



# Empowering Educators To Innovate And Inspire

Discover the potential of Generative AI in education with our webinar series, "Teaching and Learning with Generative Artificial Intelligence." Gain practical strategies to integrate AI into your teaching, creating dynamic learning environments.

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## Greetings from the Director



Dear Colleagues,

As we embark on a new academic year, I am excited and optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead. The start of the academic year is always a time of renewal and possibility, and this year is no different. Our commitment to fostering an inclusive and dynamic learning environment across USC remains stronger than ever. Our mission remains steadfast: to empower educators to innovate teaching and inspire learning.

Over the summer, our team has

been diligently working to enhance our website, programs, workshops, and resources to better support your teaching and professional development needs. This newsletter highlights some of these enhancements,

As we move forward, I invite you to stay engaged with the CTE through our events, programs, workshops, and resources. Together, we can continue to create a vibrant and dynamic learning environment that supports the growth and development of every member of our USC community.

Please reach out to us with any questions, suggestions, or requests for support. Our team is here to assist you in achieving your teaching and learning goals.

I wish you all a successful and fulfilling academic year ahead.

Sincerely,

Matt E. Thatcher, Ph.D.  
Director, Center for Teaching Excellence

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# Unlock the Power of Generative AI with Insightful Webinar Series



The CTE is excited to offer “Teaching and Learning with Generative Artificial Intelligence,” an engaging webinar series designed to provide educators with the practical knowledge and strategies needed to maximize the benefits of Generative AI. This series will guide participants through integrating Generative AI into their teaching practices, creating enriched and dynamic learning environments for their students.

Participants may register for individual webinars that spark their interest. However, those who attend all webinars and complete the reflection activity will receive a certificate of completion and a digital badge, recognizing their commitment to innovative teaching practices. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your skills and gain valuable recognition!

## Webinars

- **September 11, 12:00pm – 12:50pm**  
[Responsible Generative Artificial Intelligence: Empowering Tomorrow's Innovators](#)

Generative AI is revolutionizing our world, but it's essential to use it responsibly. This webinar will explore how Generative AI can complement human creativity and innovation, empowering both learners and educators across disciplines.

- **September 25, 12:00pm - 12:50pm**  
[Tinkering with Generative Artificial Intelligence](#)

Curious about the transformative potential of Generative AI? This webinar delves into the basics of Generative AI, demonstrating how to craft effective prompts and design thoughtful responses to revolutionize teaching and learning.

- **October 9, 12:00pm – 12:50pm**  
[Creating Engaging Content Using Generative Artificial Intelligence](#)

Transform your teaching approach with innovative content creation. Learn how to use Generative AI to craft lectures and instructional materials that cater to the needs of 21st-century learners, enhancing engagement and fostering deeper understanding.

- **October 23, 12:00pm – 12:50pm**  
[Active Learning with Generative AI-Powered Activities](#)

Interactive activities are key to a stimulating learning environment. This webinar will show you how to leverage Generative AI to design collaborative

projects and integrate AI-generated prompts and feedback, making your teaching practices more impactful.

- **November 6, 12:00pm – 12:50pm**  
[Reimagining Assessments with Generative Artificial Intelligence](#)

Upgrade your assessments with Generative AI! Discover how to transform traditional assessments into engaging experiences that promote deeper learning, creativity, and critical thinking, aligning with your course learning outcomes.

- **November 13, 12:00pm – 1:00pm**  
[Rethinking Your Teaching Philosophy in the Age of Generative Artificial Intelligence and ChatGPT](#)

A teaching philosophy statement is a critical reflection of your perspective on teaching and learning. This webinar will guide you in crafting a statement that incorporates the ethical usage of ChatGPT, helping you navigate the profound shifts in higher education

Join us for an enlightening journey into the future of teaching and learning with Generative AI. Register today and take the first step towards enhancing your teaching practices and earning recognition for your dedication to innovative education.

