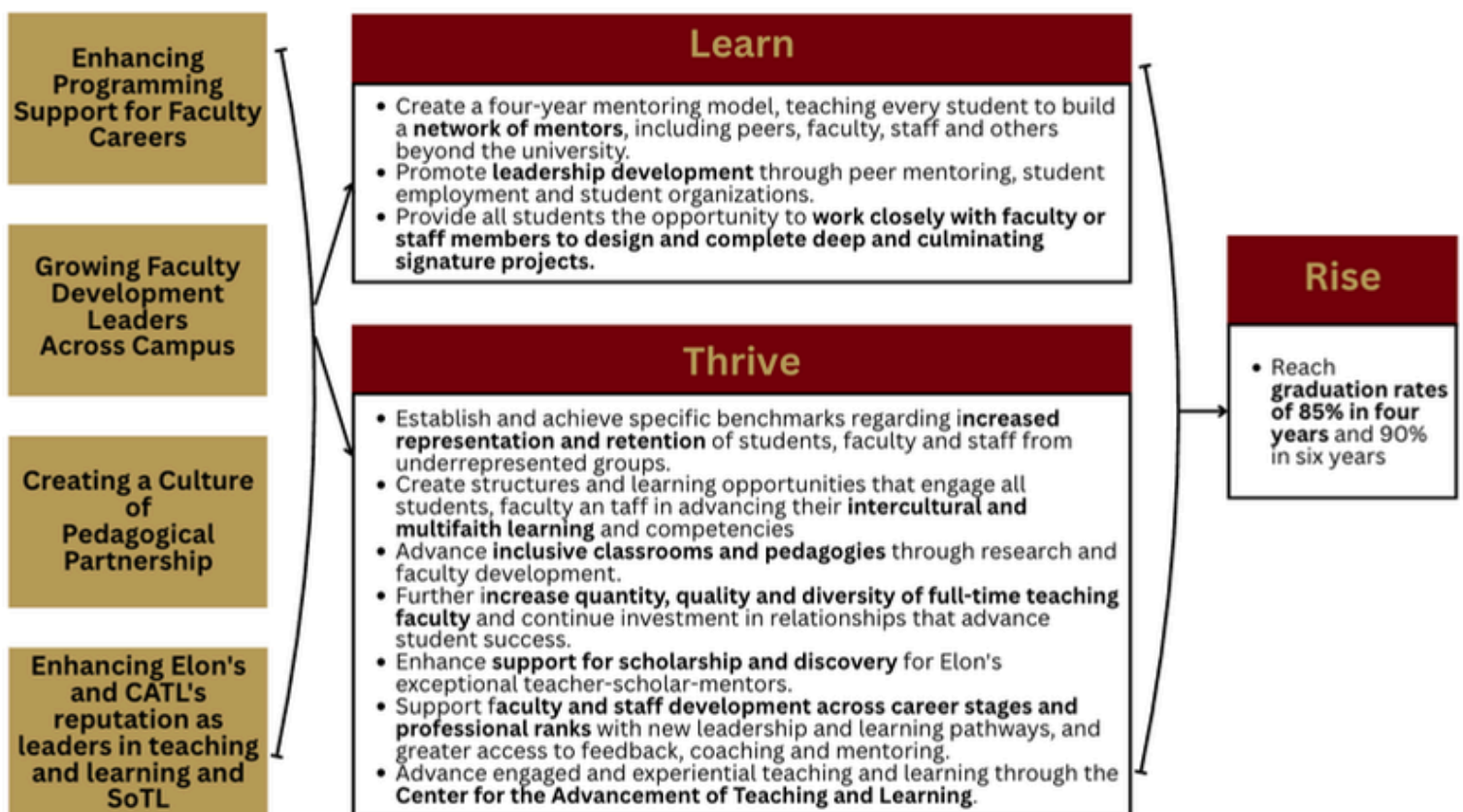
inherently collaborative and responsive to the broad needs, dynamic contexts, and evolving research that frame and surround teaching and learning locally, nationally, and globally.

