

OTEI is happy to announce the 2025-26 Faculty Learning Communities (FLC). If unsure what an FLC is, please see our frequently asked questions below the descriptions. Faculty can apply for one of the following FLC by completing [this short application](#).

Title, Leader and Proposed Time	Description
Evidence-Based Strategies for Everyday Classroom Success Minory Nammouz, PhD Principal Lecturer, Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences Wednesday @ 1:00 pm* In-person with Zoom option	This FLC will focus on exploring and implementing evidence-based teaching strategies to enhance student learning and engagement. Participants will discuss practical, research-based strategies faculty can use to improve student learning through small, intentional changes. Together, we will examine how small, incremental shifts in our teaching can lead to significant gains in student engagement and success. Participants will reflect on their practices, experiment with new techniques in their courses, and collaborate with peers to share feedback and insights. By engaging in this community, faculty will develop a toolkit of low-effort, high-impact strategies adaptable across disciplines and course formats, ultimately improving learning effectiveness in their teaching.
From Overwhelmed to Optimized: AI for Everyday Academic Tasks Carl Blue, EdD Associate Professor, Graphic Communications Tuesday or Thursday @ 1:00 pm* Virtual	This hands-on FLC introduces novice faculty to practical ways artificial intelligence can reduce workload and enhance the efficiency of teaching and administrative tasks. Participants will explore beginner-friendly AI tools and techniques for summarizing student reflections, streamlining grading, generating instructional content, managing communications, and checking for plagiarism. The group will explore real-time demonstrations, sample prompts, and guided practice designed to help faculty work smarter—not harder. No prior experience with AI is required. Leave with ready-to-use strategies that make your academic life a little easier.
Active Learning: Incorporating Simulations and Games in the Classroom Stephen C. Phillips, PhD Lecturer Department of Political Science Friday @ 1:00 pm* In-person	Looking for new ways to engage students and help them connect with course content in meaningful ways? Simulations and games offer powerful tools for active learning by placing students in dynamic roles mirroring real-world scenarios, decision-making, and rules. This FLC will explore designing and implementing simulations and games that align with specific course learning objectives, as well as how to structure games for clarity and effectiveness while managing student participation and assessment. Whether you are new to using simulations or looking to refine current games, this FLC provides a collaborative space to experiment, share ideas, and develop strategies for integrating engaging, high-impact participatory practices into your teaching.
Mindful Mastery: Teaching for Long-Term Learning Lindsey Beebe, Ph.D. Lecturer Genetics and Biochemistry	This FLC aims to enhance academic success by exploring tools and strategies that promote deeper learning and long-term retention. While one goal is to support students throughout the current semester, the broader objective is to help them develop enduring study habits and learning techniques they can apply in future courses and beyond. The FLC invites faculty from diverse departments to share varied perspectives and foster innovative approaches to assessing and supporting

Wednesday @ 10:00 am* In-person	student learning. Topics may include active learning, flipped classrooms, and the development of metacognitive skills
Promoting Curiosity, Connections, and Creating Value in Teaching Farhang Forghanparast, Ph.D. Lecturer Glenn Department of Civil Engineering Monday @ 3:00pm* In-person with Zoom option	This FLC promotes an inclusive, student-centered pedagogy that recognizes and addresses diverse student needs, fosters deep engagement, and supports both academic achievement and retention. We will explore how the Kern Entrepreneurial Engineering Network (KEEN) emphasizes cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset through the 3C framework: •Curiosity: Fostering an inquisitive spirit—encouraging exploration, questioning, and deeper inquiry. •Connections: Helping students see and integrate insights across diverse contexts, disciplines, or fields. •Creating Value: Empowering students to develop ideas, solutions, or products that address real-world needs. While traditionally associated with engineering, the 3C framework is broadly applicable across all academic disciplines to collaborate, share ideas, and develop innovative activities and assessments that enhance student learning and engagement. By incorporating these principles, faculty can help students become independent thinkers, collaborative problem-solvers, and impactful contributors to their communities.
Exploring Ungrading Principles Nigel Kaye, PhD Professor Glenn Department of Civil Engineering Wednesday or Friday after 1:30	Grading is an enormous amount of work for faculty and a source of great anxiety for students. For students, grades are all-important, and testing is endless. Ungrading is one possible approach to breaking this cycle and re-focusing students on their learning. There is also evidence that endless graded assessment of learning actually reduces learning. However, ungrading is not easy and is highly counter-cultural in some disciplines, including STEM. This FLC will explore three main questions: 1. What are the pros and cons of ungrading? 2. How can ungrading effectively be implemented in classes of all sizes? 3. How can faculty adopt ungrading in their courses? The ultimate goal of the FLC will be the production of a quick start guide for faculty looking to bring ungrading practices into their courses.
Peer Observation of Teaching Certification Becky Tugman, Ph.D. Senior Lecturer and Senior Faculty Fellow Public Health Sciences and OTEI Mini FLC offering a cohort each semester TBD* In-person with Zoom option	An in-class peer observation can be a beneficial formative tool and provide a summative review for documenting teaching effectiveness. This teaching artifact can provide valuable insight, but educational literature has noted several drawbacks if a review is not conducted in an equitable manner. The CBSHS Teaching Effectiveness Community has refined a process to support faculty to have meaningful and valuable peer reviews. Join this mini FLC to learn their process and become certified by the Faculty ADVANCEment Office and OTEI