## Generative Artificial Intelligence Community of Practice

Launching in Spring 2025, the CTE will host a Community of Practice (CoP) focused on Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). This collaborative space brings together faculty, staff, and graduate students to explore the practical applications of GenAI across administration, research, teaching, and learning. By fostering knowledge sharing and innovation, we strive to guide the responsible integration of GenAI into higher education. Regular meetings will provide a platform for members to share experiences, challenges, and successes, as well as discuss emerging trends, share best practices, and develop strategies for leveraging GenAI

Initial CoP activities will include:

- GenAI tool demonstrations and hands-

on workshops.

- Panel discussions with experts in the field.
- Showcase of member-led GenAI projects.
- Brown bag lunch sessions for informal discussions.

We invite faculty, staff, and graduate students to join us in this initiative. To express your interest or learn more, please complete the [GenAI CoP interest form](#).



 **Center for Teaching Excellence**  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) serves as the go-to hub for the development and sharing of teaching resources and best practices, championing an environment where all educators contribute to an inclusive, engaged, and student-centered learning experience.

**Center for Teaching Excellence**  
Thomas Cooper Library, Room L511  
1322 Greene St.  
Columbia, SC 29208  
Phone: 803.777.8322  
Email: [cte@sc.edu](mailto:cte@sc.edu)  
Website: [sc.edu/cte](http://sc.edu/cte)

# New Faculty Insights: Essential Updates and Resources for a Successful Start



## New Faculty Orientation (NFO)

[New Faculty Orientation \(NFO\)](#) offers new full-time faculty the chance to connect with each other and with university leaders. It also provides valuable insights into the resources available for teaching, research, and professional development, helping to build a support network for their careers at USC.

NFO 2024 is divided into two distinct days: NFO – Benefits Day and NFO – Orientation Day, both held at the University Conference Center, Close-Hipp Building, Suite 800.

**NFO – Benefits Day**  
Date: Monday, August 19

Details: Human Resources conducted two one-hour presentations on the benefits available to new faculty members. After

these presentations, new faculty had time to engage in brief discussions with benefits counselors and to schedule more detailed meetings for later.

**NFO – Orientation Day**  
Date: Friday, September 6  
Time: 8:30am – 2:00pm

Details: This comprehensive orientation is designed to provide timely information tailored for busy new faculty. The day includes:

- **Networking Breakfast:** An opportunity for new faculty to interact with their academic deans and administrators.
- **Overview of University Resources:** A focused session (including resource tables) offering just-in-time information for busy new faculty.
- **Interactive Workshop:** An engaging, interactive setting in which faculty will apply foundational educational concepts to their teaching.

We look forward to seeing all new faculty on Friday, September 6!

[Register for New Faculty Orientation](#)

## New Faculty Academy (NFA)

We invite all new full-time faculty to join the [New Faculty Academy \(NFA\)](#) after NFO! NFA, an initiative of the Office of the Provost, is designed to support new faculty through professional development, networking, and mentoring during their first year at USC. First-year full-time faculty members on the USC Columbia campus can participate.

The program structure begins with workshops during New Faculty Orientation and continues with monthly workshops and gatherings. Led by senior faculty members and administrators, each session includes informal networking opportunities.

By attending six or more sessions, participants receive a certificate of completion.

## Adjunct Faculty Orientation

Adjunct faculty are essential to the success of the student experience at USC. The Adjunct Faculty Orientation was held virtually on Friday, August 16. The orientation covered several important topics, including:

- USC Resources for Faculty
- CTE Resources and Instructional Design (ID) Support
- Blackboard and Zoom Support

Although the orientation was primarily designed for new adjunct faculty, experienced adjunct faculty were also welcome to attend. If you are an adjunct faculty member and missed the orientation, we still want to connect with you! You can access the New Adjunct Faculty Orientation slides and recording on the [New Adjunct Faculty Orientation](#) web page. In addition, if you need help achieving your teaching goals, then you can also access our teaching resources and request a consultation from an instructional designer.

## Enhance Your Teaching Practices at Oktoberbest



**Date:** Friday, October 25, 2024  
**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
**Location:** University Conference Center  
8th Floor Close-Hipp Building

Oktoberbest is USC's annual symposium celebrating teaching success and fostering a vibrant community of educators. This free, one-day event offers USC faculty, instructors, and graduate teaching assistants the chance to enhance innovative teaching practices, course design, and student learning while connecting with colleagues and exploring

creative approaches to education.

