



Dear Colleagues:

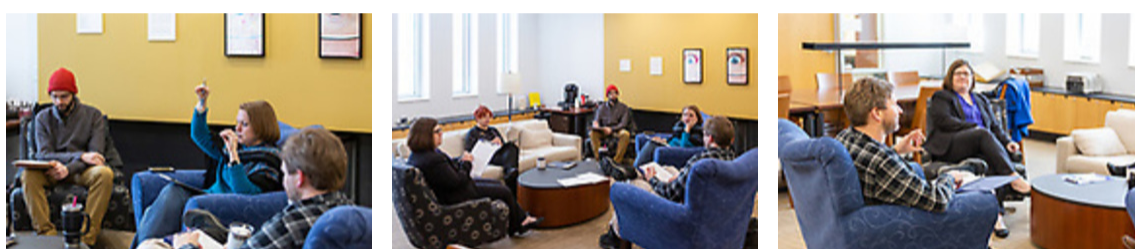
Faculty Learning Communities are a group of faculty and staff from across disciplines that regularly meet to discuss a common topic of interest. They learn together how to enhance teaching and learning and support each other in making positive changes in the classroom.

Since the Fall of 2013, members of the VU faculty and staff have been involved in multiple FLCs each year. Here are just a few of our FLC facilitators. This issue takes a closer look at this year's FLCs: "Unconventional Grading Methods" and "Teaching To Your Strengths." To learn more about CITAL's past FLCs, [click here](#).

From,  
**The Center for Innovation in Teaching, Assessment, and Learning**



## FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITIES



### Changing Things Up

Using alternative grading methods can help to change things up for faculty and students. Whether it is using specifications grading, learning contracts, ungrading, portfolios, or something in-between (blended approaches and pilots are always a good thing), these types of assessments can create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment. Something as simple as providing rubrics in advance, low-stakes tests or quizzes, or multiple assignment revisions can have a tremendous impact. Transparency and a sense of ownership are at the heart of this approach. Cindy will cover Valpo's FLC on this topic, but below are some other resources faculty may find helpful:

- [A professor shares the benefits and drawbacks of ungrading.\(opinion\) \(insidehighered.com\)](#)
- [Alternative Grading | Academic Technologies \(miami.edu\)](#)
- [Beyond "the Grade": Alternative Approaches to Assessment | Derek Bok Center, Harvard University](#)
- [Alternative Grading Frameworks | Center for Teaching & Learning \(berkeley.edu\)](#)
- [Alternative Grading: Practices to Support Both Equity and Learning | Center for Teaching Excellence \(virginia.edu\)](#)

**Ed Finn, Director of Instructional Technology, Design & Assessment**

### What Faculty Learning Communities Can Do for You

Some of your colleagues have been meeting regularly this year to explore a teaching topic that interests them and then making positive changes in their classrooms. That is what our Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) do. In the following article, Abbie Thompson (Psychology) talks about what she learned about her own strengths by taking part in the "Teaching to Your Strengths" FLC. Then Zsuzsanna Szaniszló (Math & Stats) describes experimenting with different kinds of grading in her FLC on "Unconventional Grading Methods."



**Cynthia Rutz, Director of Faculty Development**

Read the Full Article Here: [What Faculty Learning Communities Can Do for You](#)

TEACHx

# A Celebration of Teaching and Learning Innovation

Register for TEACHx today! Registration is now open.

[VISIT THE TEACHX REGISTRATION PAGE](#)

May 17-18 | Evanston, IL

Held each May, the TEACHx conference showcases innovative approaches to teaching and learning with technology. This annual event brings together instructors, students, learning designers, and technology specialists to make connections, begin collaborations, and learn from their peers.

### Blackboard learn+ Tests, Pools, and Surveys OH MY!

Learn about [Blackboard](#) surveys, pools, and test options for grading anonymously, grading all responses to a specific question, and giving full credit for all responses to a question.



Check out the [CITAL](#) YouTube playlist of [Simple Syllabus training videos](#).

[Sign up Here for Zoom Simple Syllabus Summer Workshops, too!](#)

Contact: Gina Rue for Blackboard & Simple Syllabus Assistance

Visit the CITAL Website, Your One-Stop-Shop for Faculty Resources

Submit a CITAL Helpdesk Ticket