CATL's Strategic Directions for 2024-2029

As we enter the third decade of CATL's existence as a space of leadership, mentorship, and community building, our mission and vision remain the same, even as we seek to broaden our impact and reach. We aspire to further grow our role on and beyond Elon's campus as a catalyst for exceptional teaching and learning, enhance our role as a leader in supporting faculty across their careers to refine their practices as exceptional teacher-scholar-mentors, and build cohorted programs to meaningfully support student-faculty pedagogical partnerships, in order to expand student leadership, agency, and mentorship capacities, enhance faculty engagement in scholarly teaching, and further differentiate Elon in its ability to provide all students with mentored, engaged, and experiential learning opportunities. Our specific strategic directions are as follows:

1. Supporting faculty as continuous learners and scholars in teaching and learning across the full span of their careers and roles at Elon.
2. Nurturing faculty as they further develop their capacities for teaching and learning leadership and mentorship across campus.
3. Fostering a culture of collaboration, partnership, and co-inquiry into teaching and learning, to support faculty and student growth, agency, and learning.
4. Furthering Elon's reputation as a national and international leader in teaching and learning.

In the figure below, we identify the ways that these strategic directions connect to the Boldly Elon Strategic Plan

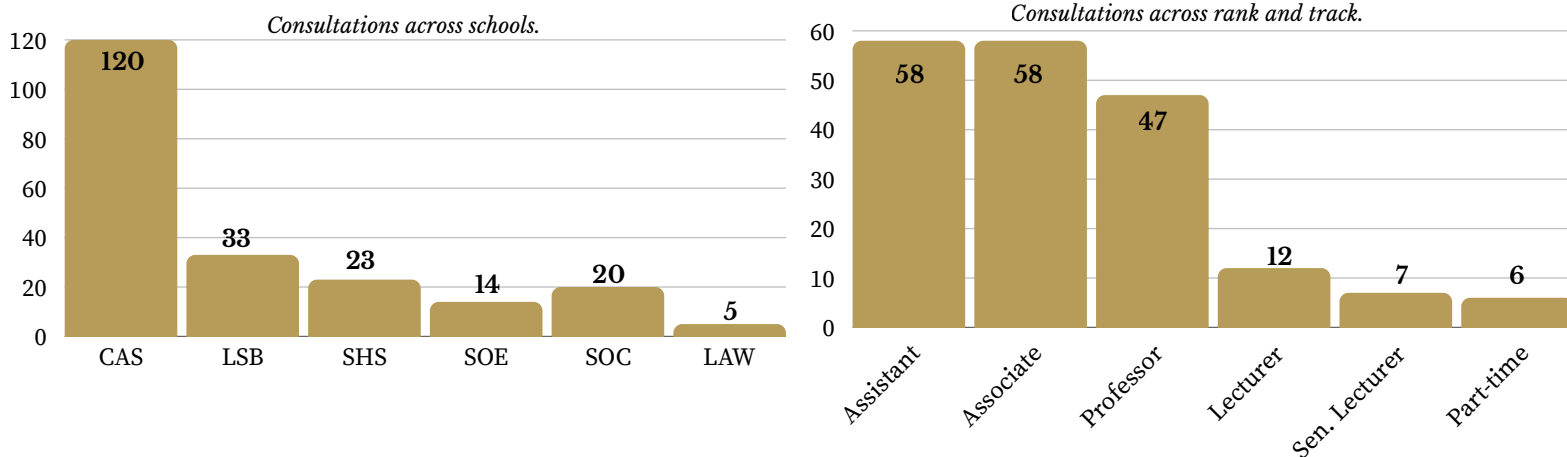


Strategic Direction 1: Supporting faculty as continuous learners and scholars in teaching and learning across the full span of their careers and roles at Elon

Individual faculty and staff support

264
hours of individualized
support!

