

Center for Teaching 2017-18 Year in Review



Mission

The mission of the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching is to promote university teaching that leads to meaningful student learning.

By helping members of the Vanderbilt community become more effective teachers, the CFT supports the educational mission of the university and enhances the learning experiences of its students.

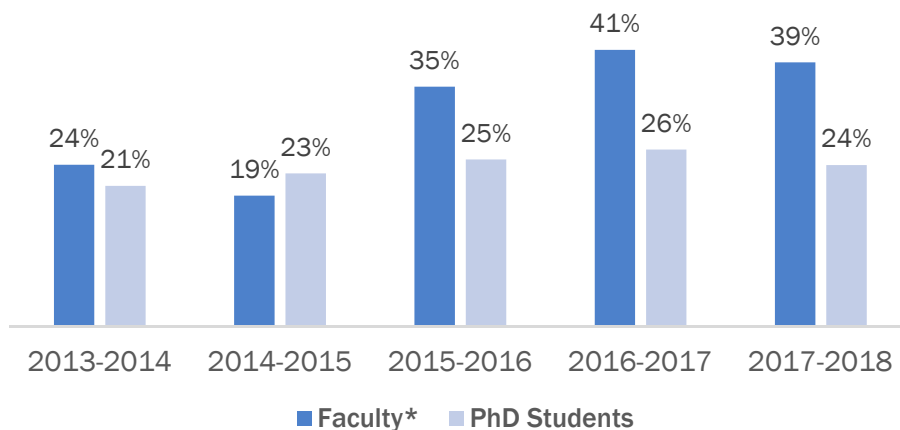
Reach

In 2017-18, the CFT reached **1,435** faculty, staff, and students across campus through consultations, programs, and events.

That included **39%** of all full-time faculty outside the School of Medicine, as well as **24%** of all PhD students, among others.



Faculty and PhD Students Reached via CFT Consultations, Programs, and Events



* Full-time faculty outside the School of Medicine, which is omitted here because many Medicine faculty have limited formal teaching duties.

By the Numbers

34

CFT staff facilitated 34 invited sessions for departments, programs, and units attended by 346 unique individuals.

61

The CFT offered 61 events open to the campus this year attended by 468 unique individuals.

6,563

Brightspace Support at the CFT handled 6,563 tickets this year as they assisted faculty, students, and staff.

13

CFT staff authored or co-authored 13 peer-reviewed articles and chapters published in 2017 and 2018.

245

A total of 245 individuals participated in intensive CFT offerings, including learning communities, programs, and institutes.



Fourteen faculty participated in the CFT's flagship **Junior Faculty Teaching Fellows** program this year, thanks to additional support from the School of Nursing.

46

This year's **Open Classroom** event featured two days of teaching visits hosted by 46 faculty members.



During the reception at the end of the second day, hosts and visitors gathered to discuss their teaching goals and choices.

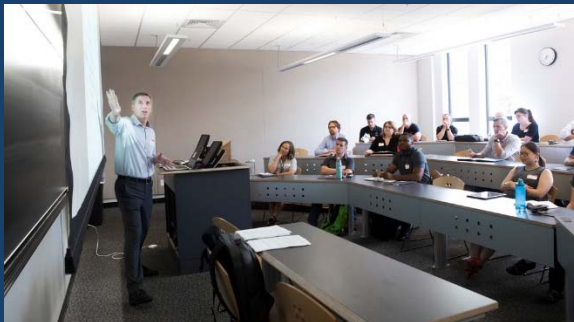
777

CFT staff conducted a total of 777 teaching consultations this year with 503 individuals.

A faculty member received negative student feedback thanks to a mismatch between student expectations and course goals. After working with a CFT consultant, the instructor made changes in communicating his goals and in in-class teaching activities, resulting in better student feedback and a more enjoyable teaching experience.

326

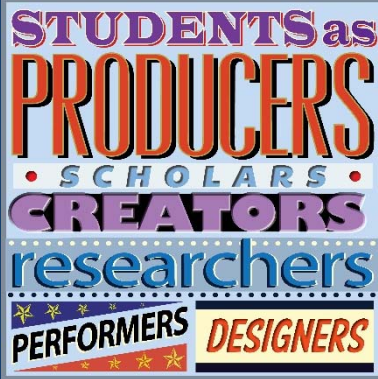
A total of 326 faculty and graduate students attended the CFT's annual orientation events in August 2017.



2,971,089

The CFT website, which features more than 70 literature-based teaching guides, received 2,971,089 pageviews this year.





The CFT works with faculty and other instructors to take a “Students as Producers” approach to teaching, helping students become not only *consumers* of information, but also *producers* of knowledge.

This approach involves encouraging students

- to tackle open-ended problems,
- to operate with a degree of anonymity,
- to create original multimodal work, and
- to share their work with wider audiences.

Such projects can lead to deep and meaningful learning for students.

Course Design Institute

The CFT offered its third annual Course Design Institute in May. In this three-day workshop, 15 faculty members from 4 colleges and schools designed (or redesigned) courses using the “Students as Producers” approach.

