

CROWN CENTER FOR TEACHING



Block 7 Newsletter

From the Director: A Temple to Teaching Forged Across Campus

In our previous newsletters, we introduced the HITS framework ([Hub-Incubator](#)-Temple-Sieve) for enhancing the effectiveness of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs). In this Block, we move to the next letter in the framework: Temple.

The Temple concept in the HITS framework represents a space of reverence and recognition where the art and craft of teaching are honored. Such celebration elevates the value of our pedagogical endeavors wherever and whenever they occur. Accordingly, this takes many forms at CC.

The Dean of Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards are announced at the outset of each academic year during Faculty Forum. They recognize a faculty member's sustained excellence in teaching and transformative impact on students. For Fall 2024, the recipients were:

- **Ángela Castro**, Assistant Professor, Spanish and Portuguese
- **Danielle Ellsworth**, Assistant Professor, Mathematics and Computer Science
- **Jessica Kisunzu**, Assistant Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry
- **Scott Krzych**, Associate Professor, Film and Media Studies
- **Rushaan Kumar**, Assistant Professor, Feminist and Gender Studies
- **Amanda Minervini**, Assistant Professor, Italian
- **Corinne Scheiner**, Professor, Comparative Literature
- **Chelsea Walter**, Lecturer and Director of the Office of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
- **Guanyi Yang**, Assistant Professor, Economics and Business

Similarly, the CC Student Government Association (CCSGA) bestows the Lloyd E. Worner Teacher of the Year Award upon faculty each spring at Honors Convocation. Students recognize professors based on their exceptional qualifications, intelligence, and care provided to students. In Spring 2024, the honorees included:

- **Nickie Coomer**, Assistant Professor of Education
- **Santiago Guerra**, Associate Professor of Southwest Studies
- **Christopher Hunt**, Assistant Professor of Religion
- **Leland Tabares**, Assistant Professor of Race, Ethnicity, and Migration Studies

In addition to these annual awards, it is essential to remember the celebration of excellent teaching that regularly emerges in multiple forms. We see this arise from the insights and observations of our students in their course evaluations. It emerges from the feedback we provide each other following a teaching observation, and it comes from the emails and reunion conversations we receive from alums who continuously remind us of how our transformational practices have impacted their path over time.

Looking ahead, we're exploring additional ways to honor and support faculty dedication to student learning. We aim to enhance recognition of innovative and inclusive teaching practices and continue to shape a campus where exceptional teaching is increasingly valued, shared, and celebrated.

How can the Crown Center celebrate your continued educational development, your big or little accomplishments in the classroom, or amplify the incredible work we know often remains unseen?

Teaching at CC is something special and needs to be celebrated in as many ways as possible.

Sincerely,

Ryan Raul Bañagale

Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Crown Center for Teaching

CC Faculty Enrich Learning at the FAC

Have you ever wondered how CC faculty leverage the FAC in their teaching? As the Crown Center celebrates teaching across campus, we highlight three faculty members who developed impactful, museum-integrated courses.

Associate Professor of Southwest Studies **Karen Roybal** used the Agents of Care gallery as a classroom for her *Art, Power, and Resistance* course. Artwork selected to inform their work surrounded the class as they met daily in the museum to examine the relationships between art, identity, and power.

Using the FAC as a learning lab, Assistant Professor of Music **Lidia Chang** asked her students to grapple with how museums can display music. Her *Music and the Museum* course culminated in an exhibition, where the students' final projects included sharing their learning with FAC visitors.

Coming up in Block 8, Assistant Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science **Varsha Koushik** will guide her students through applying what they have learned at the FAC. Her *Accessible User Interfaces* class will task students with designing tech solutions for real-world museum accessibility challenges.

Want to integrate the FAC into your class? Contact [Blair Huff, FAC Academic Engagement Manager](#), to explore the possibilities.

