INNOVATORS AMONG US: 
TEACHING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

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University of Washington faculty never cease to amaze. They experiment with approaches to expand teaching and learning, making use of technologies and novel ways of organizing instruction and maximizing of class time.

For example, Scott Fritzen, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, linked health leaders across Africa using a suite of connected e-learning tools, building a tight-knit community of professional learners in the process. Sarah Elwood, Geography, paired students with non-profits to solve community issues in Seattle. Kristi Straus, Environment, flipped her class and partnered with colleagues in China to create a global learning community first at a distance and then in person with a week-long study abroad. And more than 150 faculty of all ranks are coming together to learn more about evidence-based teaching (EBT), experiment together with EBT approaches and add to the growing body of knowledge on effective classroom practices.

This report series explores what these UW colleagues and others across our three campuses are doing in and out of the classroom to adapt to the needs of specific courses, disciplines and groups of students. These features are part of a growing suite of opportunities to learn from our colleagues—the Teaching & Learning Symposium hosted by the Center for Teaching & Learning each spring highlights classroom-based research on teaching effectiveness. The Evidence-based Teaching Program convenes communities of practice provide an introduction to existing research and the opportunity to connect with peers who are trying new things in the classroom. The Advances in Higher Education Research Seminar series highlights original research in college-level learning and instruction. The Teaching Technology Fellows offers faculty support while they redesign a course. And Engineering, Physics and Biology are home to faculty groups that conduct discipline-specific research on teaching and learning.

Consider this series as an on-demand learning community, a way for us to look into our colleagues’ practices and classrooms, to share what we’re doing, and to get inspired.

Philip J. Reid
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“EBT has been really important in showing me again both why I love to teach and how I can do it better,” says Mikelle Nuwer, senior lecturer in Oceanography. Photo credit: Shantelle Liu.
Evans School and Academic and Student Affairs build a powerful platform for learning — and help improve health in Africa

When Associate Professor Scott Fritzen was asked to help craft and teach a long-distance program for mid-career African health professionals at the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance, he jumped at the opportunity to improve public health in Africa through executive education.

A well-crafted program — with the bulk of the work conducted via live online classes — would need innovative and easy to use e-learning tools to succeed, he thought.

“We were seeking to build a tightly-knit community of health experts from a half dozen African countries — like-minded colleagues who would continue to work together to improve health outcomes throughout Africa long after classes ended,” Fritzen said.

So they partnered with online teaching experts at the Office of the Provost, and together they crafted a program backed by easy-to-use technologies that were quickly adopted by the participants and Evans faculty in the first International Program in Public Health Leadership held last fall.

The strategy worked better than expected, with the online tools playing a key role in helping the first cohort build skills as well as professional and personal relationships.

Financed by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the program focused heavily on individual coaching and mentoring, online and at the Seattle campus, with the goal of developing leadership, problem-solving and negotiation skills.

“Our goal was to re-create the Evans classroom experience in an online long-distance course,” said Justin Marlowe, associate dean for Executive Education at the Evans School. “For us, it wasn’t enough to simply have one of our faculty members lecture online. The fellows would be coming to the Seattle campus after 10 weeks of online classes, so we wanted to build community before they arrived by providing a genuine, interactive experience.”

The pilot’s success has attracted attention from other UW departments that are interested in enhancing the online teaching and learning experience for the general student population — not just for professional continuing education. The Evans School is building on its success, applying lessons it learned from the first program to its second, which started in the spring.

Partnering for success with Academic and Student Affairs

Last year, the Evans School asked UW-IT’s Learning Technologies, now part of Academic and Student Affairs in the Office of the Provost, to work with them to build the new program from scratch.

Learning Technologies has been focused on refining the online teaching and learning experience, and its staff understood the ins and outs of various technologies and how best to apply them according to circumstances.

“We were very fortunate that they asked us to partner with them,” said Nate McKee, director of Learning Technologies. “They told us, ‘we want you to help us build what is possible.’ Certainly, they were very ambitious and we welcomed the challenge.”