Get ready for an inspiring keynote address at Oktoberbest 2024 from Dr. Sarah Rose Cavanagh, Senior Associate Director for Teaching and Learning at Simmons University and Associate Professor of Practice in the Psychology Department! She will address the burnout and mental health challenges faced by both faculty and students due to recent disruptions and heavy workloads. Known for her groundbreaking research on how emotions, motivation, learning, and quality of life intersect, Dr. Cavanagh brings a wealth of insight to the table.

Her latest project, supported by the National Science Foundation, is set to transform undergraduate biology education by boosting both effectiveness and equity. An acclaimed author, Dr. Cavanagh has written several influential books, including *Mind Over Monsters*, *Hivemind*, and *The Spark of Learning*. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from a

leading voice in educational innovation and research!

At Oktoberbest, Dr. Cavanagh will explore how teaching, when well-supported, can be a deeply rewarding experience. Dr. Cavanagh will discuss how pedagogies of care - like frequent communication, flexibility, and inclusive practices - can help, while also highlighting the time and emotional investment required. This interactive keynote and workshop will offer research insights and practical strategies from her books to address faculty burnout and support student mental health.

We look forward to seeing you at Oktoberbest 2024 where you will learn from Dr. Cavanagh and engage in other professional development sessions that enhance innovative teaching practices and establish and foster meaningful connections.

Don't miss out - [submit your Oktoberbest proposal](#) and [register today!](#)

# Elevate Your Teaching: Join Our Fall Foundations of Learning Webinar Series

This fall, the CTE is excited to announce a series of four engaging webinars designed to introduce educators of all levels to foundational skill areas crucial for teaching and learning. The Foundations of Learning Series offers a comprehensive exploration of strategies and techniques to enhance your educational practices.

Here's what to expect:

- **September 16, 12:00pm - 12:50pm**  
**Strategies to Teach Toward Greater Equity**

How do we view our students, and how can we harness their strengths and abilities to succeed? This webinar will explore the hidden curriculum of expectations shaped by the lenses through which we view our students. You will learn strategies to create more equitable teaching environments, ultimately empowering students and enhancing teaching practices.

- **October 2, 2:20pm - 3:10pm**  
**From Theory to Action: Applying Constructivism and Connectivism to Your Teaching**

How do you conceptualize learning, and how do you guide your students in integrating new knowledge and skills?

This webinar will review key principles of cognitive constructivism, social constructivism, and connectivism. You will explore strategies to apply these theories to teaching, reflect on your impact on student learning, and consider how to implement them in your own practices.

- **October 21, 1:10pm - 2:00pm**  
**Strategies for Active Learner Engagement**

Do you want to learn techniques to involve your learners more actively in your course? This webinar will cover strategies for active learning and student engagement, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL). You will engage with small teaching strategies to design learning activities that you can apply immediately to enhance student engagement.

- **November 6, 9:40am - 10:30am**  
**Motivation Matters**

Do you want to help your learners become more motivated and persistent through challenges? This webinar will explore how to leverage motivation and emotion to create positive, engaging learning environments. You will analyze motivational theories and strategies

to determine the best ways to support their learners.

Take advantage of this opportunity to enhance your teaching practices and empower your students. Join us for the Foundations of Learning Series and take the next step in your professional development journey!



## Partner Spotlight

### Empowering Inclusion and Accessibility with USC's Digital Accessibility Network



The USC Digital Accessibility Network, spearheaded by the dedicated **Digital Accessibility** team, is a vibrant collective of experts and advocates committed to enhancing the digital experience for all members of the USC community, particularly those with disabilities.

Launched in spring 2024, the **Network began with 25 members** spanning

various USC Colleges, Schools, divisions, departments, and services.

#### **The USC Digital Accessibility Team's Evolution**

In 2020, as education rapidly transitioned online, USC faced significant challenges in digital accessibility. During this pivotal period, the USC Digital Accessibility team was formed with a single dedicated member. By the spring of 2023, the team had expanded with two additional members, whose contributions were instrumental in realizing the vision of the Digital Accessibility Network.

