

## **Titles & Descriptions of Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) offered during 24-25 Academic Year**

To sign up for a Faculty Learning Community, complete [this very brief form](#) by Friday, Aug 23rd.

### **Teaching In and About Climate Crisis**

Students increasingly arrive at college having heard a lot about climate change, both in their previous curriculum and in a wide range of social media. Some have strong activist goals, some feel disempowered by dire predictions about the future, and some have been taught to be suspicious of everything they hear on the subject. Climate change is relevant to many disciplines and classes. It is also central to teaching PLU's values of diversity, justice, and sustainability. This faculty learning community will explore how to meet students where they are on this topic and share ideas for lessons and discussions that empower students to engage in some of the challenges they will face as the climate continues to change. *(Facilitated by Brian Naasz, Chemistry and Environmental Studies, and Kevin O'Brien, Religion and Environment Studies)*

### **Universal Design for Learning: Eliminating barriers to learning and building an inclusive learning environment**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework upon which to plan and implement inclusive and flexible learning environments to meet the needs of your diverse students. UDL is like a recipe. Understanding how to use UDL means being able to incorporate three key ingredients into your classroom instruction and activities: (1) Options for Perception; (2) Options for Expression; and (3) Options for Comprehension. In this FLC, faculty will learn more about these elements of UDL, observe colleagues to see UDL strategies in action, and try some out in their own classrooms within a supportive environment. *(Facilitated by John Wright, Education)*

### **Renew & Reflect: Cultivating Purposeful Practice in a Community of Contemplative Educators**

Believe it or not the solution to burnout is not rest. It is finding meaning and purpose in our work. It is not doing more or being more efficient. It is going deeper and slowing down. The Wild Hope Center for Vocation invites you to join this FLC that will explore and question the definition and role of productivity in the context of academia and its fraught relationship to meaningful work. If we, as educators, can recover our sense of meaning and purpose in our work, it will pay huge dividends in the classroom and model for students. Together, we will read [Slow Productivity: The Lost Art of Accomplishment Without Burnout](#) by Cal Newport. This very accessible read will be supplemented by excerpts from other texts including [Margaret Wheatley's Who Do We Choose To Be?: Facing Reality. Claiming Leadership. Restoring Sanity](#). In addition to reflecting on how to make our work meaningful and sustainable, our goals are to build community

between faculty who are interested in pushing through disillusionment to hope, creating and sustaining our own “islands of sanity”, and learning specific and practical strategies for avoiding burnout and cynicism within the current higher education landscape. *(Facilitated by Laree Winer, The Wild Hope Center for Vocation)*

### **Enrollment in these FLCs is closed –**

#### **Active Learning: Cultivating Engagement and Equity in our Classes**

This FLC will invite colleagues to build community and a network of support by reflecting together on one of the most pressing issues in our current teaching and learning landscape: student engagement. We will learn about and practice evidence-based strategies to strategically integrate active learning techniques in our pedagogical practices, which have been shown to not only significantly enhance student learning, but to do so particularly for students from historically marginalized backgrounds ([Freeman et al., 2014](#) and [Theobald et al., 2020](#)). By reviewing research about the impact of active learning strategies and engaging in peer observations, faculty will be able to identify active learning methods that will work well within their particular teaching context and experiment with them in a supportive community. The goals of this FLC are to support faculty in revitalizing our classrooms to not only enhance student learning but to also rekindle our enthusiasm for teaching. *(Facilitated by Lathiena Nervo, Biology)*

#### **Grading for Learning: Exploring and Practicing Alternative Grading Strategies**

This FLC will center on questioning our current and past approaches to grading and re-thinking what it means to center our students in a “grading for learning” approach. Together, we will read [\*Grading for Growth: A Guide to Alternative Grading Practices that Promote Authentic Learning and Student Engagement in Higher Education\*](#) by David Clark and Robert Talbert and reflect on our own syllabi and grading schemes, hear from colleagues who use alternative grading strategies, and experiment with alternative grading practices during the year. Our goals are to build community with faculty who are interested in innovative strategies for student-centered approaches to grading, learn about and practice grading strategies that promote equity and student success, and strategize how to decrease the time and energy we spend on grading to instead provide meaningful feedback that contributes to student learning. *(Facilitated by Laura Fitzwater Gonzales, Sociology & Criminal Justice)*