

2023 UCCS Teaching & Learning Conference

ABSTRACTS

Concurrent Session 1 – TED Talks – Tuesday, 10:00-10:30

UCCS General Education Assessment: What We Know and Where We Go

Phillip Haisley

This presentation will share an overview of the work by the UCCS Compass Curriculum and the UCCS Assessment Office to assess general education learning outcomes since the inception of Compass Curriculum in 2013. We will review results from assessment efforts measuring student proficiency in many areas including writing, oral communication, and quantitative reasoning. We will also share course focused research on learning in Compass Courses approved for Sustainability, Inclusiveness, and Navigate. We will discuss the current assessment methods being used and the advantages and drawbacks of our current systems. Finally, we will explore future options for assessment of general education and seek faculty feedback on paths forward.

A Different Approach to Group Assignments

Katy Hudson

This presentation will discuss a unique approach to student group assignments. A specific example of the group assignment for an upper division UCCS School of Public Affairs course will be reviewed which applies a number of unique concepts to elevate student learning in a contemporary way.

"Can the Library Buy an E-book for My Class?" and Other Complicated Questions

Matt Jabaily

E-books and streaming videos have the potential to make accessing and sharing resources easier and more affordable, so why is using them in your class so complicated? Copyright, licensing, digital rights management, and economics all play a role. This talk will share the perspective of an Electronic Resources Librarian on how the transition to digital media has impacted classroom instruction and how the library can help teaching faculty navigate the digital media landscape.

Turning Discussion Boards into Productive Writing Collaboration

DeLyn Winters

"Respond with at least one paragraph, and with at least two sentences to each of two other posts." Many of us resorted to this kind of discussion board requirement during the pandemic, but we quickly learned that this didn't lead to very productive conversation, especially when it comes to something useful that students will be writing about later. Using real examples, I'll demonstrate how I created a loosely-structured collaboration space to help students help each other annotate, take notes, group for classwork, and discuss their reading. I was surprised at the effect it had—and you might be too. It is possible to get freshmen to do their homework!

Concurrent Session 2 – Professional Development Workshops – Tuesday, 10:45-11:45

How To Create flexible Learning Classrooms Students Can't Wait To Work in and Hate To Leave!

Kelly Almer

So much is written on how students learn. But what about where students learn? Environments are never neutral. Educational learning environments must adapt, engage, and create flexible experiences that provide students with places to thrive. Kelly Almer's book, "flex Ed" and soon to be released, "flex Further", encourages educators with inspiration, techniques, and models so that teachers can learn to design their learning spaces into life-giving environments. You will enjoy the stories of successes and struggles and relate to her journey while picking up tips and tricks to flex your classroom into dynamic learning experiences.

You Got Your FCQs... Now What?

Grant Clayton and Ann Amicucci

Receiving student feedback on your courses can be daunting. You might delay reading Faculty Course Questionnaires (FCQs) because of critical feedback they contain or be unsure how to choose which pieces of feedback warrant attention. Despite their challenges, FCQs present a rich opportunity for revising our courses. Presenters will share strategies for using FCQs as part of the course revisions cycle. Next, we will address other parts of the course revision process including alignment with course objectives, assessments, and teaching strategies. The workshop will include examples with real FCQs—feel free to bring your own. Presenters will also share resources from Faculty Assembly on recognizing bias in student evaluations and using FCQs as one piece of feedback in the big picture of describing your teaching successes for evaluation or promotion.

The Paradox of Power in the College Classroom: Is Less More?

Janice Thorpe and Connie Staley

This one-hour workshop will explore the traditional power dynamic in the college classroom and the benefits of moving from “either/or” to “both/and” power to maximize student learning. The facilitators request that participants bring a syllabus they are working on so they can incorporate ideas from specific examples of successful power-sharing strategies.

Lessons from the Pandemic: Compassion in Academia

Regina Winters, Caroline Chubb, Anna Kosloski, and Stephanie Gangemi

This workshop explores how one community of faculty, staff, and students experienced compassion during the pandemic. Workshop attendees will discuss the results of a survey capturing university community members' experience of compassion before and during the pandemic. The group will cultivate a new understanding of compassion in academia through the emergent framework TCISW. Participants will reflect and discuss ways to expand the pre-pandemic stress constructed compassion toolbox to enrich the academic experience of all university community members.