Connecting existing online tools creates powerful learning platform

McKee’s group recommended Canvas, the University's learning management system. “Canvas is very powerful and there are some very interesting things you can do with it,” McKee said. “So, with their input, we built a system around Canvas with UW-IT-sponsored tools” — including Zoom for live video collaboration, and Slack for instant messaging online.
“In a way, we were using technology creatively to stretch the experience and create a space so our program participants could interact over a longer period of time,” Fritzen said.

The fellows — who were located in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda — relied heavily on the tools, and the apps allowed Fritzen and as many as 10 other faculty members who participated in the program to communicate during online classes and outside the virtual classroom.

“We chose a multipronged approach, using Slack for small-group discussions and for one-on-one conversations. And we used the Zoom tool during the twice-weekly online classes. Zoom also allowed us to break into small discussion groups, which gave us a lot of flexibility on how best to present course material,” Fritzen said. Faculty also used Canvas and Panopto for recorded lectures and to present case studies.

“None of us had a lot of experience working with all these tools,” Fritzen said. “I had never done this. But we jumped into it and did our best to design a class that would work for our fellows.”

The fellows didn’t have any experience with the tools either, but they quickly caught on.

“Canvas, Slack and Zoom helped the group establish community among all of us, making it easier to learn,” said Abiola Ogunenika, program manager with the Ondo State Ministry of Health in Nigeria. “These tools facilitated group development faster, even while we were thousands of miles apart across our different countries.”

Several of the participants lived in countries without the robust communications networks found elsewhere, so choosing tools that didn’t need a lot of bandwidth was key.

“I think we are mostly amazed at the technology that was used to bring such a group together,” said Gloria Ntow-Kummi, with Ghana Health Service. “Even from our various countries, we were able to meet as a group to have good interaction. I know that even as the program is ending, we still have a platform that we can use to continue to interact and discuss issues for our common good.”

All that technology had a purpose, Fritzen said: improving the learning experience in a short-duration executive program that allowed students to learn from one another, bringing a great deal of value to participants.

“What I loved about the program is the mix of teaching us how to improve our leadership skills as well as our technical skills,” said Kenya’s Joanne Ondera, with the German Development Cooperation/GIZ-Health Sector Program. “We were able to teach each other and learn from the different experiences.”

“A big part of our mission is to help improve the quality of government, add value and fulfill our educational mission to train a new generation of dedicated public sector professionals,” Fritzen said. “We often do that with executive education, but it has certain limitations. We can’t reach everyone, it is expensive, and it is hard for those professionals who do participate to build relationships with others in their field, because classes are short and quite intensive.

“Despite the challenges, I think we used technology creatively to overcome some of the limitations of executive education,” he said. “More importantly, we discovered that quality programming can be delivered this way. And it is certainly not limited to executive education programs.”

Group discussions came easily when the fellows arrived in Seattle because they got to know each other online.

Fritzen’s top tips for building a successful online executive education program — which can be applied to any type of online class:

→ Partner with like-minded UW groups working to improve online learning. Learning Technologies loves a challenge, Fritzen said, whether it is big or small. If you have a particular need but don’t know how to solve it, give them a call.

→ Choosing easy to use tools is key — not just for students but also faculty. Avoid the temptation to throw the latest tool at a problem. The Evans School chose simple tools that could be coupled with Canvas, the UW’s LMS. The tools are easy to download and easy to use without much training.

→ Be prepared for some chaos, and adjust to it. “It took a while to make a one-hour class go smoothly,” Fritzen said. He suggests using the first online session for troubleshooting technology and providing “concierge-level” IT support for participants throughout.

→ Online tools may surprise you in many other ways. As many as 10 faculty members interacted with the fellows during the program, which led to increased use of technology inside and outside the classroom — and to a wider acceptance of the tools within the Evans School. “Overall, this experience has made us more open to try new things,” Fritzen said.
A new course add-on option adds short-term travel to international, online collaboration — helping more students to have rich global learning experiences, at home and abroad.

Teaching sustainability through international partnership

Kristi Straus, lecturer in the College of the Environment, knew that her students could learn an enormous amount about sustainability issues if they could place them in more global context. But traditional study abroad programs aren’t always feasible, or accessible, for many students.

