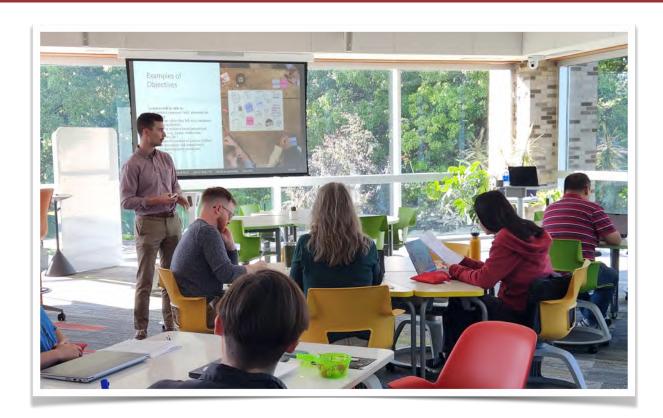# DePeters Family Center for Innovation and Teaching Excellence

New Teaching Excellence Program

We are excited to announce the launch of the Teaching Excellence Program, a new initiative designed to support new full-time faculty at St. John Fisher University in their journey to become excellent educators. This program offers a series of in-depth professional development courses that equip faculty with evidence-based skills and knowledge essential for creating high-quality learning environments. Faculty will participate in both synchronous and asynchronous courses, engage in peer observations, and apply new strategies to their teaching. Upon completion, participants will be recognized for their commitment to teaching excellence through public acknowledgment and a customized growth trophy (example shown to the right). Use the QR code to watch a short video about the program and hear from participants.

Educational Technology & Pedagogical Support

143

WORKSHOPS

on a variety of topics such as Brightspace, Zoom, and Fundamentals of Online Teaching

1300

ATTENDEES

including faculty, staff, and students who participated in the events offered by the Center

371

1-ON-1 CONSULTATIONS

with Center staff and fellows on topics such as active learning or technology questions

Workshop Feedback

Below shows the percentage of workshop attendees that rate us as **Excellent** in the following categories:

93%

Presenter was well prepared.

92%

Presenter's knowledge of the subject matter.

89%

Presenter's ability to respond appropriately to questions.

Faculty & Staff Feedback on DePeters Family Center Workshops

- *"Very beneficial. We are lucky to have such talented people."*
- *"Definitely worth my time!"*
- *"Loved the workshop time to actually think of ways to implement these ideas in our classes."*
- *"I prefer doing the Brightspace training in person with DePeters Center staff rather than the webinars from Brightspace."*
- *"Excellent assistance and outreach - Your support is VERY helpful in faculty successfully teaching classes. I was also pleasantly surprised to hear about assistance pedagogy and research - I look forward to collaborating in these resources!"*
- *"Very helpful, cutting edge material. So glad to see Fisher ahead of the curve on these topics. Glad to know the conversations around AI will continue."*
- *"We are all thankful of CITE's expertise (and patience with faculty!)."*

Brightspace - 1 Year!

Fisher's new course management system has now been in place for a full year after the launch of all courses taught on Brightspace starting in the summer 2023 semester. Below are stats on how it is being used and feedback from campus stakeholders.

- The most commonly used tools across all instructors in Brightspace are **Content, Assignments, and Grades**
- Nearly **5,000** users in the system
- **100,000+** announcements
- **36,000** discussion topics
- **81,000** assignments
- **350,000** grade items

What Do Students Like About Brightspace?
- *"The little weekly calendar it provides for me."*
- *"That it is so user friendly, anyone can use it."*
- *"How easy it is to submit and see assignments. I no longer have to worry about if an assignment that said it submitted didn't actually and it works really well with Google."*

What Do Faculty Like About Brightspace?
- *"I like the ability to easily create weekly modules for all the course content."*
- *"The ability to create a linear learning path students can just click through."*
- *"Ease of use, ability to communicate, and transparency of grading."*
- *"The interface is clear and I have acclimated faster than I thought."*

Active Learning Professional Development

Providing faculty professional development to fully utilize our classroom spaces has been a key objective since the initial creation of the Center. Dr. Emily Dane-Staples helps to lead these efforts at Fisher by offering both full-day and multi-day Active Learning Institutes and a series of workshops throughout the academic year. So far:

45 faculty have completed the highest level of active learning training

4 department specific workshops offered

107 faculty attended at least one active learning workshop

Faculty Feedback on Active Learning Professional Development
- *"I have a slew of new resources, and many of the issues that were troubling me about the upcoming semester now seem like exciting opportunities."*
- *"The institute functioned as an illustrative and inspiring model of active learning strategies."*
- *"There are so many options to take advantage of! I feel so much more skilled and knowledgeable about these tools and can't wait to try it."*

The Rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The pace of rapid development has not slowed down for generative AI tools and features, and its impact across campus has expanded. This year, the AI Working Group, including staff from the DePeters Family Center and OIT, as well as the AI Advisory Board, which includes faculty, staff, and students from across campus, were both created to increase communication, draft policy recommendation, evaluate and test potential tools, and offer professional development on AI and generative AI topics. Some highlights from this year include:

- Updated **AI Toolkit** with Student, Faculty, and Staff Resources

- **Generative AI Basics Module** for Student Support in Brightspace

- AI Tools Available for Campus Use, including **Zoom AI Companion** and **Microsoft Copilot**

- Over **20** professional development sessions were offered this year by DePeters staff on a variety of AI topics, including:

  - Generative AI: Where Are We Now?
  - Using AI to Enhance Your Teaching and Research
  - Harnessing AI: Practical Applications for Staff
  - AI Detectors & AI Resilient Assessment
  - AI Student Panel Discussion
  - Effective Prompt Engineering
  - Exploring AI Tools (Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini)

