

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice have been around as long as human beings have learned together. Officially coined by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991, Communities of Practice are firmly rooted in American pragmatism (e.g., Pierce's community of inquiry, Dewey's principle of learning through occupation). As such, they fundamentally consist of: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. That is, they require a community (of scholars) to engage in (academic) practices within a shared domain of interest.

For over 18 years, the Office of Academic Excellence and Assessment, through various programs, has introduced innovative forms of teaching, developed faculty's reflective practices, and encouraged a variety of forms of assessing student learning. In essence, AEA invites, encourages, and develops Communities of Practice/Practitioners.

At Creighton, where all are encouraged and developed to be "life-long learners," faculty and professional staff are reminded that their ongoing formation experiences are important for our educational excellence and invited to actively engage with a community of scholars that share their interests by: joining us in an exploration of collaborative and innovative teaching practices; utilizing a variety of faculty/assessment mentoring resources; and celebrating a variety of creative methods by which to study and assess our students' learning, as showcased in the 2015-2016 AEA Development

Grant Series and the annual Distinguished Educator in Teaching as Scholarship award.

This year's AEA programs are designed to achieve the following three goals:

1. Bring together and develop members of the (larger) Creighton community;
2. Engage in shared learning and creation of some "best practices;" and
3. Advance our expertise in the domains of teaching, learning, and assessment.

Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner, 2015

As we begin the 2015-2016 academic year, it is imperative that we come together to support ourselves and our work through Communities of Practice.

Engage with and contribute to these explorations and discussions by finding the topic and Community of Practice that best matches your interest and availability; you are encouraged

to begin our academic year with your own commitment to teaching, learning, and reflective evaluation, as guided by Ignatian pedagogy and the Creighton tradition. When we (faculty, staff, students) join together as a collaborative, educational community, we encourage and are able to celebrate the best of Creighton's educational experiences.

For inquiries about faculty development programming, contact Michele King at 402.280.3036 or Mary Emmer at 402.280.1109.



Creighton Student Engagement Nationally Recognized

The Princeton Review has again named Creighton University as one of the nation's "Best 380 Colleges" in its 2016 edition. **The University's students earned special recognition for their commitment to community service. Creighton ranked fourth on the breakout list for "Students Most Engaged in Community Service" and 20th on the list for "Most Religious Students."**

The college guide's flagship publication profiles the 380 top institutions of higher learning out of the nation's more than 2,500 universities and colleges. The Review cites Creighton as one of the nation's leaders in undergraduate education, saying the University is a place where students are challenged "academically, socially, culturally," and are "faith-filled, and service-oriented."

For a closer look at the colleges on the list, visit the Princeton Review's website: princetonreview.com/college-rankings/best-colleges.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Engaging Communities of Practice

Posing Meaningful Questions: Seeking Answers to Questions that Matter

Facilitator: Christina Murcek, College of Nursing, AEA Fellow for Electronic Learning and Assessment Systems and Mary Ann Danielson, Associate Vice Provost, Academic Excellence and Assessment

(Tuesdays, Sept. 15 and Sept. 29; 11:30-1; Skutt SC, Room 105)

The wise man doesn't give the right answers, he poses the right questions. ~ Claude Levi-Strauss

Our classrooms, laboratories, and clinics are filled with questions: students' questions of instructors; faculty questions of students; and occasionally, faculty or staff questions for each other about their students' learning and/or performances. Comfortable employing the Socratic method in your classroom or engaging your students in rich discussions but struggling to find meaning in your assessment of student learning? Do you continue to ask yourself, "What is the benefit of collecting and producing evidence of student learning?"

This two-part, active-learning session will engage you in a semi-structured process to pose meaningful questions about student learning, explore tools that will help answer those questions, and ultimately, develop a process whereby your answers to these questions will inform teaching and learning practices.



Competency Mapping: Creating Learning Activities Across Courses to Develop Key Competencies and Meet Learning Outcomes

Facilitator: Amy Mayer, Occupational Therapy Department, AEA Associate

(Tuesdays, Oct. 27, Nov. 10, Nov. 17; 11:30-1; Skutt SC, Room 105)

Are you frustrated when students don't make connections between courses? Have you found that students do not always come in to your course knowing what you expect them to know even when they have taken the appropriate prerequisite courses? This three-part series introduces basic curricular mapping concepts and dives into mapping key skills across courses. You are invited to identify two to three courses in your program that build on one another, team up with the faculty teaching the courses and attend the series. During the series, participants will identify intended outcomes and design learning activities and assignments that will strategically build knowledge and competencies across courses.

Session 1 Curricular Mapping: Where Does Your Course Fit?

By the end of the session participants will: Understand basic curricular mapping concepts; Identify courses that lay a foundation for a course you teach; Identify courses that will build on what you are teaching.