In the 2024-25 academic year, CATL provided 288 consultations with individual faculty and staff across all six schools at the university, as well as educators from around the globe. We were also pleased to note that Elon faculty consultations ranged across the full gamut of career stage and role as well. Averaging 55 minutes per consultation, that's 264 hours of individualized teaching and learning support!



In addition to individual consultations, we also were invited into 37 classrooms to conduct mid-semester focus groups. In this process, a CATL member facilitates a ~25 minute small group instructional diagnosis (SGID; e.g., Hurney, Rene, & Troisi, 2022) conversation with the enrolled students in a faculty members' class, gathering mid-course feedback related to the factors that are helping them learn and what suggestions they have for mid-course adjustments. Across the 38 mid-semester focus groups, CATL facilitated this feedback process with 1390 students. After each session, the CATL facilitator anonymized and summarized this feedback and then met with the instructor to support them in incorporating this feedback into their teaching practice.

Strategic Direction 1: Supporting faculty as continuous learners and scholars in teaching and learning across the full span of their careers and roles at Elon

Support for new faculty at Elon

CATL hosted **21** new faculty at a three-day Course Design Institute in early August, in partnership with Teaching and Learning Technologies. Twenty-nine full time faculty and 18 new part-time faculty colleagues also joined us for orientation sessions during Planning week. Throughout the academic year, CATL offered **eight** monthly sessions for new faculty, focused on topics such as inclusive teaching practices, successful approaches for advising, and balancing the provision of challenge and support in your teaching.

Support for faculty post-promotion

In May, we partnered with the Provost Office to facilitate half-day orientation programs for individuals new promoted to associate professor (in the morning) and full professor (in the afternoon). Across the fall semester, we offered three additional workshops for **5** newly promoted associate professors, supporting them in thinking about their goals for their teaching, scholarship, and contributions to the university in this new phase of their career.



Workshops and Institutes to support all faculty in their ongoing teaching development

20

workshops & reading groups

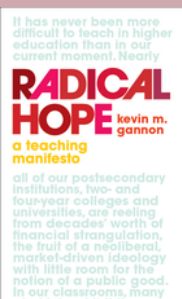
32

institutes & seminars

In addition to our programming for faculty at specific points in their career, we offered a wide range of workshops, often with campus partners, across the academic year. Across these offerings, **588** participants joined us for these learning opportunities.

June

A three-day Neurodiversity Institute, focused on pedagogical strategies for supporting neurodiverse learners in our classrooms and a partnership with the Office of Inclusive Excellence Education and Development for the Summer Race, Reflections, and Discussion Series



September

CATL Summer Read's Radical Hope facilitated discussions and a "Teaching in Challenging Times" workshop

November

A panel discussion with Writing Across the University on "Doing Teaching-Related Scholarship," a workshop on "Teaching in Winter Term," and two workshops on hope and institutional change (with Dr. Jessica Riddell, Bishop's University, Canada)

January

The "Spring Course Refresh" two-day workshop with Teaching and Learning Technology and a discussion focused on "Processing Winter Term courses" co-facilitated with the Global Education Center

March

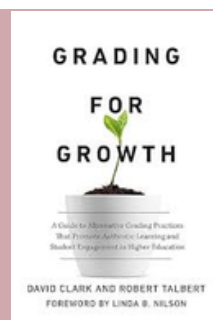
Additional "Course Design for HeathEU courses" sessions and a workshop, co-facilitated with the Library and Committee on Elon's History and Memory, focused on teaching with the committee's report and the archive

May

A two-day workshop for faculty interested teaching in the honor's program

July

Summer Reads Grading for Growth facilitated discussions



August

An Ungrading Bootcamp, a partnership with Teaching and Learning Technology to offer Digital Learning Days

October

A workshop on "Enhancing Student Feedback on your Teaching," a workshop on "Teaching Political Hot Topics," and a workshop on "Supporting New Faculty" (with visiting scholar Dr. Kath Sutherland, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

December

A workshop led by Dr. Stephen Bloch-Shulman and on "Questions in the Classroom, Questioning the Classroom"