Explore Fisher's AI Toolkit

STUDENT AI RESOURCES

Student specific resources for using generative AI effectively

FACULTY AI RESOURCES

Faculty specific resources for using generative AI effectively

STAFF AI RESOURCES

Staff specific resources for using AI effectively

*Images created using Copilot and DALL-E 3

Innovative Learning Spaces

Three classrooms and the DePeters Family Center itself were updated this year as we continue to enhance the learning spaces across campus. Room 014 in the Josephy S. Skalny Science Center was updated with new furniture and technology. This room is used by physics majors for both lab activities and interactive class sessions. Wegmans School of Nursing room 207 was renovated from a computer lab into a flexible, active learning classroom design to support augmented reality (AR) simulation experiences for nursing students. This project was made possible thanks to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation. Room 104 in the Victor E. Salerno Center for American Enterprise was also updated with new furniture and technology, creating a flexible tiered-seating classroom for business students to engage in a variety of activities. And last, the DePeters Family Center received new tables and chairs to explore as part of the Center's mission to test out new furniture options before incorporating new designs into classroom renovation. The upgrades to the Center and Salerno were made possible with funds from the DePeters Center for Innovation and Teaching Excellence Endowment established by the DePeters family. To learn more, please visit sjf.edu/centers/cite/learning-spaces.

Skalny 014

Wegmans School of Nursing 207

Salerno 104

DePeters Family Center

Teaching & Learning Library

Next time you're in the Center, don't miss our new lending library. Center staff populate the shelves with their favorite teaching and learning books, or books from some of our own Fisher faculty scholars. If you have suggestions for books to add to the collection, let us know at cite@sjf.edu. We are always adding more, so check back often.

Fundamentals of Online Teaching

The DePeters Family Center staff offer an in-depth training experience for faculty new to teaching online or hybrid courses. Taking place over a four-week period, the Fundamentals course exposes faculty to effective online teaching methods by first putting them in the shoes of a student learning online. This training, offered multiple times per year since 2011, is required for faculty planning to teach in these modalities at Fisher. Faculty find this training extremely valuable as they begin to develop their first online or hybrid course. In addition to the formal training experience, DePeters Family Center staff often work with faculty 1-1 as they prepare their courses for delivery in an alternative format. This includes a thorough course review process evaluating the course against a set of established best practices for online delivery.

iFisher: Next Generation Learning Initiative

The initiative, which provides students, faculty, and staff with an Apple iPad and accessories, connects the campus community to each other and to the world through a dynamic mobile environment. Now in the fifth year of the program, iPads have become a vital component of the educational experience at Fisher. All classrooms on campus are equipped with Apple TVs to allow for easy sharing of materials from both instructors and students alike. A growing number of classrooms include multiple displays, each with their own Apple TV connection, which enables many presenters to share their work simultaneously. The iFisher initiative creates a common learning platform for our campus, ensuring everyone has access to the same hardware and software capabilities, and elevates the level of engaging course work that can take place across disciplines.

Fisher Next

Fisher Next offers access to high-quality learning experiences produced by Fisher's expert faculty and staff to learners seeking to advance their skills. Fisher Next learning experiences include continuing education and professional development opportunities for learners from a variety of fields and industries. DePeters Family Center staff supported the AP Summer Institute, which included 69 high school AP teachers in a four-day training experience in July of 2024. This year also saw substantial growth in the number of pharmacy learners accessing the system in partnership with the Office of Continuing Professional Education in the Wegmans School of Pharmacy and new offerings through the Center for Non-Profit Leadership in partnership with the Institute of Civic and Community Engagement. We look forward to continued growth on the Fisher Next platform in the coming year.

352
Fundamentals of Online Teaching Completions

339
1.0 Completions

124
2.0 Completions

272
Apple Certified Teachers

64
Programs offered this year

627
Unique learners this year

Summer Books Clubs

Summer 2024 was an exciting time for faculty book clubs. Center staff organized two groups of faculty from across disciplines for a shared reading and exploration experience.

Alternative Grading Practices Book Club

Katie Sabourin led a group of **16** faculty in a jigsaw style book club, where faculty were broken into sub-groups to each read one of six books and then share their impressions and takeaways with the larger group. Many faculty within the group are implementing alternative grading practices explored during the summer reading in their fall courses.

Inclusive Teaching Practices Book Club

Emma Daitz led a group of **7** faculty and staff in a book club focused on *Enhancing Inclusive Instruction: Student Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Advancing Equity in Higher Education*, by Tracie Marcella Addy, Derek Dude, and Khadijah A. Mitchell.

Meet the Staff

Katie Sabourin, Assistant Vice President for Digital Learning

Katie oversees the Center operations and project planning with a special emphasis on the generative AI and learning space renovation.

Emma Daitz, Educational Technologist

Emma provides training and support on Brightspace, among other tools. She is also a point person for the use of iPads in the classroom.

Robin Schmid, Senior Training Support Specialist

Robin is a technology expert and provides training to faculty, staff, and students on a number of tools used across campus.

Tyler Woodward, Ph.D. Educational Content Developer

Tyler offers pedagogical workshops, supports faculty teaching online and hybrid courses, and develops content for Fisher Next programs.

Meet the Faculty Fellows

**Dan Brown
Apple Faculty Fellow**

Dan provides training and support to faculty and staff using iPads in a variety a ways.

**Emily Dane-Staples, Ph.D.
Active Learning Faculty Fellow**

Emily offers a number of workshops and events to support increased use of active learning strategies across campus.

https://www.sjf.edu/centers/cite/

This document was created entirely in Pages using both a Mac and iPad.