Session 2 Teaming Up and Breaking Down Learning Outcomes

By the end of the session participants will: Identify specific skills taught in your series of courses-related program outcomes; Review course and session objectives related to the skills; Review learning activities related to the skills; Brainstorm ideas for learning activities related to the skills.

Session 3 Designing Learning Activities to Strategically Build Skills and Competencies

By the end of the session participants will: Design specific learning activities and assignments that develop skills and create competency; Create strategies for helping students understand how their knowledge is being constructed across courses; Develop an assessment plan to determine if outcomes are improved.



Ignatian-inspired, MAGIS Core Curriculum Communities of Practice

Facilitator: Brian Kokensparger, College of Arts & Sciences, AEA Senior Associate

(By invitation only. For MAGIS Core Curriculum Faculty and Staff)

St. Ignatius formed a Community of Practice around his ministry and founded the Jesuit Order. We can follow his example and do some serious discussion and implementation around our common apostolate of teaching and learning. With a special consideration towards meeting MAGIS Core individual course objectives, Community of Practice groups will draw from faculty teaching Foundations courses.

As a community, the groups will share their experiences and best practices as they tackle the fundamental questions at the heart of teaching and learning in the classroom and prepare to answer the question, "How do we know our students are achieving our MAGIS Common Core learning objectives?"



Watch for our e-mail announcements regarding program information and registration.

AEA DEVELOPMENT GRANT SERIES

The Office of Academic Excellence and Assessment annually sponsors the AEA Development Grant Program to provide “seed” money for a work in its early stages that is relevant to the assessment of student learning or develops a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) project. This luncheon series of presentations is designed to familiarize the campus with the grant recipients and their projects. This year’s Development Grant projects are grouped thematically and will be presented during each luncheon.

Project-Based Learning

Project-Based Learning: What It Is and How to Get Started

Gintaras Duda, Ph.D., *Department of Physics, Worcester Polytechnic Institute Team Leader*

(Tuesday, Sept. 22; 11:30-1; Skutt SC, Room 105)



Are you interested in engaging your students in authentic, research-like projects in your courses? Would you like your students to grapple with meaningful real-world problems? A team of Arts and Science faculty from Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Physical Sciences attended the Worcester Polytechnic Institute’s summer conference on project-based learning (PBL) and will share what they’ve learned.

This session will cover the basics of project-based learning, provide evidence of large student learning gains in such environments, and discuss the long-term impacts this type of pedagogy has on students. Members of the team will also provide participants with information on how to begin implementing PBL in their courses (and pave the way for more discipline-specific workshops, to be announced).

Curricular Development and Course Redesign (TBD Spring 2016)

“Collaborative Curriculum (re)Construction: Continuing Collaborative (re)Construction of EDU 210”

C. Timothy Dickel, Ed.D.; Christine Gonderinger, Student, *Department of Education*

“Enhancing Student Learning through Active Experiential Learning for Vestibular Rehabilitation”

Heather Knight, PT, DPT, NCS, CBIS; Lisa Black, PT, DPT; Kelly Nelson, PT, DPT, PCS, CWS, *Department of Physical Therapy*

“Exploring How Clinicians Evaluate Patient Transfers: A Pilot Study to Improving Teaching Student Evaluation Skills”

Amy Mayer, OTD, OTR/L, *Department of Occupational Therapy, Creighton University*

Valerie Maeker, OTD, OTD OTR/L, *Department of Occupational Therapy, University of Mary, Billings, MT*

Kylie Widhelm, OTD, OTR/L, *Department of Occupational Therapy, CHI Bergan Mercy Campus*

Student Voices in Assessment of Student Learning (TBD Spring 2016)

“Mixed Methods Evaluation of University-Wide Interprofessional Education (IPE) Student Assessment Data”

Kathleen Packard, PharmD, MS, BCPS-AQ Cardiology; Ann Ryan-Haddad, PharmD; Michael S. Monaghan, PharmD, BCPS; Joy Doll, OTD, OTR/L; Yongyue Qi, MS, *School of Pharmacy and Health Professions*

“Identifying Spiritual Needs for Baccalaureate Nursing Students in a Multi-Campus Jesuit University”

Sandra Schlup Woods, DNP, Marilee Aufdenkamp, RN, Jenna Woster, Ph.D., Ann Harms, Ed.D., Maribeth Hercinger, Ph.D., Joely Goodman, MSN, Cindy Selig, DNP, Sue Selde, MS, *College of Nursing*

Distinguished Educator Award

In recognition of Creighton’s long history in the advancement of teaching that has led us from good to reflective teaching, from Ernest Boyer’s Teaching as Scholarship to Lee Shulman’s Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, we celebrate our Jesuit pedagogical and campus traditions, through the Creighton University Distinguished Educator in Teaching as Scholarship Award. The award recipient(s) are recognized during Founders’ Week Convocation.



Look for the Call for Nominations, September 2014.

