University at Buffalo
Curriculum, Assessment and
Teaching Transformation

Impact
REPORT

2021–22

Who we are...

The Office of Curriculum, Assessment & Teaching Transformation (CATT) seeks to provide the Division of Academic Affairs with expertise and management over a broad range of instructional opportunities and challenges.

In addition to our own expertise in curriculum and instruction, learning spaces and environments, and assessment and reporting, CATT pursues the broader objective of serving as a comprehensive conduit between faculty and other key offices and administrators on campus in our collective efforts to promote the end goal of student excellence and success.

A message from our director

Carol Van Zile-Tamsen

Dear Colleagues,

This past year has been a very exciting, and rewarding, time for our office. We saw the full benefits of our merger of two longstanding resources on campus, the Office of Educational Effectiveness (OEE) and the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI), into an enhanced resource in support of the broader goals and objectives of the Division of Academic Affairs. As such, our Office of Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching Transformation (CATT) now combines the complimentary assessment and programmatic review strengths of OEE with the instructional and pedagogical expertise of CEI into one efficient office. Through this structure we have been better positioned, over this past year, to leverage the data and critical information of each area respectively to help inform and develop the others.

Therefore, I am pleased to share with you this impact report, which speaks to our staff's collective efforts over the past year, as well as offers a glimpse into the exciting work ahead for CATT. Thank you for your interest in our office, and best wishes for a rewarding year ahead.

Sincerely,

Carol Van Zile-Tamsen, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Provost and Director
Office of Curriculum, Assessment and Teaching Transformation
Division of Academic Affairs

Points of pride

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Developed a standard approach for assessment projects in which data is disaggregated by student groups to allow for the examination of equity in student outcomes. A corresponding how-to session was included in our annual conference, Bridging Assessment and Instruction, in January.

Developed and launched a guiding web page titled Equitable and Inclusive Teaching and Learning, containing practical approaches for Inclusive Pedagogy.

Developed and presented to chairs a variety of approaches for assessing teaching effectiveness that do not rely on course evaluation results, which may be biased. In addition, we've begun the process of conducting an analysis of course evaluation data to attempt to identify biasing factors as well as quantify the impact of bias on results. A report will be developed and shared with key university leaders in fall 2022.

In collaboration with SUNY, we produced a video to help guide instructors titled "Social Justice and Learning Design."

Points of
pride

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Established the Teaching Technology Gateway, which includes the UB office of EDI, as a stake holding partner, to ensure that any educational technologies used on campus are accessible to all learners.

Developed a training series for instructors in collaboration with Inclusive Excellence and the Center for Excellence in Writing. This series will run in spring 2023.

Developed a plan to use targeted recruitment to hire a graduate student from an underrepresented group, in order to provide mentoring and promote skills building in data and assessment, while working with data and assessment specialists in the office on actual projects. Recruitment began in June 2022 for the 2022-23 academic year.

Points of pride

TOP 25 AMBITION

Provided leadership and support for the review and selection of a 21st century learning management system.

Reorganized the staffing of the office to identify a dedicated staff member to support the development and design of high quality curricula.

Reviewed the existing Comprehensive Program Review self-study template to focus on aspects related most directly to academic excellence and Top 25 ambitions, and we have likewise developed a plan to include Academic Vitality Reports for department chairs as they review the effectiveness of their programs. The revised self-study template and Academic Vitality Reports will be submitted for review by fall 2022 for launch with the next cohort of programs undergoing review in 2023-24.

Collaborated with UBIT, Facilities, Records and Registration, and Campus Planning on implementation of LSRS review of renovated classroom spaces with the intention of extending the project to all centrally scheduled classrooms and eventually to all campus classrooms.

Points of pride

TOP 25 AMBITION

| Began implementing a Peer-to-Peer Teaching Observation and Shadowing program to provide specific feedback to instructors, as well as to build a network of effective instructors who can mentor others.

Instructor development offerings to promote evidenced-based instructional practices, including:

- New Faculty Academy Teaching Module
- Faculty Academies
- Fall Into Teaching Webinar Series
- Offerings for the annual New TA Conference, the Post-Doc Teaching Certificate Program, and CIRTL

Initiatives focused on supporting student success:

- Actively participated in the Gateway Course Redesign committees to support needs assessment efforts for high DFRW courses and identified curricular gaps; prepared resources for faculty to support the redesign of these courses.
- Supported creation of a key communication to instructors of first-year students from UGE and created an accompanying web page.
- Provided video production support to Undergraduate Education and UB Curriculum for an upcoming social belonging intervention with UB Seminars.
- Provided video production support to Tutoring and Academic Support Services related to a pilot Supplemental Instruction program.