Announcing the Inaugural Faculty Fellows Cohort

The Faculty Fellows Program supports project-based professional leadership development of CC faculty

members by providing opportunities to administer and collaborate on cross-campus, academic-related initiatives while strengthening institutional engagement. The fellows were selected by a committee comprised of members of the Crown Center, the College Transitions Program, and the Butler Center.

We are pleased to announce our following colleagues in their new roles as Faculty Fellows:

- Bridge Scholars Fellow (College Transitions Programs): **Danielle Sanchez**, Assistant Professor of History
- Teaching Excellence Fellow (College Transitions Programs): **Aline Lo**, Assistant Professor of English
- Student Engagement Fellow (College Transitions Programs): **Chet Lisiecki**, Assistant Professor of German
- Mentoring Alliance Program Fellow (Crown Center): **Corina McKendry**, Associate Professor of Political Science
- Instructional Coaching Fellow (Crown Center): **Tina Valtiera**, Associate Professor and Chair of Education

While our Bridge, Mentoring Alliance, and Instructional Coaching Fellows are extensions and revisions of existing faculty roles, our Teaching Excellence and Student Engagement Fellows represent additional ways that faculty leaders can enhance the experience of our first-year students in, and beyond, the classroom. To this end, Professor Aline Lo is "excited to collaborate with others to keep FYP going strong so that students feel confident beginning their college careers." Likewise, Professor Lisiecki expresses enthusiasm "to work to develop and implement initiatives that promote and deepen a sense of academic belonging and community among first-year students at CC. A commitment to student thriving will guide this work. It will seek to empower students to shape their liberal arts education in ways that are academically, professionally, and personally meaningful to them."

Please join us in celebrating this inaugural cohort of Faculty Fellows!

Upcoming Workshops & Events

Crown Lunch: Spring Faculty Advising Workshop: From Nuts & Bolts to Meaningful Advising Conversations

Friday, Mar. 28, 12:15 –1:30 p.m.

Tutt Library 105

Hosted by Marion Hourdequin, Professor of Philosophy and Assistant Dean of the Faculty; Lori Driscoll, Professor of Psychology; Christina Rader, Associate Professor of Economics; Leo White, Student Success Specialist; and Ashley Belton, Assistant Registrar.

[Register for B7 Advising](#)

This lunchtime workshop will cover key, need-to-know information for faculty advisors and academic mentors, including tips for effectively using Stellic and Banner, and the nuts and bolts of pre-registration advising. In addition, we will discuss ways to develop constructive advising relationships and have meaningful advising conversations that support students in their personal, academic, and professional

development. All members of our educational community are welcome, and faculty advisors are especially encouraged to attend in preparation for spring pre-registration advising.

Crown Lunch: Elevating Competency Awareness in the Classroom and Off-Campus Blocks

Tuesday, Apr. 1, 12:15–1:30 p.m.

Tutt Library Room 317

Hosted by Brett Woodard, Career Center, Allen Bertsche, Center for Global Education and Field Study, and Ryan Bañagale, Crown Center Director.

[Register for B7 Experiential Learning & World Readiness](#)

Join us for a dynamic workshop to explore practical, low-lift strategies to help students recognize and articulate the critical competencies they're developing in your courses. Join us to discover and exchange simple practices that can empower your students to articulate their foundational skills to the world confidently!

Opportunities

Call for Applications: Creative Courage Cohort 2025-26

Creativity & Innovation invites faculty in all disciplines to join the Creative Confidence Cohort (CCC). This year-long program offers those in the cohort opportunities to explore creative thinking and problem-solving exercises. **The cohort begins on August 11 and 12** with an immersive experience.