So when Straus was approached by the Academic & Student Affairs in Fall 2017 to design and pilot a new “global flip” course model, she jumped at the chance to add a short-term study abroad option to her introductory course on sustainability. Straus partnered with professors at Tsinghua University in Beijing to design an international — and internationally collaborative — component to her ENVIR 239 Sustainability: Personal Choices, Broad Impacts course. The 15 students who enrolled in the “global flip” option (of 80 total students in the course) worked alongside their peers in China to tackle real environmental issues in both countries — first online, then in-person — without the time or cost of traditional study abroad.

Using technology to “flip the classroom” on a global scale

Straus had long practiced the “flipped classroom”: in which students study course content outside of class via recorded lecture or course texts, and do more active learning during class time. The idea — increasingly popular nationwide — is that “flipping” makes best use of learning time, as instructors can support students through the more applied learning activities in the classroom.

A “global flip” course combines a flipped classroom with Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Sometimes called “virtual exchange,” COIL refers to any method that uses technology to bring global experiences into classrooms or curricula. In COIL courses, faculty in different nations loosely sync their curricula so that students collaborate on projects in international groups.

In Straus’ course, “flipping” a COIL course meant that students read materials and watched lectures outside of class; during class, they worked collaboratively amongst themselves and with their Tsinghua peers. Throughout the course, students on both campuses connected online — via WeChat, online discussion boards and video conferencing — to think critically about how personal choices affect social, economic and environmental sustainability. They shared their experiences with assignments and activities, and compared sustainability issues, policies and cultural norms in the U.S. and China.

“It is certainly innovative,” says Straus of combining COIL with a “flipped” classroom. “It helps us to learn together across boundaries, to use technology and the skills of our students, while also teaching our students multicultural, multi-disciplinary collaboration and problem-solving, virtually. I can’t imagine more important skills for this generation.”

Maximizing the short-term study abroad

In addition, the “global flip” includes short-term study abroad — adding travel and on-the-ground applied learning to the experience.

At the end of the term, during exams week, the UW students traveled to Beijing for 10 days. Together with their Tsinghua peers, UW students attended lectures, went on field trips and collaborated on course projects. They saw Chinese sustainability efforts at work through field trips to industry and government labs, and vast solar and wind farms. They also explored Beijing, including the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, to learn about Chinese culture and history, and to think about how cultural and political norms influence sustainability.

A short-term study abroad allows more students to access immersive international experiences. The cost of going abroad is much lower than a full-quarter program, and students with tight timelines to graduation or restrictive course requirements in their majors can more easily manage the travel schedule.
Placing learning in global context

For UW students, says Straus, there is enormous value in having cross-cultural conversations around pressing global challenges, including sustainability — whether those conversations take place online or in person. Students not only learn about another nation’s sustainability issues and policies, but they learn that sustainability has everything to do with cultural norms and ways of thinking about the environment.

Straus emphasizes that the diversity among both UW students and Tsinghua students enhanced everyone’s learning experience as well. About half of her 15 UW students were international students from China — and many of the Tsinghua students were international students as well, from Spain, Brazil, Hong Kong and elsewhere. For the UW Chinese international students, the course offered an opportunity to work with scholars at the prestigious Tsinghua, and to learn about environmental sectors in China where they might return to work after college. For all students at both universities, international and domestic students alike offered distinct insights around relationships between sustainability and culture.

A model with far-reaching impact

The “global flip” builds potentially long-lasting connections across institutions, faculty and even nations. “I see this program as planting the seed for future environmental collaboration between the U.S. and China,” says UW student Shunxi Liu, “and it was exciting to be part of it.”

This highly transferable model is inspiring others, across disciplines. UW instructors in departments ranging from English and Philosophy to Oceanography are currently seeking partners in countries around the world to teach global flip classes of their own. Proposed courses include titles such as PHILOSOPHY 149: Existentialism and Film and ENVIRONMENT 300: Diversity and Ecology of Coral Reefs.

“Global flip” tips

» **Sync schedules carefully.** Coordinating includes taking into account time differences, academic calendars and introducing topics and assignments in similar sequences and at a similar pace.

» **Set clear expectations for all partners.** Communicate with partner instructors to clarify expectations. What will collaboration look like? For students? For instructors? Keep lines of communication open, and check in regularly.

» **Recruit early (and everywhere).** A mix of student backgrounds brings diverse perspectives. Make use of advisors to recruit broadly and encourage students to apply for scholarships through the Office of Global Affairs.

