CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO JOIN FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES AT CLEMSON, 2019-2020

OTEI is pleased to invite Clemson faculty to apply for participation in the Faculty Learning Community program. This program is designed to create faculty learning communities across the university, and to assist faculty in learning about and incorporating new, evidence-based ideas into their practice. In the first year, FLCs were highly rated by faculty participants. “It is a great way to meet people outside of your department and have engaging discussions with other peers while learning along the way. As academics we crave learning, so this is a great way to do that.”

2019-2020 TOPICS

1. The Lecture as Performance: Provoking Interest and Curiosity in Large Sections
2. Promoting Student Engagement and Critical Thinking with Video-based Student Learning Projects
3. Innovative Ways for Teaching Large Enrollment General Education Courses
4. Digital Tools for Collaboration and Engagement
5. Supporting Effective Teamwork Through Training and Assessment
6. Action Research: Starting Your Scholarly Teaching Project, with an Eye Towards Scholarship
7. Connecting the Big Picture in Science to Break "Learn & Forget" Cycles
8. Dive-In to Teaching Diversity and Inclusion across Disciplines

Links and Descriptions below. Thank you to The Division of Undergraduate Studies, General Education and to the Division of Inclusion and Equity for support of this program.

WHAT IS A FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY?

FLCs ARE “A CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF LEARNING AND REFLECTION, SUPPORTED BY COLLEAGUES, WITH AN INTENTION OF GETTING THINGS DONE.” MCGILL & BEATY, 2001

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) have an “emphasis on the team aspect (while still consulting about and developing each individual’s project) and on the ultimate beneficiaries of the program: the students in the participants’ courses” (Cox & Sorenson, 1999). Louis et al. (1996) described shared values, a focus on student learning, collaboration, shared practice, and reflective dialogue as five elements of these professional communities. While an FLC can have one lead facilitator, the curricular content and the overall direction are strongly influenced by participating faculty (Cox, 2004).

At Clemson, FLCs are organized by topics, each with a faculty leader who coordinates meetings and facilitates shared content for discussion (with assistance from OTEI). Each FLC starts with
the intention of learning as well as producing—the learning aspect of the community 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 assessments and creating new assignments or tests
- Sharing feedback as new approaches and course content are created and implemented

Individual groups form around a topic, meet regularly during the year (each third week or at least once per month), share common readings, and support the implementation of a targeted change in each person’s practice, in the spirit of trying out something new.

## PARTICIPATION IN An FLC

Each FLC will include 5-8 participants. FLC groups will meet throughout two semesters (September 2019-April 2020) once a month or each third week. Attendance at group meetings as well as submission of a deliverable such as revised assignment, developed activity, or other creation/revision of another teaching element at the end of the second semester are required for participation. Participants will receive $400 in professional development funding awarded in the second semester.

Groups sizes are limited, and **you may only apply to 1 FLC. The application window will close on Sunday September 8, 2019.** Submissions will be reviewed by committee.

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 (as long as they are supported by their supervisor to engage in this program).

## HOW TO APPLY

Please follow the link for the individual FLC to apply to join a group (details and links below). This survey 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 account details for professional development fund transfer; and (5) agreement to meeting attendance and end-of-program deliverables.

**Questions? Email to otei@clemson.edu attn: FLCs.**
1. **Cynthia Pury  cpury@g.clemson.edu**  
The Lecture as Performance: Provoking Interest and Curiosity in Large Sections

As Cavanagh writes in “How to Make Your Teaching More Engaging” in the Chronical of Higher Education, “Your persona and performance matter, like it or not.” Enhancing student interest in large lectures by improving the delivery of the lecture itself is a low-cost way to enhance the undergraduate experience and undergraduate learning. Student attendance and student interest drive student learning. Students who are physically or mentally absent from lecture will not get the benefits of it. Moreover, inspiring lecturers can create inspired, engaged students. If we can motivate students early on, when they are taking those large lecture classes, we can increase graduation and retention rates.

This FLC is specifically focused on the enhancement of large enrollment lecture delivery rooted in two areas: in the psychology of curiosity and interest, and in the broad methods of the performing arts. I have implemented a variety of these principles in my large courses myself, and have seen an increase in student attendance, student test scores, and student satisfaction as measured by evaluations. This has all been without a reduction in content covered or expectations of student learning. It is proposed that membership in this FLC for faculty across the university who either teach large sections or have an interest in doing so. The “Lecture as Performance” FLC would be a coordinated companion to Amy Pope’s proposed “Innovative Ways for Teaching Large Enrollment General Education Courses”. “Innovative Ways” focuses on structural changes to improve large enrollment sections, including course management, engagement activities, metacognitive tools, and assessments, while this FLC focuses specifically on lecture delivery.