Concurrent Session 3 – TED Talks – Tuesday, 1:45-2:15

Why Do We Do It? How Do We Use It?

Lynne Calhoun

Although program level assessment is embedded in our campus wide culture, there are still questions that get repeated annually. As our campus process has become more sophisticated over time, these remain legitimate questions. Beyond the initial questions such as “why do we do it?”, there lie other equally important questions. As a campus we have become adept at gathering data. Overall, departments have well-designed student learning outcomes, well-developed instruments, and gather and present impressive data. Typically, the process stops there. What do we do with the results? The response to this question may very well circle back to answer “why do we do it?” The goal of this presentation will be to explore the options available once you have viable data and bring clarity to the why question. In this session I will explore how the campus currently uses the information and how academic departments currently use the information and offer suggestions as to how the results might also be used to bring value to faculty time and efforts in the campus-wide assessment process.

Demystifying Online Learners: What New Research Tells Us About Fully Online Students

Nathan Bullock

Online learners are likely one of the most studied student groups in higher education’s history. In the second half of 2022 alone, all the following reports were released:

- AASCU’s Online Learning at Public Universities
- Wiley’s Online Learner Experiences
- Quality Matters’ and Eduventures Research’s CHLOE 7: Tracking Online Learning from Mainstream Acceptance to Universal Adoption
- Education Dynamic’s Online College Students Report 2022
- Wiley’s Voice of the Online Learner

However, these students are often overlooked and misunderstood on campuses, taking an almost ghostlike quality of existence without observation—a part of our community, and yet not physically present. We will use these recent to further elucidate online students and their motivations, abilities, apprehensions, and preferences.

Free Tech Tools for Better Student Engagement

Katherine Cliff

During your lecture, what are students actually learning? No, I’m not talking about what you’re teaching your students; I’m talking about what are they actually taking away from your lecture? Here are three tech tools—Plickers, Whiteboard.fi, and Myopenmath.com—that can help you to assess student understanding in real time, so that you know what they know before your first midterm. I’ll give demonstrations of how each tool works in real time, and share use-case suggestions for the classroom.

The FAQ-Centered Syllabus: One Your Students Will Read

Dan Lykins

“That’s in the Syllabus,” you say, silently regretting that students don’t read and don’t remember a darn thing from your syllabi. They rarely do. It’s maddening. Make your Syllabus a proper noun: Give it a purpose, a life, and a voice. Your voice. In this TED Talk style presentation, Lt Dan (HPNU Principal Instructor of Anatomy, Dan Lykins, (Lt Col,

USAF, Ret.)) will show and explain how he moved from four-page syllabi that helped no one, to 80-90 page syllabi that students willingly read cover-to-cover, sometimes weeks or months in advance of the start of classes. Best part: This can dramatically reduce your email workload.

Pedagogical Horizons Over Treacherous Terrains

Raphi Sassower

In this brief presentation, I plan to offer the boundary conditions that differentiate the practical from the theoretical, however their points of imbrication. This is not to argue that pedagogical theories, however diverse, do not find themselves in the classroom; instead, it attempts to suggest that multiple theoretical frameworks inform, influence, and drive classroom interactions. I shall present, in this context, different organizational platform that tap into difference registers of intellectual engagement, from Teaching and Learning Centers to the President's Teaching Scholars Program. My goal is to offer theoretical bridges, however shaky their foundations.

