



Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC)

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Director's Note



Ten days into a new administration in Washington, and we wonder where things are headed. For the moment, the president's choice for Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, is not yet confirmed. Many believe that her appointment poses a significant threat to public education.

More broadly, many people sense a loss of confidence in evidence-based reasoning and a waning of a vital commitment to standards of truth in public discourse. How as educators do we respond to these challenges? Later this month (date & location tba) TMAC will host a forum on "Alternative Facts?: Speech and Politics in a Post-Truth Era." If you would like to contribute to a panel to get the discussion going, please contact us (tmac@camden.rutgers.edu).

We've entered the busy season for faculty development and assessment. As you will see below, TMAC hosts two events in the coming weeks for TAs/early career faculty on classroom management and good relations with students. Also below, read about how one of this year's Digital Teaching Fellows, Laura Napolitano (Soc/Antho/Criminal Justice), uses the digital tool "Explain Everything" to make instructional videos for her class and department.

There's lots more I invite you to consider, including advice of staying well. Take care!

Let's Talk Teaching

In a recent [blog post](#) Akwugo Emejulu, Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, discusses the School for Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) students' push to decolonize their curriculum, raising questions about "who the university is for, and whom it should serve."

Last week, *Inside Higher Ed* released an [article](#) exploring strategies for rebuilding the public's trust in higher education following debates about "liberal agenda" in the university.

In the wake of recent policy changes targeting sanctuary cities and universities, many administrators are [pledging to protect students in the US illegally](#).



As the new semester gains momentum, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reminds instructors to [practice self-care](#). If you are a current graduate student balancing TA duties and coursework, or a teacher/mentor of graduate students, you may find these [tips](#) for health and wellness useful.

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



Developing Learning Goals and Outcomes

Establishing solid learning goals and outcomes anchors instruction and leads to increased student success. Visit the following resources to learn more about crafting (and implementing) these important statements:

George Mason University discusses the importance of including [learning goals on course syllabi](#).

Visit the following sites from [Swarthmore College](#) and [NACADA Clearinghouse](#) for aspects to consider when articulating learning goals.

Carnegie Mellon's Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence discusses the [difference](#) between "learning objectives" and "learning outcomes."

When considering the effectiveness of your learning goals and outcomes, be sure to visit the [National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment](#).

Managing Responding to Student Work

A blogpost authored by Robin Lee Mozer titled ["I Would Rather Do Anything Else Than Grade Your Final Papers"](#) recently made the rounds again on social media.

Last week, an [interview](#) was published with Carol Lago, the author of [Papers Papers Papers: An English Teacher's Survival Guide](#). Lago discusses her strategies for responding to student work.

Check out *Edukention's* ["5 Tips for Managing the Grading Grind."](#)

TMAC offers many more resources for effective and manageable grading practices on our [website](#)!





Digital Teaching Fellow Spotlight

Laura Napolitano, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminal Justice, uses digital tools to provide instructional resources for her students. During her fall 2016 course entitled “Methods and Techniques of Social Research,” Dr. Napolitano utilized a new method of sharing instructional content with her students by creating a video entitled “Reading Academic Research Articles.” The video was made using “[Explain Everything](#),” an app that allows users to record themselves interacting with documents in a variety of ways, including highlighting, annotating, and turning pages. Dr. Napolitano cites that using videos helped supplement in-class lecture, guiding students through important concepts and allowing them to review key components throughout the semester. Due to the video’s success, it is now used by other instructors department-wide!

Want to get involved? Click [here](#) for more information on the Digital Teaching Fellows Program.

Upcoming Events

Teaching assistants/early career faculty are invited to join us for the following events:

“Handling Challenging Classroom Situations”

Thursday, February 16th – 12:30-1:30 – Faculty Lounge, Armitage

Picture this: A student is 20 minutes late to class. He sits down next to two people who haven’t stopped talking since you’ve begun your lecture. The student next to them is on her phone. No one is answering your questions because they’ve all decided that today, they’re too tired to care. They all expect As. They will all email you about this later. What is the right way to respond? How can you make sure that your classroom stays on track, even when there are people disturbing the flow of your lesson? Please join us for this workshop for tools and tips to help you with these issues, especially if you’ve ever found yourself guessing whether or not you are, in fact, the leader of your classroom (and don’t worry—you are.)

“Student/Teacher Relations: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly”

Wednesday, March 8th – 12:15-1:15 – Faculty Lounge, Armitage

Where does the line fall between student and teacher relationships? You can sense when it’s been crossed—an inappropriate comment, a barrage of casual emails, a too-friendly rapport, but how do you deal with it without making yourself or the student uncomfortable? Perhaps you’re still a student yourself. Do you think that affects how your own students interact with you? Please join us for this workshop on the right ways to deal with the distressing, sometimes awkward situations that can occur when boundaries get crossed. Horror stories are welcome.

Pizza will be served.

From the Bookshelf

A bit shameless self-promotion:

TMAC is pleased to announce a new 4th edition of [*The Craft of Research*](#) (University of Chicago Press, 2016). Originally written by Wayne Booth, Greg Colomb, and Joseph Williams and thoroughly revised by Joseph Bizup and William FitzGerald, this classic guide takes students through the stages of the research process, from generating topics and research questions, to interacting with sources and drafting and revising reports. In English 102, the second semester of our Composition sequence, students are using *Craft* to learn how their own research responds and contributes to scholarly conversations.

Call for Proposals: Eastern Kentucky University has released a call for proposals for the 2017 Pedagogicon on May 19th. This year's theme is "Innovations in Teaching and Learning." Visit the [EKU webpage](#) for full details and submission guidelines! Interested parties are also encouraged to submit to a special issue of EKU's *Journal of Faculty Development*.

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