“My students got to a whole new level of understanding and ownership,” said Robin M. Jones, assistant professor of hearing and speech sciences, who participated in the 2017 institute and implemented a new project in his course this year. “They felt they learned the tools and knowledge they needed to work with people who stutter.”



Celebration of Learning

On January 29, more than 100 faculty, staff, and students participated in the CFT’s Celebration of Learning. Students from six colleges and schools exhibited digital timelines, service-learning projects, computer games, manufacturing equipment, podcasts, lab research, and other products of their work.



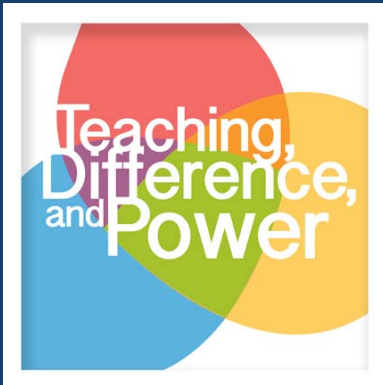
Of the 34 student projects on display at the event, 20 were created for courses taught by faculty participants in past CFT institutes, programs, and learning communities. The event also featured a student-faculty panel exploring the idea of “Students as Producers.”



Student-Produced Podcasts

Students in Karla McKanders’ spring class found a surprisingly large audience for their work—the *Life of the Law* podcast. McKanders, clinical professor of law, wanted to “transform their learning from the classroom to the real world,” so she asked her students to produce their final projects on immigration and refugee law as audio stories. With some ideas from the CFT and a collaboration with *Life of the Law* producers, the assignment resulted in three of her students’ audio stories published in Episode 136 of the popular podcast.





Higher education is home to an increasingly diverse student population with a wide variety of experiences, backgrounds, and interests. This presents opportunities to enliven and enhance the intellectual dynamism of our campuses, as well as challenges in negotiating difference and power in our classrooms.

The CFT offers a variety of resources under the banner of “Teaching, Difference, and Power” to help educators develop the knowledge and skills of teaching inclusively to diverse audiences, as well as strategies for teaching about difference and power.

Disability and Learning

The CFT hosted a yearlong learning community on disability that brought a diverse group of 28 faculty, staff, and students from across campus to explore principles of inclusive teaching, universal design for learning, instructional accommodations, and legal and cultural issues relevant to students and faculty with disabilities. Discussions among the learning community informed a new teaching guide on the CFT website, [Creating Accessible Learning Environments](#).

“I’m so glad we’re having these conversations! Disability is so often the afterthought, but this learning community centered these conversations and voices at the foreground, and I feel enthusiastic about the momentum and directions this will take to improve learning experiences for all learners with disabilities.”

Anjali Forber-Pratt, Assistant Professor of Human and Organizational Development



Inclusive Teaching in the Sciences

Fifteen faculty members gathered in the fall to discuss inclusive teaching practices in the first of a series of five “teaching lunches” jointly sponsored by the CFT and A&S natural science departments. The group considered a model of motivation and science identity development that can help guide teaching choices, as well as specific practices that have been shown to be effective in college science classes.



“Part of my response to what I learned has been to incorporate into my teaching more examples of the messy, individualized ways in which important scientific discoveries have been made. This provides a way for students to relate to the history and cultural context of the discipline—and to see themselves as capable of contributing to that history and culture.”

Richard Haglund, Stevenson Professor of Physics

Diversity Statements

Increasingly, academic institutions are requesting faculty job applicants address how they can contribute to cultures of inclusion and equity in the form of a written diversity statement. In April the CFT partnered with the Office of Inclusive Excellence and the Graduate School’s Office for Career Development to provide a workshop on developing a diversity statement that was attended by graduate students and post-docs.

The workshop led to the creation of a new teaching guide on the CFT website, [Developing and Writing a Diversity Statement](#), aimed at introducing future faculty to this increasingly important piece of the job application portfolio.

Campus Collaborations

Course Design in Environmental & Sustainability Studies

This year the CFT partnered with the Environmental & Sustainability Studies program to facilitate a learning community focused on the design of new courses for the ESS minor. Six faculty from the College of Arts & Science met regularly throughout the year to determine learning objectives, plan assignments, and draft syllabi. Through the learning community, new courses have been developed that will expand ESS into Political Science, Sociology, English, Spanish & Portuguese, and History.

"The community helped me shift my thinking away from content-driven course design to an approach rooted in deep learning principles to provide students with a more meaningful experience. I left energized and optimistic."

Tasha Rijke-Epstein,
Assistant Professor of History



Signature Pedagogies in Human & Organizational Development

Building on past work with faculty from Human & Organizational Development (CFT), CFT staff offered a workshop on "signature pedagogies" for HOD faculty to help them identify a set of intellectual traditions and teaching objectives to guide their upcoming curricular redesign, which is needed as the department welcomes new faculty members and becomes more interdisciplinary.

CFT staff will continue supporting course design efforts in HOD in the coming year through a special cohort of the Junior Faculty Teaching Fellows program.