#### **Who We Are and Our Aspirations**

The Digital Accessibility Network comprises USC faculty and staff with deep expertise in their fields, accessibility, and best practices in Universal Design (UD) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This diverse membership provides a broad spectrum of valuable insights and perspectives on accessibility. Some members bring personal experience with disabilities, while others offer direct support to students and colleagues with disabilities.

#### **Short-Term Achievements and Goals**

The Network's initial successes include:

- This article, which showcases progress and initiatives.

- The creation of a Digital Accessibility listserv to enhance communication within the USC community. To join, email [DigitalAccessibility@sc.edu](mailto:DigitalAccessibility@sc.edu).
- The development of brief training videos aligned with the USC Digital Accessibility Toolbox.

#### **Long-Term Vision**

Looking ahead, the Network aims to:

- Launch a Digital Accessibility certificate of completion through the Center for Teaching Excellence.
- Establish an accessibility mentorship program to support USC faculty and staff in designing and developing accessible learning content.
- Expand the Digital Accessibility Network to include even more members.

#### **Get Involved!**

The Digital Accessibility Network invites you to become part of this dynamic and passionate group. Whether you're interested in accessibility, UD/UDL, disability advocacy, or simply wish to increase your awareness, your unique perspective will help drive meaningful progress toward a more inclusive digital environment. Let's make a significant impact together! **Connect with the Digital Accessibility Network.**

# Exciting Updates From the Center for Teaching Excellence

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our [newly updated website](#)! Be sure to explore it and discover the enhanced resources available. If you have any recommendations for additional resources, please let us know at [cte@sc.edu](mailto:cte@sc.edu).

We are also delighted to welcome three new staff members to the CTE team:

- [Kristin Harrell](#), Instructional Designer
- [Mitchell Dallas Herring](#), Instructional Designer
- [Payton Kenmore](#), Program Assistant

As a team, we are dedicated to helping you achieve excellence in teaching.



## Reflective Teaching Practices for Medical Educators Expands in Its Fourth Year



This summer, the CTE successfully concluded the fourth year of its Reflective Teaching Practices for Medical Educators (RTPforME) program. In partnership with the School of Medicine - Greenville, School of Medicine - Columbia, and Prisma Health, this year's program also welcomed five faculty members from the College of Pharmacy, further broadening its impact.

### Program Overview

The RTPforME program is designed to engage faculty in reflective teaching practices that foster continuous improvement. It covers key areas such as adult learning principles, learning design, course development, and teaching delivery. The program utilizes a cohort model, providing live, interactive webinars, asynchronous modules, instructional design support, and a

personalized teaching project.

### Highlights and Outcomes

Participants in the RTPforME program:

- Reflected on their teaching practices
- Applied adult learning theories to their instructional planning
- Developed instructional materials
- Incorporated active learning strategies into their teaching
- Completed individualized teaching projects aimed at enhancing specific aspects of their teaching practices

### Program Structure

The program ran for six weeks, featuring five live webinars and several asynchronous modules. Participants received one-on-one consultations with CTE instructional designers who coached them throughout the program. This blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning ensured flexibility and comprehensive support.

### Participant Success

This year's cohort included **21 faculty members** from the Schools of Medicine and the College of Pharmacy. The program successfully facilitated their professional growth and enhanced their teaching capabilities, ultimately benefiting their students. We celebrate the dedication and accomplishments of all participants and look forward to continuing this impactful program in the coming years.

## Fall 2024 Success with Support for Blackboard, Panopto, and Zoom



Fall 2024 courses have begun, and USC support staff are here to assist with any needs related to Blackboard, Panopto, or Zoom. Explore the [CTE workshop calendar](#) to register for sessions and visit the [Blackboard resource](#) web page for training materials on Blackboard. For personalized assistance with Blackboard, schedule a one-on-one consultation with a [CTE Instructional Designer](#) or an [eLearning Services consultant](#). If you need assistance with Panopto or Zoom, submit a ticket to consult with an [eLearning Services or Media Services consultant](#). For technical issues, submit a request through the [Division of Information Technology Service Desk](#).