February

A series of sessions on "Course Design for HeathEU courses" in partnership with Dr. Evan Small, and a "Speed Teaching Workshop on Students-as-Partners"

April

Additional "Course Design for HeathEU courses" sessions and a workshop, co-facilitated with the Library and Committee on Elon's History and Memory, focused on teaching with the committee's report and the archive

Inclusive Teaching Certificate and 2nd year Community of Practice

Building on the success of the 2023-2024 Inclusive Teaching Certificate Program, co-sponsored by the Provost's Office and the Office of Inclusive Excellence Education and Development, we supported **27** additional faculty in face-to-face or online cohorts to complete **6** training modules alongside reflection and application assignments. The certificate program is designed to enhance individuals' awareness of and capacity for fostering inclusive classroom environments where all students can learn and thrive.



Feedback from this program continues to be very positive. In the response to the question: “Thinking about the impact of the Inclusive Teaching Certificate on your [current] courses, please consider the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements,” respondents said:

● Strongly Disagree ● Disagree ● Neutral ● Agree ● Strongly Agree

The ITC had an impact on how I constructed my courses for this fall.

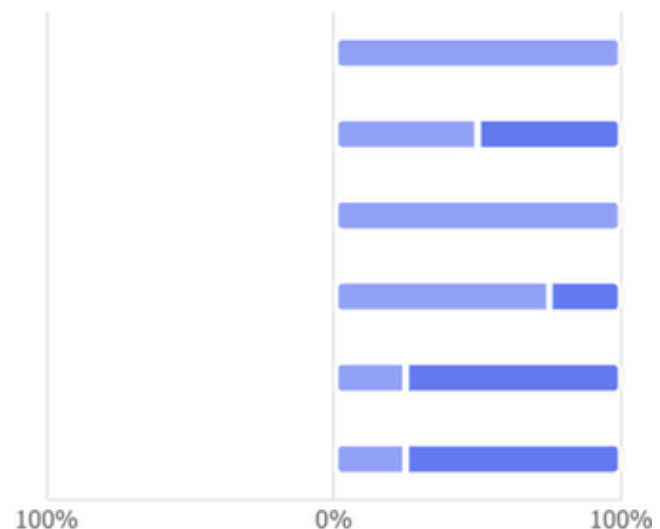
I have integrated strategies I learned in the ITC into my courses this fall.

I have shared information that I learned from the ITC with departmental or other colleagues.

I have continued to think about the impact of inclusive teaching throughout the semester.

Participating in the ITC was a valuable use of my time.

I wish I had more time to integrate my ITC learning into my current teaching.



Notably, the last question above (“I wish I had more time to integrate my Inclusive Teaching Certificate (ITC) learning into my current teaching”) was endorsed by all respondents as ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree.’ In response, and under the leadership of Marna Winter and Evan Small, a subset of faculty from the first year’s certificate cohorts convened across the year to deepen their inclusive teaching practices and support each other in applying what they have learned from the certificate program to their classrooms. We are thankful for this powerful partnership and for all those who continued their learning and development in this community!



Strategic Direction 2: Nurturing faculty as they further develop their capacities for teaching and learning leadership and mentorship across campus.

CATL Leadership

CATL's team has several teaching and learning leadership positions designed to help faculty in promoting teaching and learning across campus while concurrently building their own leadership and educational development skills

CATL Faculty Associate Directors



Olivia Choplin completed her final year as Faculty Associate Director of CATL this year. In addition to supporting the ongoing work of the Center, Olivia also took the lead in working to understand the landscape of Teaching and Learning Assistants on campus, as a space where partnership between faculty and students on teaching is already happening. Her analysis identified some key opportunities for CATL to consider as we work to build a robust pedagogical partnership program at Elon.



Jen Uno completed her third year as Faculty Associate Director of CATL. As one of the leads for Elon's cross-institutional partnership in enhancing inclusive teaching in the sciences through the SCIENCE Collaborative, Jen again co-facilitated a highly successful Neurodiversity Summer Institute (with colleague Alexa Darby, Full Professor of Psychology) and has provided critical leadership for laying the groundwork for the pilot pedagogical partnership program that CATL will run, alongside 6 other institutional partners, in Spring 2026.



