CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO JOIN
FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES
2022 – 2023

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. Former faculty participants have rated the FLC experience highly:

“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.”

2022-2023 TOPICS (Detailed Descriptions Below)

1. Motivating Engagement from Anxious Students in Challenging, High-Enrollment Courses
2. Peer Review of Teaching
3. Untangling the Science of Learning from Myths About Learning
4. Investigating Active Learning to Enhance Student Comprehension, Engagement, and Critical Thinking
5. Incorporating Popular Culture in the Classroom
6. Incorporating International Virtual Exchange (IVE) in the College Classroom

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, share common readings, and support the implementation of a targeted change in each person’s practice, in the spirit of trying out something new.
We thank The Division of Undergraduate Studies, General Education for support of this program.

### PARTICIPATION IN AN FLC

Each FLC will include up to 10 participants. FLC groups will meet throughout two semesters (September 2022-April 2023) approximately each third week. Members can anticipate face-to-face meetings and potentially some online meetings. Attendance at group meetings, as well as submission of a deliverable such as revised assignment, developed activity, short video, or other creation/revision of another teaching element at the end of the second semester, are required for participation. Participants will receive $500 in professional development funding awarded in the second semester.

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). FLC groups welcome members from all disciplines to join.

### HOW TO APPLY

Details of FLC topics are below. Please follow the [this link](https://bit.ly/ClemsonFLC22) to apply to join a group. Groups sizes are limited, and you may only apply to one FLC. The application window will close on Monday, September 12, 2022. Submissions will be reviewed by committee.

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.

**Questions? Email to otei@clemson.edu Attn: FLCs.**

### FLC FACULTY LEADERS AND TOPICS

1. **Motivating Engagement from Anxious Students in Challenging, High-Enrollment Courses**
   
   Modi Wetzler, mwetzle@clemson.edu & Mariah Magagnotti, mariahm@clemson.edu

   The mental health crisis in higher education has reached pandemic proportions, exacerbating student disengagement, anxiety, and poor academic performance, particularly in large enrollment courses where individualized attention is less applicable, and STEM courses that typically involve less discussion. In contrast with their approach to playing sports and musical instruments with a constructive “keep practicing” attitude, students increasingly preface their mental approach to academic material with unhelpful (and ultimately experience-defining) “I can’t” or “I don’t.”

   This Faculty Learning Community seeks to bring together instructors from a wide range of departments to discuss specific manifestations of the problem, the literature (both formal and informal such as blogs) on causes and mitigation strategies, as well as to brainstorm, develop, and refine Clemson-specific approaches to re-motivating student engagement. The FLC will meet both in-person and online with a strong preference for in-person attendance. In addition to the regular discussion, we will brainstorm a way to share our own growth and learning with the broader campus community, such as a blog post, a video on individual strategies, a workshop, etc.
2. **Peer Review of Teaching**  
Emily Scribner, escribn@clemson.edu

Peer review of teaching is a reflective and collaborative process in which instructors identify their teaching goals and perceived strengths and weaknesses, observe each other’s classes, and reflect on how they could modify their teaching practices in order to achieve their teaching goals.

In this Faculty Learning Community (FLC), participants will both be observed by their peers and conduct classroom observations of their peers using published classroom observation protocols to characterize how instructors and students spend their time in the classroom. Each instructor will identify their teaching goals and aspects of their teaching they seek to improve. The FLC meetings and pre- and post-classroom observation discussions will ensure each instructor receives feedback that is tailored to those goals, whether that be clarity of lecture materials, design of classroom activities, or engagement of students during lecture. The materials generated by classroom observation protocols can be used to demonstrate teaching practices and effectiveness as part of a teaching portfolio or promotion and tenure package.

**Proposed Day/Time for Meetings:** Wednesdays from 12:30 - 2:00 pm, with a possible alternative time of Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30 pm. Meetings will occur every 3-4 weeks. This FLC will be offered primarily in-person with the possibility for virtual attendance. All classroom observations will be completed in person.