» **Choose tools strategically.** Decide what COIL platforms will be easy and accessible for students on all campuses to use. UW Academic Technologies can help, especially in navigating the complex challenges of the Chinese firewall.

**“This program is not just about environment and sustainability. It’s about comparing two countries and building a community of global citizens.”**

— Mike Liu, class of 2018, Environmental Studies major

**Resources for faculty:** UW Study Abroad, UW Bothell COIL Initiative, UW Tacoma COIL Fellows Program, Global Innovation Fund, The Center for Teaching and Learning and Academic Technologies
LINKING CLASSROOM TO COMMUNITY WITH TECHNOLOGY

A geography workshop paired its students with nonprofit organizations to help solve critical community issues, offering a model of how to bring service learning into the classroom.

Two fundamental questions help shape Professor Sarah Elwood’s approach to teaching a capstone course in the Department of Geography.

“What do I want my students to learn? And what does the world around us need?” These are important issues for Elwood and the students who participate in the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Workshop, an upper-level course that uses emerging technologies and the power of spatial data to tackle the critical needs of community organizations serving underrepresented populations.

“One of the many things we do in the geography department is to share with students our long-term commitment to public service and scholarship,” says Elwood, who has been widely recognized for her work inside and outside the classroom.

“We have a deep commitment to giving students meaningful assignments that engage them in community service and prepare them with the skills they need once they leave the University,” she says.

An example of that commitment was the most recent GIS workshop that Elwood taught, with about 40 students and two TAs working alongside organizations such as the South King County Food Coalition, Northwest Justice Project, Statewide Poverty Action Network, and Real Change News, a newspaper sold by the homeless in the Seattle area.

“All of the groups have pressing needs, and the urgency of the work makes the classroom experience real for the students,” Elwood says.

Linking class work to real world experiences is a valuable teaching and learning tool. And the UW geography department offers a model for other departments to emulate those experiences in their own workshops or classes.

It is certainly an approach that has worked well for the students, offering a tough challenge with a great payoff, said Jacqueline Ines, a former student who worked with the South King County Food Coalition, a group of 12 food banks collectively serving more than 35,000 families each year. The coalition partnered with the workshop to help find unserved potential clients and develop strategies to connect people in need to food bank services in a decentralized geographic area.

“This was one of my favorite projects to work on because it was equally fun and stressful to have a real-life audience to present our work to who would be utilizing the findings we ended up producing,” Ines says.

Elwood’s top tips for successful community partnerships

» Look for opportunities to bring real world experience into the classroom: Elwood, and Nyerges before her, identified real world applications for what they’re teaching their students. “Our workshop is not just about geography,” Elwood said. “My students learn about social justice issues, public service and collaboration.” They suggest looking for real world applications in your field, such as what the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies did for its capstone projects.

» Define the relationship: “I don’t use the language of ‘client.’ They are colleagues, project partners,” Elwood says about community organizations that agree to work with workshop participants. “We are working together to find solutions, so we strive to teach humility, and learn humility.” She also makes sure that any organization is committed to a long-term partnership with the UW. She suggests defining what the workshop needs as well as what partners need, and ask organizations to “Be a good partner to our students.”

» Balance your teams: Students bring all kinds of experiences, and that’s particularly important in a workshop that relies heavily on tech tools. So make sure each student team is balanced, such as Ines’ team. And don’t overlook the intangibles. UW students come from all social and class backgrounds, and they have much to learn from one another. Help them recognize how these differences
Mapping data to help communities solve problems

Geography students learn to use GIS — at its most basic, a software for gathering, managing and analyzing geographic data. And because it is deeply rooted in geography, that data is integrated into maps — where information is more easily brought to life.

Practically every field of study uses GIS to make maps that help them better understand an issue and solve problems. Whether someone is studying loss of habitat in the swamps of Florida, the effects of climate change on economically undeveloped island nations, or the opioid epidemic in the Midwest, you can bet that GIS tools are being used to map it all in order to understand the root causes and ultimately offer solutions.

