

**WesTeach 2022**  
**Wesleyan's Pedagogy Seminar**

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**Objectives:**

This seminar is designed to bring Wesleyan faculty together to have conversations about our teaching. Through discussions, exercises, guest speakers, peer observations, and videos, we will be gaining insight into ways to improve our teaching and reflect critically on our own performance in the classroom. This course is designed to facilitate the selection of appropriate instructional tools and teaching styles for your course, and to develop strategies of analysis and evaluation to help determine teaching effectiveness. In addition to professionalizing performance in the classroom, this course is intended to help develop the habit of reflecting on teaching to promote ongoing development and improvement.

We welcome new faculty who are teaching their very first course, seasoned teachers who may be seeking to reinvigorate their pedagogy, and everyone in between. Our goal is that everyone participating will finish with new energy and enthusiasm for teaching at Wesleyan.

**Expectations:**

There are hopes rather than expectations for this course. Since everyone in the group is, by definition, currently teaching and working at Wesleyan, we recognize that you already have a lot on your plate. The hope is that regular participation in this seminar will alleviate rather than add to that burden.

Weekly sessions will generally be divided into two parts, with the first part tackling the topic for the day and the second part offering an opportunity to share challenges/triumphs/laughs that occurred during the week and gain assistance when requested.

Additionally, we've set up a Slack channel so we can engage in ongoing conversation throughout the semester about topics related to teaching. Sign up here using your Wesleyan email address: [https://join.slack.com/t/westeachworkspace/shared\\_invite/zt-1esntrde-07R3naHOXROHuXxcUI98fQ](https://join.slack.com/t/westeachworkspace/shared_invite/zt-1esntrde-07R3naHOXROHuXxcUI98fQ)

**Assignments:**

Readings will be emailed to everyone registered for a particular week. All reading is optional. However, as with all seminars, the more that people participate, the better the individual and collective experience will be. We hope that you'll make an effort to come to as many sessions as you can.

There will be four outside-of-class assignments that are encouraged.

1. Peer Observation—observe one of your peers, be observed, and discuss your findings with each other.
2. Lecture/class Observation—observe one or more of the faculty in your department/division known for good teaching with an eye towards figuring out what was working pedagogically for that faculty member and how you might replicate it in your own class(es).

3. Syllabus Development—Develop a syllabus for your spring semester. Give and receive feedback with colleagues.
4. Reflection—Immediately at the end of the semester take a couple of minutes to write down what worked and what didn't, so you can improve the next time you teach the class.

**Week 1 Introduction—Leading Discussion**

Sept. 8

During this section we will spend some time getting to know each other. We will go over diverse ways to facilitate class discussion, including review of Bloom's taxonomy and other strategies of asking effective questions and listening to student responses. We will also talk about how the first week went.

Optional Assignment: - Find a partner and plan peer observations

**Week 2 Challenges in the classroom—the silent class, the domineering student, the hostile student, etc.**

Sept. 15

We will discuss several of the biggest challenges that we face in the classroom and discuss practical ways to overcome them.

Optional Assignment: Find a good teacher in your unit and make a plan to observe one of their classes

**Week 3 Facilitating active learning— polling, small discussion groups, debates, simulations, project-based learning, movement workshops, asynchronous online interactions, etc.**

Sept. 22

We will discuss several effective ways to facilitate active learning in the classroom in small and large classes.

**Week 4 Writing Feedback—Designing good assignments and offering effective and \*efficient\* feedback— Lauren Silber, Writing Center**

Sept. 29

We will discuss different kinds of writing assignments and learn about how to give more effective feedback in less time.

**Week 5 Wrapping up, reflecting, and syllabus design for next semester—How did it go? How to improve?**

December 8

This session will offer a chance to reflect on the semester and help build a habit of reflection and improvement, focusing particularly on which areas of our teaching have improved, which areas we still need to improve, and how we intend to address those areas. We will also spend some time in groups giving and receiving feedback on Spring semester syllabi.