SAVE THE DATE

**Thursday, November 12; 8-12:30;
Harper Ballroom**

University Assessment Symposium

This University-wide Assessment Symposium will provide an opportunity to share evidence of student learning and showcase the depth and breadth of assessment activities on campus. The symposium will be rich in academic discourse and a celebration of “best practices.” The program will include a poster session of assessment best practices, keynote speaker and breakout sessions.

Look for the Call for Poster Proposals, September 2014.

Assessment Mentoring Program

The Office of Academic Excellence and Assessment has an established cadre of faculty assessment mentors assist individuals, programs, and departments in conducting the many activities that compose quality assessment. This group of individuals is available to assist in those activities, but they are not available to “do your assessment work.” When an individual, program, or department has needs in the area of assessment, you can request mentoring assistance.



For more information: <https://www.creighton.edu/aea/assessmentofstudentlearning/assessmentmentoringprogram/>



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University Assessment Committee

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) is a presidentially-appointed committee designed to foster communication between all colleges, schools, and divisions that facilitate and assess student learning. The UAC works to promote an integrated culture of assessment, consistent with the Creighton mission. The committee is charged to coordinate assessment at the University level, represent all colleges and schools in articulating an integrative assessment program, provide feedback and assistance to programs, colleges, and schools, and generally advance efforts to enhance University support for assessment.

2015-2016 Committee Members

Mary Ann Danielson (Chair), Academic Excellence and Assessment
Jim Bothmer, Health Sciences Library
Tracy Chapman, Center for Academic Innovation
Brenda Coppard, School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
Gintaras Duda, Core Curriculum
Mary Emmer, Academic Excellence and Assessment
Cassie Eno, School of Medicine
Jackie Font-Guzmán, Graduate School
Rachel Goedken, Law School
Nalini Govindarajulu, College of Business
Kevin Graham, Magis Core Curriculum
Gail Jensen, Graduate School and College of Professional Studies
Pat Kelsey, School of Dentistry
Michele King, Academic Excellence and Assessment
Brian Kokensparger, College of Arts and Sciences
Tracy Leavelle, College of Arts and Sciences
Chad McBride, College of Arts and Sciences
Mark Mongar, Information Technology
Susan Naatz, University Ministry
Lori Rusch, College of Nursing
Ying Vuthipadadon, Institutional Research
Amy Wilson, School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
Wayne Young, Jr., Student Life

Contact Us

Office of Academic Excellence and Assessment

You are invited to imagine, reflect, collaborate and transform as Communities of Practice at Creighton University. AEA is dedicated to your professional development and committed to excellence in teaching and student learning. To that end, the Office:

- Provides teaching, learning, and assessment workshops and consultation to individuals and groups, both in general and at the request of individuals, departments, and schools / colleges.
- Manages an interdisciplinary team of AEA Associates and Fellows to provide programming, consultation, and outreach.
- Develops, promotes, and evaluates programs directed to enhancing teaching, student learning, and assessment of student learning at all levels of the learning process (i.e., class, program, college/school, and institution);
- In addition, this office manages Service-Learning reporting, the TaskStream Assessment Management System, Institutional Research, Academic Program Reviews, and HLC Accreditation Planning.

Located in Brandeis 111, AEA is open for drop-in questions or to browse current teaching, learning, and assessment books and journals.

To learn more about assessment, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, effective teaching methods, or how you can be a part of AEA, contact Mary Ann Danielson at 402.280.2535. For inquiries about faculty development programming, contact Michele King at 402.280.3036 or Mary Emmer at 402.280.1109.

Resources:

Teaching and Learning Connections e-Newsletter
Service-Learning at Creighton e-Newsletter
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Journals

Academic Program Review

Program review is an evaluation process that allows an institution to review and ensure quality assurance for all degree programs, majors and certificate programs. An assumed practice for all institutions accredited by the HLC is a regular program review process. Systematic program review provides a number of benefits to include: Evidence of educational quality and consistency with national trends and Documentation of student performance and achievement of stated program outcomes within the context of the University mission.

Institutional Research

The Institutional Research Office is the primary resource for university-related data. The Office completes all external surveys and questionnaires which relate to national rankings and reports as well as coordinates, analyzes and interprets data from recurring and ad-hoc projects involving Creighton students, faculty and alumni. It provides "snapshots" of relevant findings to Creighton faculty, staff and administrators through the Creighton University Fact Book and a yearly series of Research Bulletins.

Service Learning

Creighton University has been recognized in the **President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll** since 2006 and recognized **"With Distinction" in 2014** (previously 2007). For 2013-2014, Creighton University reported **more than 1 million total student service hours for the reporting year. The report shows that 4,520 Creighton students engaged in academic, co-curricular or community service; 65% (2,921) of Creighton students engaged in some form of academic service learning and 3,571 students participated in more than 20 hours of service in a given semester.**