These are some of the reasons Professor of Geography, Timothy Nyerges founded the workshop nearly two decades ago. He wanted students to use their GIS skills to gain a better understanding of environmental and sustainability issues. Elwood started teaching the workshop shortly after she came to the University in 2006, shifting the focus of her course to social justice and poverty issues. Today, professors take turns teaching the workshop, with topics switching back and forth. Professor Suzanne Withers will be teaching the workshop in spring 2019.

But no matter the field under study, Elwood says acquiring and working with data is difficult — and often quite expensive. That makes it inaccessible to community organizations, including food banks and environmental nonprofits, seeking to improve their decision-making. That’s where the partnership with the UW students comes in.

GIS has migrated to the web and cloud computing, and accessing, analyzing and applying the needed data is a complex undertaking. Putting a map together for use by a client such as a food bank requires specialized skills and teamwork, and GIS students are versed in a number of the technologies needed.

As geographers, says Elwood, “we bring the technical expertise, but our students quickly learn that our partners bring rich community expertise.”

How one student project showed food banks where to focus efforts

“We use Census data in a lot of our GIS work,” Elwood said. “But the Census doesn’t ask, ‘Are you hungry?’ And that’s a fundamental question that needs to be asked if we are trying to analyze gaps in services in a particular community.”

The South King County Food Coalition was seeking to answer that fundamental question, as well as several others, when it started working with the geography department. The coalition has been considering whether to start a mobile van service to deliver food to some of their most vulnerable clients, including elderly residents living in isolated areas with no public transportation and single parents who have little time to travel to a food bank. But it needed to know where those clients were.

Ines and her team set to work. Using GIS, they identified and mapped regions in South King County that were underserved by the food coalition, explored the prospect of introducing a mobile delivery service to the Des Moines Area Food Bank’s operations, and compiled an analysis of data to locate potential long-term volunteers to help grow the coalition’s fresh produce at Elk Run Farm.

“While we all collectively worked on the end-product, we were able to split parts of the projects out to those who were comfortable extracting and analyzing the types of data we had to investigate for each individual part,” Ines said. “Two of my partners focused more on the bivariate choropleth map (a map that uses color to show quantities within a geographical area) because they did the most research on the data that was used to create that map, while another partner and I were primarily responsible for the hot spot map (a map that uses statistical analysis to define areas of high occurrence versus areas of low occurrence).

I think we created a helpful map for them,” she said.

And their work is likely to pay off in big ways, Elwood said. “They built a realistic model that showed a need in several areas.”

Ultimately, the workshop is not just about accurately mapping data. “We want our students to bring together what they have learned here over four years about technology, race, class and poverty,” Elwood said, “and integrate these lessons so they can effectively support communities that are often marginalized and underrepresented.”
USING EVIDENCE TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Evidence-Based Teaching (EBT) program supports faculty to try new, research-based teaching strategies in classrooms across disciplines.

Across the UW, faculty are committed to using the best possible teaching strategies to enhance student learning — whether that learning takes place in large lecture classes or small seminars, in Philosophy or in Oceanography.

At the same time, few faculty have time or support to continuously evolve their teaching — or necessarily know where to begin. Frequently, instructors learn to teach on the job without formal training, and community around teaching and learning can be hard to come by.

Enter the Evidence-Based Teaching Program (EBT): a program offering mentorship, a community of peers, opportunities for leadership, and expedited support from the Center for Teaching and Learning and Learning Technologies to faculty in all disciplines. The EBT program also offers opportunities to innovate: to use research on pedagogy, and the support of teaching colleagues, to implement new techniques and tools to become better teachers, and help students become better learners.

“From the first meeting, I knew that this is what I’d been looking for: a program that wants to prioritize empirical work in teaching, and support faculty to continuously improve their teaching,” says Lecturer in Philosophy Ian Schnee, who joined EBT in 2016. Over the past two years, participation in EBT has “transformed my teaching,” Schnee says.

A program built for growth

EBT began in 2015 as part of the Office of the Provost’s Teaching & Learning initiative, in response to a meta-analysis, co-authored by UW researchers including Principal Lecturers in Biology Scott Freeman and Mary Pat Wenderoth, that showed dramatic gains in student learning when instructors use active learning techniques. A small team in Academic & Student Affairs, led by Senior Director Marisa Nickle, partnered with Wenderoth to design the pilot.

