



ELON
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR THE
Advancement of
Teaching and Learning

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 - 2029



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MISSION

Founded in 2005, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) serves as a catalyst for effective, inclusive, and intentional teaching and engaged learning at Elon University. With a firm commitment to educational excellence and innovation, CATL fosters a vibrant teaching and learning community committed to evidence-informed, equity-centered, and reflective practices that support transformative education.

CATL promotes scholarly, equity-minded, and evidence-informed teaching and learning practices, supports institution-wide initiatives related to high-impact and experiential learning, and fosters faculty growth across all career stages. Our work is rooted in a deep understanding of the evolving landscape of higher education and is informed by continuous assessment, emerging research, and strong institutional partnerships.

To fulfill this mission, CATL partners with Elon faculty, staff, and students to:

- Foster intentional and inclusive teaching and learning practices through confidential and formative programming and consultations designed to meet the diverse needs of educators and learners.
- Develop and implement programs responsive to individual, departmental, and institutional goals while remaining attentive to the Center's mission, evolving priorities, and resource capacity.
- Create, curate, and disseminate scholarly resources that support innovative, sustainable teaching and learning strategies and promote reflective practice.
- Support faculty in building integrated, meaningful careers as teacher-scholar-mentors through mentorship, community-building, and leadership development.
- Contribute to national and international conversations about pedagogy, inclusive practices, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), and educational development through scholarship and strategic collaborations.
- Engage in ongoing, equity-minded assessment practices that inform programming decisions, ensure accountability, and continuously enhance CATL's impact and effectiveness.

VALUES

CATL's work is shaped by a core set of shared values and guiding principles:

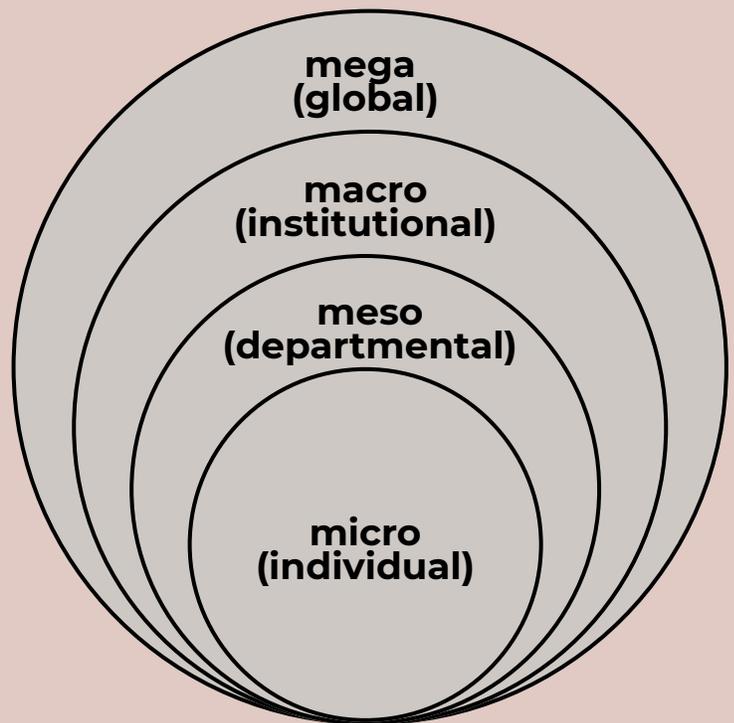
- All programs and services are confidential, voluntary, and formative (not evaluative), encouraging open exploration and risk-taking in teaching and learning.
- CATL programming fosters collegiality, mutual respect, and inclusivity, creating supportive spaces for reflection, dialogue, and experimentation.
- Our initiatives are grounded in educational research, best practices, and data-informed approaches that respond to complex and changing teaching and learning contexts.
- We remain responsive to Elon's institutional culture and to the evolving goals and aspirations of faculty, staff, and students.
- The Center values collaboration and cross-functional partnerships and is committed to continuous learning and adaptability in our practices.



BUILDING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH

This strategic plan builds on CATL's well-established reputation as a hub for inclusive, innovative, and reflective teaching practice. Faculty consistently identify the Center as a space for formative dialogue, pedagogical support, and scholarly engagement. Following the successful implementation of the 2016–2021 plan, CATL expanded programming in high-impact pedagogy, inclusive practices, and career-stage faculty development. Our leadership transitions from 2022–2024 were matched with continuity of high-quality teaching supports, collaboration, and resilience, enabling us to continue to advance the initiatives outlined in the 2016-2021 plan, while exploring new opportunities and potential spaces for impact going forward.

