

## 2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

### The Teaching and Learning Center at Drexel University

At Drexel University, we value experiential learning. We also know that intentionally linking lived experiences with academic studies provides our students with the most effective learning environment possible—one that is more critical and valuable than ever. Drexel’s Teaching and Learning Center promotes the pedagogy that advances Drexel’s mission to provide “every student with a valuable, rigorous, experiential, technology-infused education, enriched by the nation’s premier co-operative education program.”

Drexel's Teaching and Learning Center plays many roles within the institution including:

- ensuring positive student learning outcomes through evidence-based teaching;
- supporting specialized needs of new and part-time faculty hires;
- implementing teaching practices that accrediting bodies require;
- increasing the profile of teaching at Drexel through research and scholarship;
- improving interdisciplinary communication and collaboration; and
- assisting instructors in designing holistic learning experiences which integrate experiential learning, community and industry partnerships, and academics.

### Potential for Impact

The majority of college instructors are hired because of their disciplinary expertise, but few hold any formal pedagogical education. As a result, many instructors rely on teaching the way they were taught or personal experience.<sup>1</sup> However, a large body of research indicates that some specific teaching methods are more effective than others at improving student learning and academic success.<sup>2</sup> Teaching and Learning Centers across the globe help faculty identify these strategies and implement them within their teaching. These coordinated, systematic professional development efforts have been linked to benefits such as increased student persistence and higher retention rates.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Oleson, A., & Hora, M. T. (2014). Teaching the way they were taught? Revisiting the sources of teaching knowledge and the role of prior experience in shaping faculty teaching practices. *Higher Education*, 68(1), 29-45.

<sup>2</sup> Freeman, S., Eddy, S. L., McDonough, M., Smith, M. K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H., & Wenderoth, M. P. (2014). Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(23), 8410-8415.

<sup>3</sup> Condon, W., Iverson, E. R., Manduca, C. A., Rutz, C., & Willett, G. (2016). *Faculty development and student learning: Assessing the connections*. Indiana University Press.

## Strategic Planning Process

The vision for Drexel University's new Teaching and Learning Center started as an integral component of a Provost initiative to create a more comprehensive system for faculty advancement. In 2017, Senior Vice Provost Erin McNamara Horvat brought together a 16-member faculty committee to engage in a year-long envisioning process for this new Center. The process resulted in the creation of a mission and vision for the Center, as well as a job description for the Director. In May of 2019, Johanna Inman was hired as Inaugural Director and she launched the first Teaching and Learning Center programs in August.

The Strategic Plan outlined within this document is the product of 1) work completed by the envisioning committee prior to the Director's hire and 2) work completed by the Director and newly established Teaching and Learning Center Advisory Board in the fall of 2019. During this process, we collected input from a wide variety of stakeholders, solidified our values, and made critical decisions about where to put Center resources for its first three years that will yield the highest impact and build a solid foundation for the Center and Drexel's future.

The result is a plan that is both aspirational and grounded. The plan includes practical actions to make immediate progress towards each of the goals listed below, as well as the tools and metrics we plan to use to measure our progress. These plans anticipate the hire of an administrative staff member and an associate director in AY 2020-2021.

## The Mission and Vision

Our mission is to *inspire and promote excellence in teaching throughout Drexel University's diverse learning environments.*

As a result of this work, we *envision an institutional culture of teaching excellence where effective pedagogies are supported, recognized, and rewarded.*

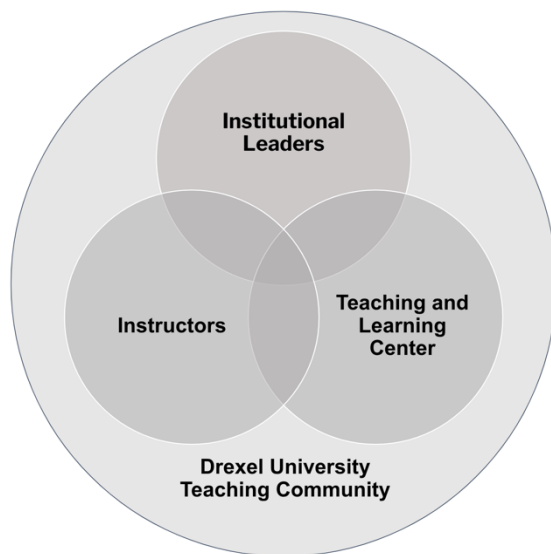
## Guiding Principles

The Teaching and Learning Center is guided by five beliefs about teaching:

