



Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC)

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Director's Note



Home stretch! I hope for a satisfying semester's end for all. As 2016-17 comes to a close, I am mindful of the many changes to Arts and Sciences and to our campus as a whole these past few years: the expanding ranks of first year students choosing a four (or five) year Rutgers experience, a change brought about in part by our "Bridging the Gap" program; the explosion of health sciences, biology and nursing students as exemplified in the soon-to-be-open Science and Nursing building midway to Cooper Hospital; the inauguration of a new block schedule to accommodate our curricular and physical growth; and, of course, a new General Education program for all newly admitted undergraduates. While this list is far from exhaustive, it highlights a spirit of innovation and optimism as we go forward.

With respect to Teaching Matters, I can highlight continuity over change. We continue to support departments and programs and individual instructors (full-time, part-time, Tas) seeking to develop their teaching effectiveness. We do so through programs like the Digital Faculty Fellows (see below for details; application due today, April 17). We do so through spotlights on technology (see below for pieces on Voicethread and Kaltura). Finally, we do so through our ongoing series of workshops, including the last one this year later this week "Help! My Syllabus Needs a Facelift." (Again, details below). Please consider attending this hands-on review of best practices in syllabus construction and design, co-presented by Teaching Matters and the Writing and Design Lab.

We'll publish one more newsletter the first week of May to focus on assessment and best ways to use summer to tweek, re-engineer, or develop courses. All best!

Let's Talk Teaching

New York State recently passed legislation aligning with the national trend toward free public college education. This [report from NPR](#) describes the state's Excelsior Scholarship program, as well as recent criticisms from college affordability advocates.

With growing national concerns regarding data security, *The Chronical of Higher Education* considers [the safety of sensitive information on college networks](#).



In a recent opinion piece written for *Inside Higher Ed*, Bruce Fleming explores how a teacher's physicality impacts student learning. Fleming's article, and the comment section that follows, raise interesting questions about the role of [teacher appearance and physical performance in the classroom](#).

What do *you* think? Let us know at teaching.matters@camden.rutgers.edu



Teaching with Twitter

An increasing number of teachers are integrating social media platforms such as Twitter both in and outside of the classroom. The following resources offer strategies, tips, and possible caveats for teaching with Twitter:

While this ["Teacher Tool Kit"](#) focuses on Twitter in K-12 classrooms, many of these tips can be adapted for higher education.

This [blog](#) provides practical steps for teachers just beginning to use Twitter, providing 20 suggestions for ways to incorporate the platform in their teaching.

In her piece for *Inside Higher Ed*, Stephanie Hedge describes [Twitter's role in her classroom](#), providing a real world example of the site's pedagogical potential.

As with any new teaching practice, there are supporters and skeptics of Twitter's possibility as a learning tool. In ["Teaching with Twitter: Not for the Faint of Heart,"](#) Jeffrey Young explores objections to the platform's use.

To combat pitfalls and missteps, *Educause Review* presents a survey of scholarship on Twitter use and compiles a [list of best practices](#).

Extending the Conversation – Using VoiceThread

[VoiceThread](#) is a digital tool that allows teachers and students to record their voices as they work through various onscreen documents, videos, and presentations.

Like Twitter, many sources discuss integrating VoiceThread in K-12 education. Many of these principles can transfer to the college classroom! Check out this paper published by the *Council for Exceptional Children* and consider how VoiceThread might help you [create a more inclusive classroom](#).

While VoiceThread can be used in physical classrooms as a means to promote discussion, provide feedback, and create a flipped classroom structure, it is also a great tool for [online courses](#).

VoiceThread's website offers a list of [lesson ideas](#) and tips for using the tool in an [online course](#).





Taking another Look: Incorporating Kaltura

[Kaltura](#) is a platform that allows teachers and students to create and share videos, opening up possibilities for flipped classrooms, blended learning, and online courses.

The company's website offers [suggestions](#) for using Kaltura as a pedagogical tool, and includes the option for a free trial. In a brief video, educators from a host of universities and fields [share their experiences with the platform](#).

Indiana University Bloomington's Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning encourages its instructors to consider using Kaltura, presenting a series of [training videos and supporting documents](#).

In a piece for the University of Pittsburgh's University Center for Teaching and Learning, Anu Ashwat discusses the [benefits of using video screen capture technology](#).

In a presentation for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Teaching Academy, Josh Harder discusses [strategies for using Kaltura and other screen capture programs](#).

Become a Rutgers-Camden Digital Teaching Fellow!

Applications for Digital Teaching Fellowships, sponsored by the Office of Instructional Design & Technology and the Teaching Matters and Assessment Center, are due on Monday, April 17th. Click this [link](#) for more information about the fellowship, and follow this link to submit an [online application](#).

Upcoming Events

Help! My Syllabus Needs a Facelift!

Thursday, April 20th – 3:00 – 4:30pm – Writers House Room 202

Are you drafting or revising a syllabus for the fall semester? Do you have questions about what content you should include in the document? Are you unsure of how to lay that content out in a way that's both clear and engaging? Join the Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC) and the Writing and Design Lab (WDL) for this workshop on syllabus design!

Visit us at tmac.camden.rutgers.edu. Send us your questions, links, and comments at teaching.matters@camden.rutgers.edu.