**We will meet on the third Thursday of each month from 3:30 – 5:00.** This time coordinates with the “Innovative Ways” FLC to allow for us to attend the other group’s meeting as well. 
**Apply #1:** [https://forms.gle/3Ff4j3F4rW3GZmpG9](https://forms.gle/3Ff4j3F4rW3GZmpG9)

2. **Ralph Welsh  ralphw@clemson.edu**  
Promoting Student Engagement and Critical Thinking with Video-based Student Learning Projects

This FLC will collaboratively explore current literature and pedagogical practices associated with the use of video-based projects that promote student engagement, critical thinking and digital communication across a variety of higher education disciplines. In addition, participants will be provided with the opportunity to design/refine student video projects through a collaborative peer review/assignment tuning process. An emphasis will be placed on discussing 1) the design of video projects that align with key student learning outcomes, 2) video project evaluation, 3) perceived barriers/benefits students face doing video projects and 4) the dissemination of lessons learned. Monthly topics will be based on participants’ interests as they relate to Clemson Forward goals and the development of engaging course video projects that promote skill development among our new generation of student learners.

Student video production projects have been identified as an emerging pedagogical method for promoting student learning and demonstrating learning outcomes (Chareen Snelson, 2018). Video projects have the potential for providing students with the opportunity to expand their
communication skills beyond written and oral methods to digital methods that are common in society today. In addition, if designed correctly, the process by which students design and produce video projects (individually or within groups) can provide opportunities for them to explore core critical thinking skills (e.g. interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation & self-regulation) identified as important in academics, careers and their personal lives (Peter A. Facione, 2018).

We will meet regularly (once-a-month) on a day and time to be determined. A poll will be set up to gather Fall schedule availability from interested participants and Fall meeting dates will be finalized as soon as possible.

Apply #2: https://forms.gle/H7fEjWyYKsHGQUSR7

3. Amy Pope amyj@g.clemson.edu
Innovative Ways for Teaching Large Enrollment General Education Courses
The large classes necessitated by increasing enrollment often breed passive learning and student instructor disconnects. Low engagement results in poor student performance on assessments and increased failure rates, which are both in direct opposition to the focus on student retention. This faculty learning community will bring together faculty teaching large enrollment general education courses across campus to discuss methods for actively engaging students in large classes, as well as tools for managing large classes, providing student feedback, and promoting an inclusive learning environment.

Participation in this FLC during the 2018-2019 academic year provided members cross disciplinary interactions and a better view of Clemson students as learners. The continued focus on the unique challenges of teaching 100+ students in a single course section provides instructors with resource, perspectives and encouragement to try new innovations in their classes.
Bringing together faculty teaching large enrollment courses can have an impact through the development of community through several different disciplines. Many students are enrolled in several large enrollment class at the same time. Talking through issues as a group of instructors with overlapping students allowed us to identify where we as instructors could challenge students more as well as areas where we needed to better support our students as emerging learners. I hope that Through the continuation of the large enrollment FLC, these connections can continue to be forged.

We will meet on Thursdays from 3:30 – 5:00. This time coordinates with the “Lecture as Performance” FLC to allow for us to attend the other group’s meeting as we wish.

Apply #3: https://forms.gle/Xkn5vFhe8yLzRS7w6

4. Rachelle Savitz rsavitz@clemson.edu
Digital Tools for Collaboration and Engagement
This faculty learning community will reflect on current technology use and provide space for discussion and incorporation of new digital tools for collaboration and engagement. Digital tools like Flipgrid, VoiceThread, and Pear Deck, will be discussed with a goal of FLC members introducing and sharing other digital tools that can provide collaborative opportunities and small group instruction, accountability for students, and promote students to interact with one another
virtually. These resources are appropriate for small or large classroom sizes and for all age learners. Many of our students are provided little interaction with each other or the instructor and these tools can eliminate that isolation. The goal for this FLC is to present and share ideas we have used within our own classrooms and gather ideas from each other, including research that discusses various digital resources. We will commit to trying various digital resources within our own classrooms.