The program takes a three-phase approach: Exploration, Implementation and Research. Faculty can participate for just the Exploration quarter, in which they read literature around teaching and learning (as extensively as they'd like) and develop goals for their own courses. Those who stay on for an Implementation quarter then implement those goals with support and mentorship from colleagues who have more experience with EBT. Some faculty are now even conducting their own research. Members can progress through the program’s mentoring ladder, from early-stage participants to group coaches or “leads” — allowing professional development opportunities for tenure-track faculty and lecturers alike.
EBT has seen enormous growth over the past three years, largely through word of mouth, as participants share their experiences with colleagues. It continues to attract instructors interested in learning about education research and implementing what they learn in real time, with support from an interdisciplinary community of peers.

The program now has three “leads” who have moved up the mentoring ladder: Schnee, Mikelle Nuwer, senior lecturer in Oceanography, and Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges, principal lecturer in English. Faculty from over 50 departments have engaged with the program, from all three campuses; over 13,000 students have taken EBT-informed courses; and the new 2018-2019 cohort is predicted to include over one hundred faculty participants.

Exploring the research — and implementing new, innovative teaching practices

In the first two phases of the EBT program, members explore existing research on teaching that applies to their own unique contexts. They meet regularly to discuss what they've read, as well as their own goals and potential challenges, and they observe at least two other participants' courses. Those who stay on then implement their findings in their own classrooms, while continuing to meet in small groups to share and troubleshoot.

Mikelle Nuwer tends to teach large lecture courses in Oceanography — and like many faculty, she used to rely in large part on a traditional lecture format. But reading and discussing the evidence on active learning, and receiving support from EBT peers as she implemented new strategies, has fundamentally changed her teaching, she says.

Now, she relies on active learning techniques that have been shown to be more effective at engaging students. These include assigning more collaborative group work and think-pair-share activities, and using clickers to increase engagement. Nuwer has seen the results for herself, she says. Even in large lectures, more students participate more actively, more often.

“Because of the diversity of our students, having a toolbox — tools to engage different learning styles — is really important,” she says.

And faculty are using evidence to do more than just restructure class time. Research is continuously being published on everything from online and hybrid teaching, to assessment strategies, to creating inclusive classrooms.

“On any aspect of teaching, there’s evidence out there,” says Kristi Straus, who recently stepped down as EBT lead to serve as acting director of the Environmental Studies program. “In EBT, it’s the job of lead faculty to help other faculty find that literature, and then help them apply it to their own contexts.”
Opportunities for original research and leadership

While most EBT participants join an Exploration or Implementation group, some connect to the program in a Research group. These participants focus on conducting their own classroom research to close gaps between teaching and learning. “Faculty may not have the critical mass or the expertise in their own departments to do research on teaching,” says Colleen Craig, senior lecturer in Chemistry and Academic & Student Affairs Teaching Fellow. “A crucial thing that EBT offers is an outlet for high-quality, rigorous education research in faculty’s own courses.”

The program also offers unique opportunities for leadership. Participants receive mentorship and collaborate with peers throughout each phase of EBT, but they can also move up the mentoring ladder to become coaches, and continue to learn through leading others.

Building community around teaching, across disciplines

Ian Schnee says that finding a community of faculty invested in teaching has been one of the most valuable aspects of EBT. “It’s great to meet all these other instructors whose fundamental mission is to teach well,” he says. Nuwer agrees. “The support we’ve gotten to create plans and implement new tools has been incredible,” she says, “but so are the things we learn from each other, and the ability to discuss our challenges and successes.”

The interdisciplinary peer group can have an enormous, even surprising impact. Approaches more common to teaching in the humanities can help STEM instructors think differently about their own habits, and vice versa. Meanwhile, says Schnee, “It becomes apparent that we do so many things in common. Everyone teaches critical reasoning; everyone strives to do more than teach facts, but to teach students how to apply facts and problem-solve,” he says.

Nuwer, for one, developed new assessment techniques for her Oceanography courses after observing how EBT colleague Gillis-Bridges evaluates student work in her English courses. “Kimberlee’s assessment tools were so different,” Nuwer says. “To see what she expects from her students inspired me.” Now, Nuwer uses a combination of assessments in addition to exams, including having students create videos or posters — techniques borrowed from Gillis-Bridges and other colleagues in other fields.