*The listed time may change if the group can find a better alternative time. You may sign up for an FLC if the proposed time may not work for your schedule.

We thank the Provost's Office for support of this program.

Clemson Faculty Learning Communities Frequently Asked Questions



What is a Faculty Learning Community?

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) are based on the communities of practice model, where a group of faculty have a shared concern or passion about a topic and meet to deepen knowledge and expertise by interacting regularly (Cox, 2013). Approximately every three weeks, this group meets over an academic year to build community and create a product (e.g., a teaching method, research, or reflective practice) related to the group's topic (Cox, 2013).

At Clemson, each FLC topic is guided by a faculty leader who coordinates meetings and facilitates shared content for discussion (with assistance from OTEI). Each FLC starts with the intention of learning and producing—the community's learning aspect turns into actions undertaken by the community, either individually or as a group. These include:

- Learning about and applying new approaches to your teaching practice
- Learning about new pedagogical methods and assessment tools
- Sharing ideas and giving feedback on current and new practices

How many participants are in an FLC?

Each FLC must have at least five members, and the group will be capped at 10 participants. Each group is designed in person or virtually. Some FLCs may offer a Zoom option for in-person meetings.

What is the time commitment to participate?

Each FLC will meet approximately every third week for two semesters (September 2025 - April 2026) for roughly an hour, which is approximately **five hours per semester**. The leader will set a proposed meeting time that may be changed if the group agrees. The time may change in the Spring semester based on the group's availability.

Attendance is encouraged for all meetings. Participants may miss one meeting a semester without being dropped from the group.

What would be the expectations for participation?

Ideally, participants will actively engage with the discussions and group expectations. Many FLC themes encourage participants to "try" a teaching or assessment method as part of the group requirement. For example, if the group is exploring a new active learning method, then everyone will try a particular method.

As a group, the FLC will submit a "deliverable" to OTEI to report what the group learned or what problem they solved. OTEI will assist the group with determining the deliverables.

Each participant will complete the reflective essay in April.

What benefit would you get from participating in an FLC?

In addition to increasing your knowledge in the subject, you will receive

- Network and build relationships with faculty across the University
- Recognition for completion to your chair and dean
- Faculty professional development funds to be deposited next May. For a full year, participants receive \$500. Mini FLC participants receive \$200.
- You can document this as professional development in Faculty Success for annual review and promotion.

Who can apply?

We strive for diverse learning communities made up of multiple disciplines and experiences. We encourage faculty of all positions and levels of teaching experience to apply. OTEI encourages faculty to notify their chairs of their participation.

How do I apply?

Complete [this short application](#) by August 29, 2025. You will be notified by the leader or OTEI about your acceptance. This application form includes sections to provide: (1) a description of how the FLC aligns with your professional and teaching goals; (2) a description of how you will contribute to this group; (3) confirmation of support from your chair or supervisor; (4) internal financial staff contact information; and (5) agreement to meeting attendance and end-of-program deliverables.

What if I have other questions?

Contact Dr. Becky Tugman (btugman@clermson.edu), and she will answer your questions within 1-2 days. You can also directly contact the leaders if you are curious about the content.

What have past participants said about their FLC experience?

"This FLC has motivated me to re-evaluate and revise some activities in my classroom, building upon practices that have proven effective. By refining these activities and integrating new strategies, I can enhance student engagement and create a more dynamic learning environment that supports my teaching goals and students' needs."

"My experience was positive. The leaders were always helpful and provided so much support."

"My biggest takeaway from participating in the FLC was gaining a deeper understanding of student collaboration through the unique interpretations and fresh perspectives our younger faculty members shared. Their innovative approaches and insights challenged me to rethink traditional methods and inspired me to explore new strategies for fostering collaboration among students. It was both enlightening and rewarding to see how diverse experiences can contribute to a richer teaching and learning environment."

The logo for OTEI (Office of Teaching Excellence and Innovation) features the letters "OTEI" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The text is centered between two horizontal purple lines.