Helpful links:

- [Blackboard Learn Ultra Course View \(UCV\)](#)
- [Zoom at USC](#)
- [Getting Started with Panopto](#)
- [Zoom with Blackboard](#)
- [Link Zoom Account with Panopto](#)
- [Access Zoom Account without Blackboard](#)

# Need-to-Know Insights and Updates

## Ask USC: Answering Your Questions About Supporting Students



The **Office of Student Advocacy** is the first stop for students and family members who need help navigating the university and for faculty who have questions or concerns about students.

The office's **Ask USC initiative**, which launched in March, ensures that students, family members, faculty and staff members can get help when, where, and how they want it. Knowledgeable staff

are available in person, by phone, email, and online chat to answer questions and refer Carolina community members to resources, programs, and policies.

The office supports faculty members and instructors by:

- Answering questions regarding university policy
- Identifying options to manage and resolve conflict
- Providing recommendations to consider when supporting students
- Verifying student absence

While the Office of Student Advocacy provides a variety of services, the most frequently requested are related to excused absences.

- During the 2023-24 academic year, the office received 7,370 requests from students for excused absences and make-up work.
- After reviewing each request, in accordance with attendance policies and

verifying documentation, the office sent 5,724 notifications last year.

Excused absences are defined in the **undergraduate** and **graduate** attendance policies, but faculty members can excuse any absence they deem appropriate.

- Students can request an excused absence by completing the **Student Advocacy Report form**.
- Students are encouraged to request make-up work and complete it within one week of returning to class.
- Students must make their requests within 30 days of their absence and before the last day of regular class meetings or before grades post if the absence occurs during final exams.

Contact the Office of Student Advocacy:

- Chat: [sc.edu/ask](https://sc.edu/ask)
- Call: 803-777-4872 (4USC)
- Email: [studentadvocacy@sc.edu](mailto:studentadvocacy@sc.edu)
- Visit: Russell House West Wing Suite 115

## University-wide Graduate Student Teaching Award Winners for 2023-2024

The CTE is thrilled to recognize the teaching excellence of our graduate student instructors and graduate teaching/instructional assistants (GTAs/GIAs) from this past academic year. Graduate student instructors and GTAs/GIAs are vital contributors to student learning at the university, and the Graduate School along with many individual departments and schools have explicitly recognized these achievements. [Learn what has been the most rewarding part of teaching for our award winning GTAs/GIAs.](#)

### Graduate Student Award Winners

- Alex Barth – Department of Biological Sciences' Jeffery Barnsdale Memorial Fellowship Award
- Taylor Berrier – The Graduate School's Outstanding Teaching Award for Graduate Instructors
- Andrew Boldy – Department of Physics and Astronomy's Teaching Assistant Teaching Award
- George Brooks – Department of Mathematics' Outstanding Graduate Instructor
- Jiasong Duan – Department of Statistics' Outstanding Performance as a Graduate Teaching Assistant
- Odera Covenant Ezenna – School of Journalism & Mass Communication's Graduate Student Excellence in Teaching Award
- Grant Foster – Department of Biological Sciences' Jeffery Barnsdale Memorial Fellowship Award for Excellence as a Graduate Instructional Assistant
- Macie Goodman – The Graduate School's Outstanding Teaching Award for Graduate Teaching Assistants
- Nandana Goswami – Department of Geological Sciences' Taber Award for Outstanding Teaching
- Anderson Harris – Department of Philosophy's Graduate Teaching Award
- Shannon Powers – Marine Science Program's Outstanding Teaching Award
- Damla Sonmez – College of Hospitality, Retail and Sports Management's Outstanding Doctoral Student Teacher of the Year
- Milton A. Straw – Darla Moore School of Business's Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award
- Lance Tully – Department of Geological Sciences' Taber Award for Outstanding Teaching
- Grant Wong – Department of History's Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award
- Yanyan (Emma) Zhan – Department of Statistics Outstanding Performance as a Graduate Teaching Assistant



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