1. Effective teaching is integral to advancing the institution's mission to provide every student with a valuable, rigorous, experiential, technology-infused education.
2. Effective teaching is evidence-based. We advance best practices from research on a range of pedagogies and disciplines to help everyone be more effective in Drexel's diverse learning environments.
3. Effective teaching is inclusive. We believe learning flourishes from the diversity of our students, as well as the backgrounds, disciplines and pedagogical approaches of all who are responsible for teaching. We believe in the equitable distribution of teaching resources and commit to inclusive programs.
4. Effective teaching is an iterative process and thrives on reflection, interaction, and innovation. We support the development of one's knowledge, skills, and style over time and challenge each other to excel, irrespective of where we are in our careers.
5. Effective teaching is recognizable and should be promoted, incentivized, and rewarded.

## 3-Year Priorities, Goals, and Objectives

The 2020-2023 strategic plan is organized around three priorities which focus on the main constituents of teaching at Drexel University: leadership (responsible for the oversight of teaching), individual instructors (responsible for teaching), and the center itself (responsible for the advancement of teaching). These goals will be implemented in a holistic manner, as well as guided by interconnected goals and initiatives which will be monitored and evaluated using a variety of measurements. Students are not listed within the priorities, because the Center has little direct contact with students, however Drexel's students are the main beneficiaries of our work.





**GOAL 1.** Foster a community of institutional leaders, administrators, and instructors who value the practice and scholarship of teaching and learning.

**Years 1-3**

- 1.1. Celebrate and share effective teaching practices at Drexel University.
- 1.2. Develop leaders in teaching to be change agents at Drexel University.

**Years 2-3**

- 1.3. Raise awareness among institutional leaders about research linking effective teaching to student engagement, retention, and satisfaction.

**Year 3**

- 1.4. Create opportunities for instructors to learn about and engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).
- 1.5. Advocate for multiple evaluation methods that promote effective teaching.

**GOAL 2.** Increase participation among all instructors at Drexel University in educational development that is grounded in the art and science of teaching.

**Years 1-3**

- 2.1. Develop a range of programs open to all instructors which include opportunities to participate in-person, and both synchronously and asynchronously online.
- 2.2. Provide customized workshops to departments and units upon request.
- 2.3. Partner with units across campus (Online Learning Council Fellows, Instructional Technology Group, Lindy Center, Steinbright) to create programs that align with institutional priorities such as civic engagement, cooperative learning, online learning, and technology-infused learning.

**Years 2-3**

- 2.4. Identify and implement internal marketing and communication tools to disseminate the Center's programs, services, and resources to the Drexel community.



### Year 3

- 2.5. Provide individualized support for instructors including consultations, teaching observations, and small-group instructional feedback.

**GOAL 3.** Implement strategies that ensure the Center's sustainability and growth.

### Years 1-3

- 3.1. Collect, analyze, and communicate data regarding the impact of the center.
- 3.2. Share research on Teaching and Learning Center outcomes at other institutions with vice provosts, deans, department heads, and other stakeholders.
- 3.3. Work with institutional advancement to identify funding opportunities.

### Year 3

- 3.4. Explore entrepreneurial projects for the Center.

## Long-term Goals

In addition to taking critical steps within the institution to *inspire and promote excellence in teaching throughout Drexel University's diverse learning environments*, we also see potential for the Center to have a broader impact on teaching in higher education. Therefore, our strategic plan includes one aspirational goal.

**ASPIRATIONAL GOAL:** Mobilize Drexel University to become a leader in advancing the pedagogy of experiential learning.

## Strategic Projects, Initiatives, and Activities

The Teaching and Learning Center provides a number of programs for faculty, staff, and teaching assistants each quarter. The Director also sits on a number of committees which include projects not listed within this strategic plan. In addition, the Teaching and Learning Center plans to undertake several projects, initiatives, and activities appropriate for launching the Center and meeting the three-year strategic goals and objectives.