Learning Management System transition •----------------

Due to the upcoming expiration of our contract with Blackboard, UB has been afforded the exciting opportunity to seek out an LMS for the campus that will best support the needs of our faculty and students. After a thorough review process involving stakeholders from across campus, Brightspace was ultimately selected to be the new UB LMS beginning in the fall semester of 2023.

While this transition will not be simple, it does present us with opportunities to improve course design and delivery for nearly 4,000 courses per term in a three-semester time frame. In addition, it will provide an opportunity for all instructors to fully learn the functionality of the new system, and it will provide a 21st century online environment through which instruction can be fully implemented or as a supplement to in-person instruction.

FOR THE LATEST UPDATES: buffalo.edu/lms

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BRIGHTSPACE

Timeline

April 2022

Brightspace selected as new Learning Management System.

Summer 2022

Project planning and organization of university-wide implementation teams.

Fall 2022

Technical configuration of Brightspace environment. Training and workshop materials developed for delivery to campus instructional designers and instructional support staff.

Spring 2023

Phase 1 of course content migration from Blackboard to Brightspace. Early training opportunities for faculty and departmental support personnel.

Summer 2023

Early adopter program for identified summer courses. Phase 2 of course content migration from Blackboard to Brightspace. Full faculty and support staff training schedule available.

Fall 2023

Brightspace becomes UB's primary LMS. Continued training and workshop availability. Close out and archiving of Blackboard system.

Our teams
ADMINISTRATION

Carol Van Zile-Tamsen
Associate Vice Provost & Director

Daniel Kelly
Director
Administration & Strategy

Heather Waddy
Operations Manager

" Our team strives to empower CATT's staff to achieve and advance our mission of academic excellence.

Carol Van Zile-Tamsen

Team Highlights

1 Provided administrative oversight of the LMS review and implementation process.

2 Helped lead and staff the University's reaccreditation efforts.

3 Managed and facilitated inter-team projects and operations.

Our teams

OUTREACH & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Jeremy Cooper
Assistant Director
Digital Operations & Communications

Kathleen Kielar
Training & Digital Course Design Specialist

Lauren Bruzga
Senior Curriculum & Instruction Specialist

" The communications and outreach group extends our reach to those we intend to serve.

Daniel Kelly

Team Highlights

1. Provided logistical, technical and communications support for programming and events.

2. Served as critical liasons to the academic units and partner offices.

3. Provided oversight for CATT identity and branding.

4. Ensured internal compliance and professional development.

Our teams

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS & LEARNING ANALYTICS

Cathleen Morreale
Assistant Vice Provost
Educational Effectiveness and Learning Analytics

Mary Odden
Assessment Specialist

Daniel Schweitzer
Program Review and Assessment Technician

Christopher Rates
Research & Development Strategist

Athena Tsembelis
Assessment Reporting Specialist

Courtney Doxbeck
Data & Learning Analytics Technician

> " EELA provides the tools to engage in assessment and continuously improve the educational experience.

Cathleen Morreale

Team Highlights

1 After the Annual Assessment reporting period, 97% of programs have learning outcomes on record and 83% have completed at least one cycle of assessment.

2 Thirty-eight Assessment Surveys were created and deployed with 70% for program planning or

3 Two new staff members joined the team, Courtney Doxbeck and Christopher Rates, to focus primarily on data analytics and research projects, respectively.

4 The University Assessment Council was renamed the Institutional Assessment Council and houses the Course Evaluation Working Group. These groups actively advise assessment for the university.

Our teams

TEACHING TRANSFORMATION

Jeffrey Kohler
Associate Director
Teaching Transformation

Maggie Grady
Learning Designer

Jeremy Jungbluth
Learning Designer for
Inclusive Pedagogy

Kevin Hittle
Digital Learning Designer

Jacqueline Conroy
Content Development
Specialist

" Our team uses pedagogical expertise to support instructors in designing effective learning experiences.

Jeffrey Kohler

Team Highlights

1 Offered Academies in a condensed bootcamp format to provide faculty development during ideal breaks in the academic year.

2 In support of emerging curriculum initiatives, the team partnered with other units on campus and provided instructional support with the development of curricula and resources to support inclusive pedagogy and equitable instruction.

3 All team members are active in fostering excellence in teaching and student success through regular critical conversations on subjects that matter through our faculty-driven community of practice, UB TaLCK.

