



Teaching Matters and Assessment Center

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Director's Note



Welcome to Fall 2016! A special welcome to those of you new to teaching at Rutgers-Camden, including full-time and part-time faculty and teaching assistants. As I begin a fifth year as director of the Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC), I invite you to read our new format of a twice-monthly newsletter—a compilation of links and summaries of resources related to teaching in higher ed. We will try to address both the politics and pedagogy of the university through regular features on teaching strategies and technology, classroom culture, the science of learning, and the challenges posed by assessment.

This is a crucial year for us at Rutgers-Camden as we prepare for a new Gen Ed curriculum to begin in Fall 2017. Also next year, Rutgers comes up for reaccreditation by Middle States. So *this* year is the key preparation year to demonstrate that our courses and programs are oriented toward effective learning. Though we have come a long way in meeting the standards for assessment, which basically boil down to documenting the good work we already do, we still have a ways to go.

Stay tuned in future newsletters for details on workshops and events sponsored by TMAC. And please pass along news and links to information of benefit to your colleagues and we will include them here.

Best wishes for a pleasant and productive semester!

Let's Talk Teaching

This summer, University of Chicago dean John Ellison's [welcome letter](#) to new students reignited recent [debates](#) regarding classroom "safe spaces." Teachers and administrators have weighed in through published [scholarship](#) and [commentary](#).

Fredrik deBoer's five paragraph essay [against the five paragraph essay](#) raises concerns about this "commonplace" academic task.

As the fall 2016 semester begins in the whirlwind of another election cycle, this [op-ed piece](#) questions the University's role in preparing students for both the professional and civic spheres.

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





Beginning the Semester

How does your course design meet students' needs? As you get to know your students, check out this [resource](#) from Carnegie Mellon.

This isn't just the first semester for freshmen – it's also many transfer students' first experience at Rutgers University-Camden! The AAC&U describes a [collaborative approach](#) for easing the transition.

Need some tips to make your classroom accessible to all students? See the following resources for [trends](#), [tips](#), and [tools](#). Also, be sure to visit the Rutgers University-Camden [Disability Services](#) page, as well as the Coalition for Disability Awareness of Rutgers Camden [blog](#).

Tools and Technology

Many educators use personal response systems ("clickers") to provide real-time student feedback in the classroom. Dr. Michael J. LaGier explores [Google Forms](#) as an assessment tool with the usefulness of clickers (minus the cost).

Carnegie Mellon's Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation has released a list of strategies for using technology to create a [flipped classroom](#).

The University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching reviews the purposes and methods for various kinds of [lecture capture](#) tools.



From the Bookshelf

From Harvard University Press, [Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning](#) reviews recent research in cognitive psychology and other fields, exploring how the brain encodes memory and identifying implications for teaching practice.

Conferences and Events

The AAC&U is holding a conference Nov. 3-5 titled "[2016 Transforming Undergraduate STEM Education: Implications for 21st Century Society.](#)"

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