Action Item	Description	Objectives	Measurements	Timeline
Create, advertise, and facilitate short-form pedagogy workshops which include opportunities to participate in-person, and both synchronously and asynchronously online.	To help keep faculty and TAs at the forefront of the ever-evolving research of how students learn and what types of best practices teachers should engage in, the Teaching and Learning Center offers a number of quarterly programs. These events, workshops, and book groups provide an opportunity for an interdisciplinary group of instructors to explore a topic or set of strategies together and consider ways to apply these to a variety of teaching contexts.	2.1 2.2	Attendance numbers Survey data	In progress, ongoing
Create and facilitate customized workshops for colleges, schools, departments, and programs.	The Teaching and Learning Center designs and delivers customized workshops on a variety of teaching and learning topics. These workshops are designed according to the individual needs of departments, academic units, or campuses who request the workshop.	2.2	Attendance numbers Survey data	In progress, ongoing
Create and distribute Teaching and Learning Center Year-at-a-glance	An online document will be created and distributed to the Board, Provost, Vice Provosts and Deans documenting the Teaching and Learning Center's accomplishments within an academic year. This will describe ways that the Teaching and Learning Center met its mission and moved towards accomplishing its strategic goals. The year-at-a-glance offers an infographic-like overview of the Center's activities the numbers of clients served, with a breakdown by position, department, and school/college.	3.1	Deliverable Analytics	2020 spring; yearly



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

# Teaching and Learning Center

Create and launch a comprehensive communication plan to promote the Center's activities	The Teaching and Learning Center will create and manage an administrative email account, listserv, email campaign software, and online registration system to publicize events and workshops, distribute resources, and make registration easier for Drexel faculty, staff, and teaching assistants.	2.4 2.5 3.1	Deliverables Analytics	2020 fall
Create and launch <a href="http://drexel.edu/teaching">drexel.edu/teaching</a>	The Teaching and Learning Center's website will include information about the Center, an interactive workshop calendar, as well as links to resources and units across campus that support teaching. The vision for this is a "one-stop shop" for teaching resources at Drexel.	2.3 2.4 3.1	Deliverable Analytics	2020 fall
Drexel Teaching Academy (DTA)	DTA brings together expert researchers, scholars, practitioners, and teachers who can make a positive impact at Drexel both inside and out of their classrooms. This interdisciplinary cohort of full-time faculty engages in a deep examination of the literature on teaching and learning in higher education and considers ways to implement this research at Drexel. After completion of DTA, faculty are asked to support the mission of the Teaching and Learning Center in the following academic year.	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 2.1 2.3	Graduate a cohort of 8-12 faculty  Survey data  Project proposals  Project deliverables	2020 spring; yearly
Create and provide presentations that introduce the new Teaching and Learning Center at Drexel	Presentations about the Center, strategic planning, institutional needs, and research on the literature and impact of effective teaching in higher education are made to various leaders at Drexel including board members, vice provosts, deans, associate deans, department heads, and others with oversight of teaching.	1.3 1.5 3.1 3.2	Attendance numbers	In progress, ongoing



Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)	FLCs are year-long cohort-based programs where faculty can pursue interdisciplinary inquiry into specific topics about teaching and learning in higher education. Through meaningful collective inquiry, FLCs seek to foster a collegial environment that values pedagogical exploration and promotes collaborative learning. FLC members give back to the community by sharing their work with colleagues in a format most appropriate for the topic (e.g., a workshop, a PDF guide, online resource website, conference presentations, scholarly article).	1.1 1.2 1.4 2.1 2.3	Run 3-5 Faculty Learning Communities with 30-50 total participant completion  Survey data  Project deliverables	AY 2020-21, ongoing
Teaching and Learning Center Liaisons	Teaching and Learning Center Liaisons are Drexel University faculty members who have completed the Drexel Teaching Academy and want to serve in a more formalized leadership role at the Teaching and Learning Center. Liaisons serve the Center by providing pedagogical support in a specific disciplinary or pedagogical area. They are expected to contribute approximately 8 hours a week and may engage in a number of activities such as facilitating FLCs, book groups, classroom observations, and/or individual consultations. Liaisons are compensated for their work through course-buyout or stipend.	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	Hire 3 Faculty Liaisons by AY2022-23 (Fall/Winter/Spring)  Survey data  Project deliverables	2021 fall
Teaching Consultants	Teaching Consultants are Drexel University faculty members who have completed the Drexel Teaching Academy and want to serve the community in a mentorship role. Teaching Consultants provide confidential consultations on wide array of teaching topics. Teaching Consultants are asked to provide 2, 1-hour time slots weekly for this purpose.	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	Recruit 3-5 Teaching Consultants per year  Survey data	2020 fall, ongoing