The CCC will benefit anyone hoping to support students' creative thinking, or those who wish to align new or existing courses with the Creative Process general education requirement. Each faculty member who completes the program will receive a summer course development grant of \$2,000 to modify an existing course or \$4,000 to develop a new course (awarded in Summer 2026). [See website for more information.](#)

To apply, email your goals for participating in the cohort to Kris Stanec, Director of Creativity & Innovation, kstanec@coloradocollege.edu by **Friday, Aug. 1.**

CCE: Community Engagement Recognition Night Award Nominations Deadline

Do you know someone who has made an impact in the community? Nominations for Community Engagement Recognition awards are open. Award categories honor students, staff, faculty, and community partners who have gone above and beyond in contributing to the public good. Community Engagement Recognition Night Award categories include: Community Collaborator, Advocacy and Activism, Public Problem Solver, Campus Organizer, Excellence in Community-Engaged Teaching, Excellence in Community-Engaged Research, and Outstanding Community Partner. [The deadline to nominate is Apr. 7.](#)

CCE: PEAK (Publicly Engaged Actionable Knowledge) Project

Are you interested in transitioning a course you are teaching this fall to community-engaged learning, but need community connections? If so, you are invited to participate in the Publicly Engaged Actionable Knowledge (PEAK) Project by filling out [this brief interest form](#) by the priority deadline at the end of Block

7 (**Sunday, Apr. 20**) with a final deadline at the end of Block 8 (**Sunday, May 18**). The PEAK Project bridges campus knowledge to community impact by connecting CC educators to nonprofit partners for community-engaged learning classroom projects.

For a limited time, those who participate in the PEAK Project and are successfully "matched" will be eligible to receive project development stipends (\$500 each for faculty and community partners) to honor the time, capacity, and thought-work that goes into developing new community-engaged learning projects. This funding is generously provided through the [Bonner Foundation's Community-Engaged Learning Initiative](#), through which the CCE received a grant. Funds will be offered until grant funding is exhausted.

CCE: Liberal Arts in Correctional Facilities (LACF) Initiative

The LACF initiative is currently seeking educators to teach courses in the 2025-26 academic year and beyond. The mission of the program is to address inequities in higher education by expanding access for incarcerated persons. Through the LACF, CC faculty and qualified staff offer for-credit courses at no cost in the Youthful Offenders System (YOS) facility in Pueblo, which serves a population of 19 to 25-year-olds. Students receive credit through Pueblo Community College (PCC), and courses are guaranteed to transfer as degree requirements at any Colorado public institution of higher learning. CC faculty or qualified staff receive a grant-funded stipend to teach evening courses (typically twice a week) over the course of a semester. Please [visit our website](#) to express interest, or email jradke@coloradocollege.edu with questions.

Save the Date for the CCE's Annual Senior Symposium on Tuesday, Apr. 22nd from 3-5 p.m.

Every year, graduating seniors from some of our civic leadership programs and our Newman Fellow present their Presentations of Learning to reflect on their community engaged experiences, and Capstone projects in a conference style event on the 2nd floor of the Tutt Library. Here's a sneak peak of this year's presentation schedule! We hope that you can join us.

Global: Faculty-Focused Online Resources for Taking Students Off-Campus

Global Education & Field Study continues to update and improve our online resources for faculty interested in taking students off campus. For faculty interested in developing an off-campus Block (domestic or international) there is the Canvas course ["Building a Block Away"](#) which focuses on the idea-to-proposal process, including CC policy and practice on course design, budgeting, and use of partner organizations or OPA (Off-Campus Program Assistants).

For faculty with planned field experiences, Blocks away, or longer study-away programs, there is also the Canvas course ["Taking Academic Courses Off-Campus"](#), which is designed for faculty who are already scheduled for off-campus travel with their class. This course is required of all faculty who are leading students outside of El Paso County and contains policy, guidelines and advice around safety, health, risk management, and your role as a faculty leader of off-campus experiences. It must be completed before you lead your course off-campus, but is valid for the entire year.

In addition to these resources, both Drew Cavin (Field & Domestic Travel) and Allen Bertsche (Block Away and International Travel) are happy to walk through the travel plan development process, review college

requirements and expectations, or help you brainstorm about ways to maximize the experiential education potential of your course and its off-campus components.

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