Concurrent Session 4 – Professional Development Workshops & TED Talks – Tuesday, 2:30-3:30

Research Jitters: Helping Students Build Confidence with Library Resources

Jess LaBozetta and Ella Gibson

Recently, discourse in higher education has begun to focus on academic anxiety among student populations. Like other forms of academic anxiety, both library anxiety and research anxiety alike can result in tangible effects on student wellbeing, academic performance, and retention. Both library and research anxiety are pervasive issues experienced by many students. This is especially true for students belonging to historically marginalized groups, first-generation students, non-traditional students, and first-year students. In this proposed workshop for teaching faculty and lecturers, we will discuss the theory of library and research anxiety and how educators can implement new strategies to help students overcome it. *Participants, please bring a laptop or tablet with you for the active learning segments of the workshop.*

Lifting the Veil: Co-teaching Current Controversies Through Illusion and Transparency

Jennifer Kling and Colin Lewis

In this session, my colleague and I demonstrate how we teach controversial current topics through a combination of illusion and transparency. We sketch out our general approach first, then guide session attendees through two of the concrete practices that we use to create our classroom environment. All of this is conducive to teaching current controversies in constructive, inclusive ways that go beyond the false neutrality of simply “teaching the debate”. Our hope is that attendees will take away some new pedagogical approaches and practices that help them teach controversies with confidence.

CollabTeach: The Unessay and Intellectual Curiosity

Carole Woodall

CollabTeach is an interactive workshop initiative that focuses on faculty engagement with critical educational strategies. The workshop centers on how students' intellectual curiosity can inspire the design of unessay projects. Unessays move beyond traditional papers and center different learning preferences and expressions. Unessays also engage with curiosity; however, this workshop asks how can intellectual curiosity be centered from the outset of a course as opposed to curiosity being in the background.

Understanding the Impact of Learning Communities from the Perspective of UCCS Students and Alumni

Anna Kosloski and Alex Remillard

This presentation will include a brief history of learning communities (LCs) and an overview of existing literature on how LCs have been document related to retention and fostering community. Attendees will hear about how a longstanding learning community at UCCS has been structured. Most notably data collected from a survey and interviews with alumni of the LC will illustrate the impact that the LC had on student learning, connection to others, connection to campus, and career goals. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and ideas for future directions of the LC will be shared.

Mixing it Up: Utilizing Mixed Methods Studies as Teaching/Learning Strategies for Critiquing Research

Jennifer Zohn

- Purpose: To create focused and effective methods of teaching nursing students to critique quantitative/qualitative research in an 8-week, online course.
- Background: Combining qualitative and quantitative research critique assignments may focus students' learning of this process.
- Methods: A *Mixed Methods Research Critique* assignment was planned and developed.

- Results: The *Mixed Methods Research Critique* assignment was implemented during two courses, Fall, 2022. Initial data is promising.
- Implications: More data is needed to determine the *Mixed Methods Research Critique* assignment's effectiveness.

Conclusion: The *Mixed Methods Research Critique* assignment may provide a focused and effective teaching/learning method to helping students develop research critique competencies.

Concurrent Session 5 – Professional Development Workshops – Wednesday, 10:45-11:45

Revising Written Communication to Improve Access for First Generation Students and English Language Learners

Ann Amicucci

If you're new to a higher education environment, terms like "elective," "prerequisite," and "office hours" may not mean much to you. What's more, if your primary language isn't English, multisyllable words and jargon can make course and campus expectations difficult to understand. For first generation college students, English Language Learners, and students who belong to both groups, navigating written communication at UCCS can be overwhelming. In this workshop, participants will collaborate on two exercises that apply to faculty and staff work. First, we'll do a terminology translation exercise to find easier ways to explain common terms we use with students. Second, we'll do a jargon reduction exercise to practice removing complex words and passive voice from writing. Participants will gain hands-on practice at making written communication more accessible for students. Content from this workshop can be applied to documents such as syllabi, assignment directions, Canvas pages, and informational flyers. This workshop will use exercises designed by EAB (eab.com).

Using Interactive Digital Tools for Creating Inclusive Learning Experiences

Angie Dodson

This workshop focuses on transforming mediocre or mundane learning activities and assignments into experiences where students contribute from their own knowledge, skills, and ideas collaboratively using various interactive, digital tools. Pre-select a course activity or assignment to redesign using social annotation, real-time collaboration, video discussion and sharing, inquiry-oriented WebQuests, or short-story creation. Participants will be introduced to a series of interactive tools and then choose one to revise their pre-selected learning activity or assignment for immediate implementation.

