

## Teaching and Learning Resources Committee (TLRC)

Annual Report 2023-2024

Submitted by Yogesh More

### I. Membership

The TLRC consists of seven elected/appointed faculty members and four ex-officio members. The combination of personnel reflects current practice and facilitates and formalizes communication and collaboration across units in fulfillment of the committee's charge.

| <b>TLRC Membership 2023-2024</b>                                                  |                               |
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| <i>Elected &amp; Appointed Members</i>                                            | <i>Representing</i>           |
| Yogesh More (chair)                                                               | SAS                           |
| Shebuti Rayana (Vice Chair)                                                       | SAS                           |
| Renu Balyan (Secretary)                                                           | SAS                           |
| Antonia DiGregorio                                                                | Library                       |
| Fernando Espinoza                                                                 | SOE                           |
| Amy Hsu (replacement for Fernando Espinoza who went on sabbatical in Spring 2024) | SOE                           |
| Svetlana Jović                                                                    | SAS                           |
| Katarzyna Platt                                                                   | SOB                           |
|                                                                                   |                               |
|                                                                                   |                               |
| <i>Ex Officio (non-voting) Members</i>                                            | <i>Representing</i>           |
| Ed Bever                                                                          | Director of Distance Learning |
| Antonia DiGregorio                                                                | Director of Library           |
| Cris Notaro                                                                       | Coordinator of CETL           |
| Chandra Shehigian                                                                 | Instructional Designer        |

### II. Activities

#### a. Establishing a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The Faculty bylaws for TLRC have an extensive list of initiatives the committee is not equipped to address. In practice, TLRC primarily organizes 3-4 events per semester on teaching-related topics. There have been efforts going back several years to re-establish a "Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning", with a full-time director, which would be better resourced to support faculty. (This is different from the CETL

program coordinated by Cris Notaro. That is funded by an expiring grant focused on student success).

Interim Provost Dorothy Escribano made the establishment of such a CETL a priority for her tenure. She requested that the process be faculty-driven. While our recommendation for a director chosen from a national search could not be accommodated, TLRC interviewed three internal candidates for the interim director of such a center. We are delighted to report that Dr. Nicole Sieben has agreed to be the initial director of the center. Over the next 2-3 years, she will identify priorities for the center, and work with the Associate Provost to ensure the center receives the necessary support from the university. TLRC will serve as an advisory board; the details of this relationship remain to be clarified.

#### b. Events

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the TLRC hosted or co-hosted six events. Many of the events focused on artificial intelligence and its use in education. TLRC members Drs. Renu Balyan and Shebuti Rayana generously offered to fund the AI-related events through their NSF Grant # 2131052. TLRC remained committed to ensuring events are accessible to the widest possible audience by making events hybrid and/or recorded, when possible. We thank the ITS department for providing the necessary technological support.

#### TLRC Activities 2023-2024

| Title                                                                                              | Format | Date       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Collaborators |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs): inherently flawed, but can they be useful, and if so, how? | Hybrid | 10/19/2023 | Panelists Drs. Jillian Crocker, Manya Mascareno, and Geta Techanie will address questions such as "Given that SETs have well-documented intrinsic and systemic problems that are difficult if not impossible to eliminate, can they be useful, and if so, how?" Bring your questions for the panelists! These questions will help guide the discussion. |               |

|                                                          |                 |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                             |
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| New Faculty Orientation                                  | Hybrid          | 11/1/2023  | Are you a new Assistant Professor? Welcome to OW and the tenure-track! Join us as Associate Provost Barbara Hillery and faculty from ARPT, TLRC, and UUP (we'll explain what these stand for) provide a brief introduction to preparing your first reappointment file. While the focus will be on helping orient and guide our newer colleagues, all faculty are welcome to come and share their tips. | Academic Affairs, ARPT, UUP |
| Don't Fear the Beast Unleashing ChatGPT in the classroom | Hybrid          | 12/01/2023 | Dr. Jessica Williams and her students share ideas about how educators might embrace AI in the classroom as a "study buddy" and versatile tool for aiding students in various processes and tasks, including revising written work, generating topic ideas, simulating peer review, and crafting personalized learning journeys.                                                                        | NSF Grant # 2131052         |
| Meeting the Needs of Students with Exceptionalities      | In-Person panel | 2/12/2024  | Drs. Lina Gilic, Julio González, and Shalinie Sarju will discuss faculty responsibilities regarding undergraduate and graduate students with exceptionalities will be discussed. We will examine what constitutes an appropriate college-level education and the laws relevant to the education of                                                                                                     | SOE                         |

|                                                                                               |        |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                     |
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|                                                                                               |        |          | students with exceptionalities. We will also share specific classroom strategies to effectively meet the needs of students with exceptionalities at our University.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                     |
| Outsmarting AI or Deliberate Design:<br><br>Strategies for Meaningful Writing Beyond AI Reach | Hybrid | 3/7/2024 | Dr. Svetlana Jović will explore the pedagogical repercussions of the dialectical relationship between writing and thinking. We will discuss various strategies to enhance students' overall intellectual and academic growth by presenting them with relevant, discipline-specific problems to write/think about. By centering writing around problems rather than concepts, we ground assignments in practical, real-life scenarios, making them more meaningful and personally relevant for students. | NSF Grant # 2131052 |
| Democratizing AI through Controlled Narrative Generation and Knowledge Grounding              | Remote | 4/2/2024 | Dr. Santu Karmaker (Auburn University, Dept. of CS) discussed his research on democratizing AI. He discussed the biases, risks, and challenges inherent in AI, and steps to mitigate these risks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | NSF Grant # 2131052 |

#### c. Miscellaneous

Last year's TLRC developed a Brightspace page to serve as a repository for recordings of TLRC presentations, teaching resources, and articles related to teaching and learning. TLRC continued to add materials from events this year. TLRC attempted to

make the Brightspace TLRC module more active by creating discussion boards, but these did not gain any faculty engagement.

TLRC asked Chandra Shehigian to prepare faculty trainings on “Regular and Substantive Interactions in Distance Classes.” According to Ed Bever, “federal regulators have been focusing on this in the past few years, and we need to do what we can to make sure our faculty are aware of the issue and running their courses in compliance. Also, it enhances the educational experience for students in online courses, and one of the remedial measures called for in last year's 5-Year Assessment of the Distance Program was ‘promoting steps to incorporate course management and teaching practices that heighten ... students’ connections with their instructors’ (p. 30)”. Chandra reports these trainings are under development. The date these trainings will be available is unknown.

Please note that members of the TLRC rely heavily on the expertise and participation of our colleagues to develop successful initiatives, and always welcome suggestions/volunteers for presenters.