A search for CATL's next Faculty Associate Director was successful, and we look forward to welcoming Marna Winter, Associate Teaching Professor of Education, to the CATL team next year.

CATL Pedagogy Fellows




Vanessa Drew-Branch completed her second and final year as CATL Pedagogy Fellow. Her pedagogy fellowship has focused on efforts for enhancing inclusive teaching practices and sense of belonging, particularly for historically marginalized groups. Building on her Good Trouble: Inclusive Pedagogy web series, Vanessa partnered with 5 students to conduct focus groups with underrepresented students to better understand their experiences in Elon classrooms. This work resulted in a series of recommendations for faculty development and related resources for enhancing inclusive practices on campus.




A search for CATL's next Pedagogy Fellow was also successful – Brandon Sheridan, Associate Professor of Economics, will join CATL in Fall 2025 to begin his two-year fellowship.

CATL Scholars



Erin Pearson, Associate Professor of English, completed her CATL Scholars project on “Connecting Literature and Professional Programs to Increase Student Motivation and Success.” In this work, she developed a pilot course and assessment tool to explore methods for enhancing business and health profession students’ appreciation for how the skills and expertise gained in literary studies courses are relevant to their professional and personal lives. She will present this work at the 2025 annual meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.



Amanda Chunco, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies, undertook her first year of her two-year scholarship focused on “Grading and Belonging in STEM.” She is exploring how identity, disciplinary differences in assessment practices, and individual faculty member’s beliefs about assessment, among other variables, relate to students’ sense of belonging, persistence, and retention in STEM.

CATL Grants

CATL also provides a range of competitive, internal granting opportunities to support faculty’s teaching and learning inquiries, professional development, and dissemination of their scholarly teaching research at national and international venues.

\$77,582

awarded to support SoTL research and engaged teaching projects.

Teaching and Learning Conference Grants. This year, CATL awarded \$28,960 to 30 faculty awardees to attend and/or present their teaching research at conferences around the world, including India, Italy, and Spain.

Teaching and Learning Grants. These large grants, ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000, support faculty in conducting teaching and learning inquiry projects. This year, CATL awarded \$38,786 to 10 faculty scholars. Some of these projects included “Fostering the adoption of an integrated inquiry-based teaching model to enhance environmental studies major recruitment” (Kelsey Bitting and Jacob Rutz) and “Learning resources for language revitalization” (Anne-Marie Iselin and Corey Roberts).

These awards support a total

57

faculty.

Winter Term and Mini-Grants. Winter Term grants are smaller (\$500) awards to support faculty in designing or redesigning their winter term courses, and mini grants are similarly sized awards to support faculty classroom innovation and redesign efforts. This past year, we awarded \$2,980 in winter term grants to 9 faculty colleagues, alongside \$6,855 to 18 faculty members in mini-grant funding.

Strategic Direction 3: Fostering a culture of collaboration, partnership, and co-inquiry into teaching and learning, to support faculty and student growth, agency, and learning.

As noted in our activities under Strategic Direction 1, CATL collaborated with campus partners on a range of programs and initiatives over the past year. Our partners across campus over the past year included:

- Academic Accommodations and Accessibility
- Belk Libraries
- Center for Engaged Learning
- Center for Research on Global Engagement
- Data Nexus
- Director of Artificial Intelligence Integration
- Elon Core Curriculum
- Elon History and Memory Committee
- Faculty Fellows
- Gender & LGBTQIA Center
- Global Education
- HealthEU
- Honors Program
- Koenigsberger Learning Center
- Office of Inclusive Excellence Education & Development
- Provost Office
- Teaching & Learning Technologies
- Writing Across the University