This FLC will offer options in terms of monthly meetings – day/time, virtual participation and F2F options.
Apply #4: https://forms.gle/ELXngH13gd3682n89

5. Jennifer Ogle ogle@clemson.edu
Supporting Effective Teamwork Through Training and Assessment
This FLC will focus on effective incorporation of team assignments in your courses. We will consider all aspects of teams: designing assignments for interdependency, training on teamwork skills, peer and group assessments, and development of individual student asset inventories to support more effective team assignments. For the better part of the last decade, individual and team creativity has been projected as “THE” skill of the future workplace. Yet, most faculty that teach with group-based projects have identified a lack of teamwork skills among students—a concern also reiterated by numerous organizational leaders in industry (Hughes, et al., 2016). If, as a university, we plan to re-envision general education by providing key tools that will prepare students to engage and succeed in upper-level coursework and careers – we desperately need to build both student and faculty teamwork skills.

Through the FLC, we will review key pieces of literature on teamwork, discuss difficulties and uncertainties in defining projects for teamwork, and address the purpose and tools for evaluating teamwork. An ongoing team-based course or assignment is not required for participation.

The group will meet on Friday mornings at 10 AM.
Apply #5: https://forms.gle/nw5WTnDC5EHyVkze7

6. Karen High khigh@clemson.edu
Action Research: Starting Your Scholarly Teaching Project, with an Eye Towards Scholarship
This FLC will focus on action research—also called “teaching as research” by the Center for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning. This topic will allow participants to become Scholarly Teachers and begin to undertake Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) topics. The group will have a focus on the many nuances of our teaching at a large university and teaching specialized disciplines—large class sizes, laboratory and field experiences, engagement of diverse students, retention of prerequisite knowledge, and other aspects teaching and learning. In each discipline, what counts as “evidence” of successful teaching practices and the impacts on learning can differ. Yet, the research process is essentially the same. Members in this FLC will work through the first steps of the process, posing a research question about teaching and learning, determining what counts as evidence, finding one’s place in the conversation, and gathering and analyzing data (which may include an ultimate goal of presentation and publication, but does not
have to do so). Dr. Karen High will facilitate the group, provide resources, and encourage cohort support of your interests in a project. You do not need to commit to a research project to join this group but simply be interested in starting the process.

**This FLC will meet at 10:00 am the second Friday of every month and at 2:00 pm the fourth Friday of every month.** Participants must attend at least one of the meetings per month.  
Apply #6: [https://forms.gle/tk4fQU7fjwfo5BJo9](https://forms.gle/tk4fQU7fjwfo5BJo9)

7. **Modi Wetzler mwetzle@clemson.edu**  
**Connecting the Big Picture in Science to Break "Learn & Forget" Cycles**

Students often default to a memorize-regurgitate-forget cycle in their science courses, in part because individual courses do not make explicit connections to other courses in the department, to courses in other departments, or to topics that are relatable or that students care about. Colleagues in this faculty learning community will be working together to come up with big picture ideas (threshold concepts, common questions, micro- or macro-molecules, etc.) to serve as common threads across a number of science courses. Working as a cohort community will allow the FLC members to make small course tweaks to give students a framework for better engagement with science topics.

Apply #7: [https://forms.gle/2ma2g6fYPu6RcE8G9](https://forms.gle/2ma2g6fYPu6RcE8G9)

8. **Curtis White and Moryah Jackson**  
**Dive-In to Teaching Diversity and Inclusion across Disciplines**

The Dive-In Faculty Learning Community will support ClemsonForward by exploring the ways faculty from all seven colleges and schools are incorporating diverse content, perspectives, and approaches to curriculum to prepare students for engagement with today’s complex world. Faculty will search for answers to questions such as, “How can I help my students engage with the multiple communities that constitute their world? How can I incorporate diversity into my teaching? And how can I create a more inclusive classroom?”

This Faculty Learning Community will explore how colleges and schools at Clemson University teach diversity and inclusion in the general education curriculum and address ways to incorporate practices supporting diversity and inclusion into their courses.

Apply #8: [https://forms.gle/zdfz85w4hS4vbyRH9](https://forms.gle/zdfz85w4hS4vbyRH9)

*Note: This FLC is sponsored by the Division of Inclusion and Equity, may offer funds as per the first year, and may focus on assisting the university and colleges in diversity and equity in teaching issues.*