3. **Untangling the Science of Learning from Myths About Learning**  
Scott Brame, brames@clemson.edu

This FLC will deeply examine the science of how students learn and evidence behind recommended teaching practices. There are many misconceptions about both how students learn and the best teaching methods to use towards being more effective and inclusive. Current research indicates that many instructors are hanging on to outdated teaching methods and perceptions of student learning that are no longer justified. An example of topics we may explore is the myth of "learning styles." The overwhelming consensus among education researchers is that there is no scientific evidence to support the hypothesis of learning styles. This FLC hopes to replace myths like this with resources and strategies rooted in evidence from cognitive and adult learning theory.

Together, we will take a close look at what current research tells us about learning (using resources such as *The New Science of Learning* book), we will reflect on what this modern research means for our disciplines and classrooms, and we will examine our own instructional beliefs and practices.

Our goal will be to distill this information down to practical guides for our fellow instructors. At the end of the FLC, each member will be responsible for creating a short video (2-3 minutes) on a specific topic related to learning and teaching that will become part of the OTEI FLC library.

**Proposed Day/Time for Meetings:** Thursdays from 4:00-5:00 pm, however members will be surveyed to finalize meeting time and place. Meetings will occur every 3-4 weeks. Meetings be in-person and virtual as needed.

4. **Investigating Active Learning to Enhance Student Comprehension, Engagement, and Critical Thinking**  
Amy Pope, amyj@clemson.edu & Pooja Puneet, ppuneet@g.clemson.edu
Meetings will be proposed as a means to support their learning and development. The identities they hold.

This FLC will facilitate a group that looks at how we, as instructors, can meet not only the academic needs of our Clemson students but engage them with opportunities to think critically about the material they are learning through active engagement in the classroom. Our group will brainstorm ways to integrate active learning strategies in the classroom.

**Proposed Day/Time for Meetings:** Thursdays from 1:00-2:00 pm, however members will be surveyed to finalize meeting time. Meetings will occur every 3 weeks. Meetings will be virtual, except for the last meeting each semester, which will be held in person.

5. **Incorporating Popular Culture in the Classroom**

Michelle Boettcher, mboettc@clemson.edu

This FLC will focus on using a variety of popular culture texts (movies, TV, books, podcasts, etc.) to inform student learning across the curriculum for both undergraduate and graduate students. Given the tremendous accessibility of a variety of popular culture resources, how can we use movies, TV shows, comic books, and the wide variety of other resources to engage students and enhance learning? Additionally, what popular culture resources do students know about that we can capitalize on in class lectures/discussion and through assignments both in-person and virtually?

Because of the variety and diversity in entertainment today, popular culture is a way of fostering a sense of inclusion. Not only can we access shows with diverse characters and experiences, but students themselves can bring forward resources (shows, books, etc.) that speak to a variety of identities including and beyond the identities they hold.

This group will seek to support teaching and learning through student engagement. Students live in multiple spaces simultaneously both physical and virtual. Their engagement with entertainment and popular culture media sources is ongoing and constantly available. One of the areas we may explore together is how we can create meaningful ways of engaging students with and through popular culture as a means to support their learning and development.

**Proposed Day/Time for Meetings:** Mondays from 2:00-3:00 pm. Meetings will occur every 3 weeks. Meetings will be virtual.

6. **Incorporating International Virtual Exchange (IVE) in the College Classroom**

Minory Nammouz, mnammou@g.clemson.edu & Antonio Baeza, jbaezam@clemson.edu

Incorporating global learning into college-level coursework can assist students in seeing the connections between their studies and the world outside the classroom. However, traveling abroad and participating in a first-hand experience with students from different cultures might not be possible for many of our students at Clemson University. The purpose of the International Virtual Exchange (IVE) model is to incorporate global learning into college-level coursework to give students a global experience in their classrooms and to enhance intercultural communication and engagement. The IVE model is an excellent opportunity to support ClemsonForward goal of incorporating global learning throughout the curriculum.

In this faculty learning community, we will share our experience in IVE, and through discussions and brainstorming, we will help faculty incorporate IVE into their current courses. Incorporating IVE does not
require changing or creating a whole course; it can be an additional component such as guided synchronous interaction between students, editing an existing course project, or developing a new one.

_Proposed Day/Time for Meetings_: **Fridays from 1:00-2:00 pm**, however members will be surveyed to finalize meeting time. Meetings will occur every 3-4 weeks. Meetings will be virtual, with possible in-person meetings towards the end of the semester.