A particular partnership that we wanted to highlight from the 2024-25 academic year was with Teaching and Learning Technologies and the Director of Artificial Intelligence Integration. Together, we conducted listening sessions with 9 faculty departments and 11 staff departments, to learn about how they are approaching the opportunities and challenges of the ever-changing AI landscape in higher education and at Elon. We found that AI adoption is broad but uneven in both contexts, and both faculty and staff named a desire for ongoing dialogue and reflection on how AI may support or limit our ability to deliver student-centered and relationally meaningful

CATL Annual Teaching and Learning Conference

For 20 years, CATL has offered an annual Teaching and Learning Conference, freely available to the full Elon teaching community and to our national and international colleagues. On August 13, 2024 and in partnership with Teaching and Learning Technologies, CATL hosted an online conference on “Divergent Teaching: Empathy, Rigor, and Beyond.” Our keynote speaker, Dr. Kevin Gannon (Queen’s University), spoke about “Rethinking Rigor and Centering Academic Wellness.” The conference also featured 8 speed-teaching sessions, 16 Innovative Pedagogical Strategy presentations, and 14 workshops by colleagues from Elon and around the world. With 478 attendees, it was a successful start to the year of teaching and learning!

————— “ —————
I really appreciated the variety of session types offered this year. The mix of workshops, panel discussions, and practical demonstrations kept the conference dynamic and engaging

————— “ —————
THIS WAS FANTASTIC. I often feel a hesitant about sitting in front of my computer on an all-day meeting/conference and struggle to focus, but this one was great

————— “ —————
Thank you for this great opportunity to improve.

————— “ —————
A lot of gratitude for your conference. It was well worth my time.

————— “ —————
I think your conference is valuable and something that more educators should attend. There is something for everyone!

CATL Writing Residency

The CATL Writing Residency Retreat has hosted Elon faculty for a week-long retreat to support the production of faculty scholarship each year since 2006. In June 2004, 13 faculty provided feedback and encouragement to each other as they worked on their scholarship throughout the week.

Peer-reviewed publications and presentations authored or co-authored by CATL faculty

CATL faculty are active scholars in the scholarship of teaching and learning and faculty development. Below are the publications and presentations that we generated over the past year. CATL faculty are bolded.

CATL Peer-Reviewed Publications from the 2024-2025 academic year:

Akben, M., Mercado, B., & **McSweeney, J.M.** (2025). Bringing Historical Management Theories to Life: An experiential exercise using generative AI. *Management Teaching Review*.

Baxter, A., Peifer, S., Robin, A., **Bunnell, S.L.**, & Reutenauer, L.M.S. (2025). Examining student learning of Infrared Spectroscopy in Organic Chemistry. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 102(6).
<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/full/10.1021/acs.jchemed.5c00031>

Bunnell, S.L. & McGowan, S. (2024). The ceremony of a SoTL welcome: The International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as a case study. *Transformative Dialogues*, 17(1). doi:
<https://doi.org/10.26209/td2024vol17iss1799>

Bunnell, S.L., Chick, N., Hamilton, M., Santucci Leoni, A., & Woolmer, C. (2024). Generations of SoTL Scholars: Transferable Lessons and New Possibilities. *Transformative Dialogues*, 17(1). doi:
<https://doi.org/10.26209/td2024vol17iss1801>

Ostrowdun, C., Scholz, K., Chittle, L., Tran, L., Woolmer, C., **McSweeney, J.**, Barrette-Ng, I., Carroll, H., Sibbald, K., Aizenobie, A., McCollum, B., Rowland, C., McBride, B., & Foster, C. (2024). Supporting equity in online learning during COVID-19. In *Online learning, open education and equity in the age of COVID*. Athabasca University Press.

Schmalzbauer, L., Jaswal, S.S., Cora ez-Bolton, S., **Bunnell, S.L.**, Trapani, J.G. (2024). Critical Empathy in the Liberal Arts: The Sociological Imagination as a Mechanism for Re-envisioning Interdisciplinary STEM Education. In: Mandal, S. (eds) *Roadmap for Humanities and Social Sciences in STEM Higher Education*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4275-2_14

CATL Presentations from the 2024-2025 academic year:

Bunnell, S.L. (2025, May). Keynote and Workshop. "Holistic Advising in the Liberal Arts." DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana.