They've Been Taught It, Why Can't They Use It? Developing Strategies for Deeper Learning, Application, and Retention

Cory Gavitt

In an attempt to increase student test scores, I revamped a classic physics lab and began on a journey of truly understanding where deep learning and retention live, and it wasn't in the places we typically look. In this presentation I will share how this journey fundamentally changed how I create material for student learning, the questions I ask, and how it boosted content retention as well. This presentation will have a math/science focus, but the tools discussed will provide examples applicable to any subject matter. In addition, the worktime will allow for collaboration and adaptation of your subject matter. By the end of the session, you should have one or two lesson ideas to implement immediately and hopefully a plethora ideas to flesh out and develop on your own.

Playing Games in the Classroom for Engagement and Critical Thinking

Melanie Pearlman

Games are often used in the classroom for review, or for "fun time" rewards, or for time filler. But the magic of using games for learning is that in a lower-stakes environment, students can make meaning and organize subject matter in their minds without the stress of grades attached. "It's just a game!" And yet real understanding can develop through well-designed games, as well as application of knowledge and collaborative teamwork with peers. Aren't these among our desired outcomes for our students, across curricula and grade levels? In this session, we will alternate between playing games that I've used in the secondary classroom, and discussing the benefits of using games as a teaching strategy and learning activity.

Concurrent Session 6 – Professional Development Workshops – Wednesday, 12:00-1:00

Upping our Hyflex Game: Strategies for Successful Hyflex Courses

Hayley Blackburn, Baye Herald, and Jennifer Kuespert

Hyflex courses offer students the opportunity to attend class in person or (synchronously) online. This flexibility for students comes at a price, however. Not only must faculty be prepared to manage technology for teaching to both modalities at the same time, but they must also be prepared to engage and respond to an online and in-person

audience. If you are looking to teach hyflex for the first time or are hoping to up your hyflex game, this interactive session will offer an overview of how to plan for a hyflex class as well as cover a variety of strategies for keeping students engaged with each other and class content, regardless of modality. Attendees are encouraged to share their experiences and best practices!

Clyde's 5: New Paths to Engage and Retain Students

Cody Parish, Stephen Cucchiara, and Noelle San Souci

Student engagement, belonging, and retention are perennial challenges facing institutions of higher education. As colleges and universities continue to reckon with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for what Nathan Grawe calls the looming “enrollment cliff” of 2026, there is an urgency to identify and implement new practices that better retain undergraduate students. Research indicates that undergraduate students report higher levels of belonging at their university when they are engaged with campus resources and programming. Clyde’s 5 is a new program at UCCS designed to facilitate holistic student engagement with academic learning opportunities, campus resources, and student life programming. This workshop will provide an overview of the new Clyde’s 5 program, outlining the program’s structure into five student engagement domains and demonstrating how to use its corresponding Paths and Club Match technology to incentivize student participation in all facets of campus life. After attending this workshop, instructors will have an understanding of the new Clyde’s 5 program and how best to integrate it into their classrooms, thus contributing to campus-wide efforts to improve student retention at UCCS.

Replacing the Dreaded Thread: Community-Centered Classroom Conversation

Josie Smith

As we move toward the building of a hybrid campus, we must create authentic and engaging online learning spaces. Instructors are realizing that in addition to the endless emails that come pouring into their inboxes every day, keeping track of student needs and answering them quickly is incredibly challenging. Authentic discourse, clear communication, and community building are paramount to student success in online formats. In our 60-minute workshop, we will explore the use of agile learning communities like Slack to engage in meaningful and authentic conversations in our classrooms. In this session, attendees will engage in *synchron-ish* discussion around building community-centered classroom conversation.

Quality Instruction Through the Eyes of the Student

Curtis Turner and Alissa Whitesell

Every student has a collection of stories related to their learning experiences and stories are a powerful way to convey a message. Big Idea: The goal of this session would be to give students an opportunity to share what instructional strategies have made the biggest impact on their learning, and for instructors to have the opportunity to ask questions and discover different ways to increase the learning and experience of their students going forward. Research-based evidence will be provided to support and expand on student experiences.