This plan embraces the complex and dynamic nature of teaching and learning in higher education. It is intentionally broad and adaptive, designed to provide strategic direction while accommodating emerging institutional needs, research developments, and global shifts in education. Our approach remains aligned with the 4M framework, which recognizes that meaningful and sustained change in educational practices requires attention to micro (individual), meso (departmental), macro (institutional), and mega (global) levels. As such, we articulate strategic directions that attend to individual faculty development, to departmental needs, to institutional needs and priorities, and to national and international teaching and learning communities.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2025–2029

CATL remains deeply committed to nurturing a culture of excellence in teaching and learning, grounded in equity, collaboration, and scholarly reflection. Over the next four years, CATL will continue to enhance and enrich Elon's culture of engaged and inclusive teaching and learning. As we broaden our scope and deepen our impact, we aim to strengthen the institution's capacity to support faculty across their careers, expand inclusive and high-impact pedagogical practices, and contribute to a more just and innovative academic community, at Elon and beyond. Throughout, CATL will remain a hub of scholarly engagement and collaborative leadership in the ever-evolving field of higher education. We aim to empower faculty, staff, and students to co-create transformative learning experiences that reflect the best of Elon University.

We will focus on the following strategic areas:

Supporting Faculty Development Across Career Stages.

Informed by multiple streams of feedback and conversations with faculty, CATL will focus our efforts to deepen and expand support for faculty across their professional journeys, in collaboration with academic and administrative partners. Particular areas of emphasis include:

- Extending and diversifying New Faculty Orientation programming to include intentional touchpoints for faculty beyond their first year at Elon.
- Rejuvenating mid-career mentoring supports, aligned with evolving faculty needs and fostering peer-driven communities of support.
- Developing additional avenues of programming to support senior faculty scholars in further deepening their pedagogical strategies and practices.
- Restructuring CATL grant programs to intentionally scaffold the development of SoTL scholars from initial inquiry, to engagement with the SoTL community, to making SoTL work public, and to avenues for faculty development and leadership.

Expanding Leadership in Faculty Development.

We will further cultivate and expand our distributed leadership model for educational development by engaging faculty and staff as co-leaders, mentors, and catalysts for scholarly teaching practices. Specific areas of focus include:

- Increasing and deepening faculty-led Communities of Practice to create shared spaces for learning and experimentation across disciplinary boundaries.
- Developing and piloting a curricular framework to support Elon's Faculty Fellows that integrates cohort-based development and attends to faculty-development skills that can support their efforts.
- Cultivating strategic partnerships with academic departments, student life, and staff professional development initiatives to strengthen the Elon educational ecosystem.
- Revitalizing and reimagining the annual Teaching and Learning Conference to extend reach and relevance.

Expanding Inclusive and High-impact Pedagogical Practices, including Pedagogical Partnerships.

Pedagogical partnership, a high-impact and evidence-supported practice, can be a transformative approach for enhancing faculty's teaching and learning practices and bolstering students' belonging, agency, and leadership capacities. Over the next four years, CATL will develop sustainable and scalable programs that center collaborative, student-faculty pedagogical partnerships, by:

- Launching, participating in, and assessing the SCIENCE Collaborative Pedagogical Partnership pilot in 2025-2026

- Building on the pilot, develop an institutional Pedagogical Partnership Program that is scalable, sustainable, and aligned with Elon's strategic priorities. We will seek additional funding sources to support the health and longevity of this program.
- Re-establishing and actively engaging CATL Faculty and Student Advisory Boards to co-create programming, offer feedback, and ensure transparency and inclusion in decision-making processes.

Enhancing Elon's National and Global Reputation as a leader in teaching and learning.

CATL will contribute to ongoing efforts to maintain Elon's position as a leading institution in teaching and learning innovation, contributing to national and international educational development dialogues and practices.

- Increasing the number of institutional site visits, Fulbright scholar visits, and external consultations that CATL provides, to highlight Elon's distinctive teacher-scholar-mentor model and the structures that enable CATL to support exceptional teaching and learning.
- Promoting and supporting CATL staff and affiliated faculty in presenting at national and international conferences, publishing scholarly work, and participating in multi-institutional collaborations.
- Redesigning and expanding the CATL website to include visualizations of long-term impact of CATL programs on teaching and learning at the institution and on faculty developmental outcomes, provide dynamic access to high-quality tools and resources about scholarly teaching, and create searchable archives of past programs and scholarship.
- Strengthen CATL's visibility and outreach by developing an integrated communications strategy that highlights teaching innovation, cross-campus partnerships, and institutional contributions.

Boldly Elon

Below, we identify the ways that these strategic directions connect to the Boldly Elon Strategic Plan.