<p>Pedagogy of Experiential Learning (PEL) Workshop Series</p>	<p>Create and facilitate a series of workshops for faculty that focus on how to design holistic learning experiences which integrate experiential learning, community and industry partnerships, and academics.</p>	<p>2.1 2.3 AG</p>	<p>Attendance numbers Survey data</p>	<p>In progress, ongoing</p>
<p>Pedagogy of Experiential Learning (PEL) Co-op Student Position</p>	<p>A co-op student will be hired by the Center to research experiential learning in higher education and at Drexel. This student will create an annotated bibliography, workshop content, and handouts regarding experiential teaching and learning.</p>	<p>2.3 AG</p>	<p>Student hired Project deliverables</p>	<p>2020 summer</p>
<p>Teaching Tips from the TLC</p>	<p>The Teaching and Learning Center will send a monthly tip or blog post to the Drexel faculty email list.</p>	<p>1.1 1.3 2.1 2.4</p>	<p>Analytics</p>	<p>2020 fall, ongoing</p>
<p>Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Travel Grants*</p>	<p>Formerly called the Teaching and Learning Conference Travel Awards, these awards now better align with the strategic goals and objects. SoTL Travel Grants can be used for travel to present SoTL work. Funds may be used toward conference registration and/or travel costs. Awards are made twice a year. Proof of proposal acceptance is not required to apply, but is required prior to fund transfer. Award recipients will be invited to share their research at Drexel through a panel discussion or another method provided in the proposal.</p>	<p>1.1 1.4</p>	<p>Awards launched  Deliverables</p>	<p>2021 fall</p>
<p>Drexel Teaching Spotlight Series*</p>	<p>In order to showcase excellence in teaching across Drexel's diverse learning environments, fall and winter term, a Drexel faculty member, adjunct instructor, teaching assistant, or community partner will be selected to showcase a successful example of a research-based teaching practice(s) they have implemented. This instructor will be featured in a column in <i>Drexel Now</i> and linked to the Teaching and Learning Center's website.</p>	<p>2.1 2.2 2.3 2.5</p>	<p>Analytics</p>	<p>2021 spring</p>



<p>Drexel Teaching Spotlight Series- Videocasts*</p>	<p>In addition to a written article, a short video will be made featuring Spotlight faculty showcasing their teaching practice.</p>	<p>2.1 2.2 2.3 2.5</p>	<p>Deliverable Analytics</p>	<p>2022 spring</p>
<p>Pedagogy of Experiential Learning (PEL) Student Partners*</p>	<p>Co-op students are hired by the Center to focus on experiential learning in higher education and at Drexel. PEL Student Partners will support faculty to conduct SoTL projects on Experiential Learning (i.e. service learning, community-based learning, study abroad, co-op etc.) in a number of ways such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● re-designing an assignment or course – and studying the outcomes of that redesign</li> <li>● analyzing classroom practices</li> <li>● examining student experiences</li> <li>● conducting literature searches on effective pedagogies and best practices</li> <li>● supporting with data collection or coding</li> </ul>	<p>1.4 2.3 AG</p>	<p>Student Partners hired and trained Faculty applications launched  Survey data  Project deliverables</p>	<p>2022 spring</p>
<p>Improvements in Undergraduate Teaching: Micro Grants*</p>	<p>Through an application process, micro grants are awarded to full-time faculty who seek to make pedagogical changes to a course. These grants are intended to encourage and recognize faculty for completing small-scale projects that result in immediate improvements to student learning.</p> <p>Applicants must demonstrate how students learning will be impacted and plans for assessing their project.</p> <p>Projects should fall into one of two tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)</li> <li>● General Pedagogy and Teaching Practices</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 1.4</p>	<p>Awards launched  Project deliverables</p>	<p>2022 fall</p>
<p>*Contingent on additional funding and administrative support.</p>				