Bunnell, S.L. (2025, April). Keynote. “Cultivating Learning through KYnsHIP: High Impact Partnerships as a Key to Pedagogical Innovation.” (The University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky.

Bunnell, S.L. (2025, March). Keynote. Partnering with students to (re)claim the joy of teaching and facilitate culture change in higher education.” (2025, March). The University of Maine, Orono, Maine.

Bunnell, S.L. (2024, November). Opening Keynote. “Leading with and through SoTL: How a SoTL mindset can transform institutions, our students, and ourselves.” Symposium for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Mokakiiks Center for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Mount Royal University.

Bunnell, S.L., Felten, P., Hanstedt, P., Metzger, K.J., & Wright, J. (2024, October). Exploring the boundaries of ‘visions of the possible:’ Creating institutional cultures that center SoTL. Pre-conference workshop presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, French Lick, Indiana.

McGowan, S., **Bunnell, S.L.**, Bass, R., & Bernstein, D. (2024, October). Walking the talk through time: What are we walking toward? Workshop presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, French Lick, Indiana.

Bunnell, S.L. (2024, September). Keynote. “Humanizing Teaching and Learning through Pedagogical Partnership.” 31st annual SoTL Summit. Hosted by Kennesaw State University.

Campagna, K., **McSweeney, J.M.**, Kaufman, E., & Bitting, K. (April, 2025). Impact of Nature Sit Spots on College Students' Mood. National Conference of Undergraduate Research. Pittsburgh, Pa. (Poster).

Choplin, C., McSweeney, J.M., Uno, J., & Fullwood, C. (February 2025). Transformative learning for faculty: A collaborative approach to fostering faculty development in inclusive pedagogies. SoTL Commons. Savannah, Georgia. (Poster).

Johnson, K.S., Cole, R.S., Darnell, M., Gurney, R.W., Hannah, R.M., Lewandowski, G., Tansey, J.T., & **Uno, J.K.** (2024, November). Developing an Inclusion-based Leadership Network to Support a Nation-wide Multi-Institutional Collaboration to Improve DEI for Introductory-level STEM College Students. Association of American Colleges and Universities Project Kaleidoscope annual meeting.

Kaufman, E. Bitting, K., Campagna, K., & **McSweeney, J.M.** (April, 2025). The Effect of Outdoor Mindfulness Practices on Nature Connectedness and Mindful Awareness. National Conference of Undergraduate Research. Pittsburgh, Pa. (Poster).

McSweeney, J. (April 2025). Keynote: Igniting Innovative Teaching: Elon University's Blueprint for Transforming Undergraduate Education. Best Practices in Teaching and Learning, American University of Sharjah, Dubai, UAE.

McSweeney, J. (April 2025). Panel: AI in Higher Education: Transforming Science, Engineering, and Human Development Best Practices in Teaching and Learning, Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

McSweeney, J. (April 2025). Panel: Reimagining Learning: The Future of Education in a Rapidly Evolving World, Best Practices in Teaching and Learning, American University of Sharjah, Dubai, UAE.

McSweeney, J. (April 2025). Panel: Rethinking Assessment in the Age of Generative AI, American University of Amity University, Dubai, UAE.

McSweeney, J. M., Uno, J., Choplin, C. & Fullwood, C. (June 2024). Using a MOOC to Create Multiple Points of Entry for DEI Faculty Development. The International Consortium for Educational Development. Nairobi, Kenya.

McSweeney, J.M. & Moore, R. (June 2024). Understanding the impact of a pandemic on the work of Educational Developers. The International Consortium for Educational Development. Nairobi, Kenya.

Morrison, S. & McSweeney, J.M. (2024, October). Teaching Outside Matters: Assessing Outdoor Learning Spaces. Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