Curriculum Development in Genetics Counseling

To support the launch of a new professional degree, the Master in Genetic Counseling in the School of Medicine, CFT staff consulted with the program's director and faculty on the design of a series of faculty development activities for those teaching in the program, largely clinical faculty with limited teaching experience. Modeled on successful CFT programs such as the Junior Faculty Teaching Fellows program, the new efforts will include course design seminars, teaching workshops, and peer classroom visits.



Meanwhile, Brightspace support staff worked with course leadership to integrate course learning objectives into Brightspace's competency tool. This will allow for systemized program assessment necessary for accreditation.

"Our meeting with CFT staff have been incredibly helpful. Through the resources of the CFT, we have created a tailored, robust training for our inaugural program, and it has been fun to explore the many Brightspace applications available to us."

Martha Dudek, Director, Master of Genetic Counseling Program

Mentoring Research Students in Engineering

This spring, the Civil & Environmental Engineering faculty asked the CFT to facilitate learning communities on mentoring in research settings. All of their faculty participated in these learning communities, committing about eight hours over the course of a month. Individual faculty developed mentoring agreements to help them align expectations with their research students, and the department is developing guidelines to foster conversations about key elements of the graduate experience with all of their graduate students. The CFT is currently working with other departments in Engineering to launch similar learning communities.



"Everyone should want to do this program."

Douglas Adams,
Distinguished
Professor of Civil
& Environmental
Engineering



Brightspace, Vanderbilt's new course management system, launched across campus in fall 2017.

Brightspace Support at the

CFT led 47 orientation sessions for the new platform attended by 299 individuals. The CFT provided 81 on-demand resources through its website, and assisted 1,711 faculty, staff, and students through email and phone.

"Brightspace has provided me with a much smoother workflow, once I became familiar with it. I appreciate the help that the team provides. Their response time is very fast, and the help I have received has been superb."

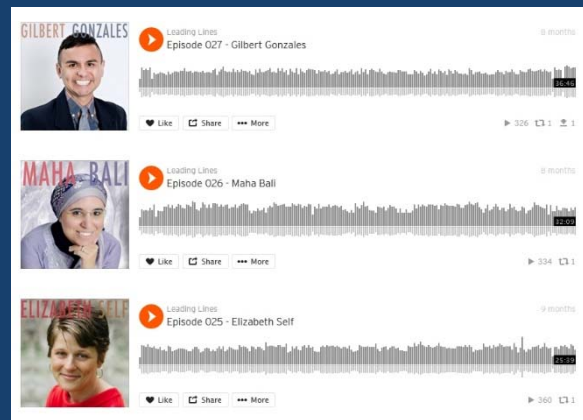
Richard Alan Peters, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering



Leading Lines

In collaboration with campus partners, the CFT launched the Leading Lines podcast in fall 2016. The podcast explores creative, intentional, and effective uses of technology to enhance student learning.

In 2017-18, Leading Lines released 20 new episodes featuring interviews with faculty and graduate students, librarians and high school teachers. Collectively, Leading Lines episodes were played or downloaded more than 7,000 times this year.



Blended and Online Learning Design (BOLD) Fellows

In the BOLD Fellows program, faculty members partner with graduate students to design and develop, implement, and assess online instructional materials to solve teaching "problems" in their courses.

When BOLD was launched in 2013, participation was limited to those in math, science, and engineering, but this year, BOLD expanded to all disciplines on campus this year. In 2017-18, eight teams participated from Nursing, Peabody, Medicine, and Engineering.



Top Hat launched in fall 2017 as the first classroom response system to be adopted campus-wide at Vanderbilt, supporting both multiple-choice and free-response polling questions.



Over 150 instructors and teaching assistants used the system, as did one sorority.

"I used Top Hat questions to gauge student understanding, provide additional practice, and reveal common misconceptions. I was extremely pleased, and a bit surprised, at how easy it was to incorporate Top Hat into my class."

Kathy Friedman, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences



Staff

In 2017-18, the CFT employed eleven full-time staff members as well as four Graduate Teaching Fellows and one Graduate Assistant. Four members of the CFT staff have secondary appointments in Arts & Science or Peabody and teach courses in those colleges.



Derek Bruff, PhD
Director
Mathematics



Joe Bandy, PhD
Assistant Director
Sociology



Cynthia Brame, PhD
Associate Director
Biological Sciences



Vivian Finch
Assistant Director
German



Stacey Johnson, EdD
Assistant Director for
Educational Technology



Rhett McDaniel
Educational
Technologist



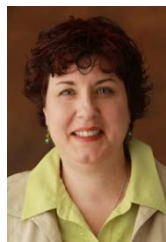
Lee Scarborough
Instructional
Technologist



Erica Brandon
Instructional
Technologist



Brandon Crawford
Instructional
Technologist



Tracy Tveit
Program Coordinator



Juliet Traub
Administrative Assistant



Ryan Bowen
Graduate Assistant
Teaching & Learning



Sara Beck
GTF
Psychology



Justin Hubbard
GTF
History



Kylie Korsnack
GTF
English



Amie Thurber
GTF
Human & Org. Dev.