Ultimately, these interactions across disciplines benefit students. “Because I have more diversity of assessment, I see all my students do better,” says Nuwer. “It allows more students to show different kinds of strengths.”

Looking ahead

After three years as a pilot program, EBT has found a new home in the Center for Teaching & Learning. “It’s a natural fit with the expertise of CTL consultants,” says Colleen Craig, who now works with the CTL to support the transition and the program’s continued growth. “We’re thrilled to take on the EBT program,” says CTL Director Beth Kalikoff, “because it runs on the creative and scholarly energies of UW faculty.”

The program has the potential to grow in a number of ways: by bringing in more faculty from more departments; by encouraging new faculty to participate in their first few years teaching; and by supporting original research from EBT participants on the scholarship of teaching and learning — research they can publish and add to the growing body of evidence.

And EBT’s impact can extend to the departmental level, as departments such as Public Health and Philosophy have discovered. The Philosophy department has launched a new committee, led by Schnee, to review findings from EBT groups and potentially implement EBT-based techniques across Philosophy curricula. “The EBT program is helping the Philosophy Department to bring best practices to the entire department, helping us to think outside the box to make our courses more engaging and effective,” says Andrea Woody, chair of Philosophy.

Katie Kirkland, project manager in the Office of the Provost, managed the pilot and worked closely with EBT leads to develop the program in its first two years of growth. “EBT not only helps the university fulfill its mission to be a superb teaching institution — to be not just an R1 but a ‘T1,’” says Kirkland. “It has also led to greater collaboration among departments across campus that support teaching faculty.”

Kalikoff agrees. “EBT is changing cultures of teaching at UW,” she says, “because the faculty participants, coaches and leads care so deeply about sharing their passion for discovery with students and with each other.”
SELECT RESOURCES

For support for teaching in ways featured in this report, consider reaching out to the faculty featured or find more information about key topics from the UW resources listed below:

Evidence-based teaching:

Evidence-Based Teaching Program (EBT) offers on-demand support from pedagogy and tech experts and collaboration with peers across disciplines. Faculty participate in online discussions and four meetings a quarter, observe peers in their classrooms, and learn what research says about effective teaching. They also experiment with new approaches and explore ways to conduct classroom-based research.

Advances in Higher Education Research Seminar highlights original research in college-level learning and instruction across disciplines. Seminars are free and open to the public and include opportunities for discussion.

Teaching & Learning Symposium is a one-day, tri-campus event that highlights research and practices that advance student learning, promote innovation in teaching and collaboration among practitioners of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) at UW.

Teaching with technology:

Academic Technologies supports learning environments and teaching technologies for UW Seattle, including technical support to more than 300 general-use classrooms.

UW Bothell’s Office of Digital Learning & Innovation and IT Digital Learning host information on pedagogy, tools and initiatives such as Universal Design for Active Learning, eLearning Symposia and an eFellows summer institute.

UW Tacoma’s Academic Innovation resources include Faculty Resource Center offerings, support for pedagogy and tools, as well as information on the iTech Fellows program to support innovative course redesign.

Linking students to the local community:

The Carlson Leadership and Public Service Center develops and supports programs designed to incorporate academic coursework with community-based learning and leadership.

Linking students to the global community:

UW Bothell COIL Initiative: Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) fosters global competence through developing a multicultural learning environment that links courses in different countries.

UW Tacoma COIL Fellows program provides training and funding for faculty to develop COIL courses.

The Global Innovation Fund provides seed funding for initiatives and programs that enhance the UW’s global engagement and reach, including innovative study abroad programs, developing new and existing programs, research collaborations and faculty exchanges.

Study abroad resources for faculty and staff: resources for program directors, administrators, advisers and departmental exchange coordinators.

The Office of Global Affairs offers a Global Opportunity Scholarship for global study, research or internships.

The Office of Global Affairs at UW Tacoma offers study abroad scholarships and resources for students, faculty and staff.

The Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity Study Abroad works with academic partners to offer study abroad programs, including one during spring break.

UW Bothell Office of Global Initiatives
UW Bothell Center for International Education
UW Tacoma Office of Global Affairs
UW Seattle Office of Global Affairs

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WRITING, RESEARCH AND DESIGN

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