Our teams

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS & TECHNOLOGIES

Thomas Slomka
Assistant Vice Provost
Learning Environments & Technologies

Mark Woodard
Assistant Director
Learning Systems

Gary Koteras
Learning Systems Specialist

Donald Trainor
Learning Systems Specialist

Michelle Connolly
Learning Designer

Rebecca Rotundo
Assistant Director
Learning Spaces

> " It's not just about assessment and instruction; you need technology wizards too.

Thomas Slomka

Team Highlights

1 Led the learning environments design impact study to seek critical evidence of learning space design on learning outcomes.

2 Began core coordination of the high-profile LMS Transition to Brightspace and Teaching Technology Gateway projects.

3 Oversaw key campus infrastructure initiatives, including the direct support pilot of NSC classroom renovations, as well as the Instructional Facilities Operations and Utilization Subcommittee.

On the horizon

## Educational Effectiveness & Learning Analytics team

The current work to revitalize and strategically rethink the Comprehensive Program Review process in light of the increasing centrality of assessment was initially delayed by the pandemic. However, that delay is proving beneficial, as the original efforts and research (including feedback from departments, senior administration, and discussions with review professionals at peer and aspirational peer institutions) have been complimented by the innovations forced by the circumstances.

In collaboration with other CATT teams, EELA is crafting a process for the reviews—particularly the self-study—that will produce a more standardized format (allowing for more effective review by non-departmental leadership) that puts an increased emphasis on assessment, long-term strategic goals, and which puts less strain, in terms of time, on academic departments.

Middle States

As part of the University's regular accreditation process, CATT will have an important coordination role in UB's self-study process for re-accreditation. Significant time and attention by several of our office staff members will be utilized in providing core support and management of this critical process.
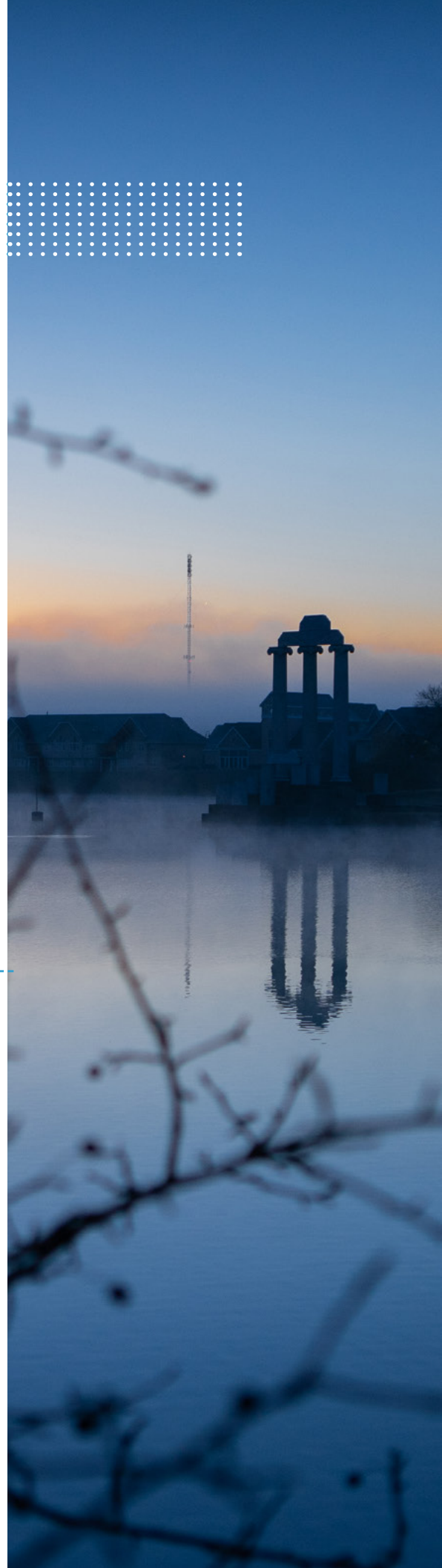
On the horizon

Teaching Transformation team

The Teaching Transformation Team has a renewed focus on providing faculty-facing support to promote quality instruction for UB's students. Our team is front and center in the larger CATT initiative to prepare for and successfully transition to UB's new learning management system, Brightspace.

We will provide strategies to incorporate the recommendations of the President's Advisory Council on Race as a part of our consultations process with faculty, including our upcoming Diversity, Equity and Inclusion teaching series. Our team will also take on a larger role in the planning and delivery of the TA Conference taking place each August, providing the next generation of teaching assistants with the tools necessary for quality instruction.

Learning Environments & Technologies team

The major focus of the Learning Environments and Technologies team this coming year, and beyond, will be leading the enterprise-wide project to transition to a new learning management system (LMS). This multi-year project began with a campus-wide review of major LMS providers, with the ultimate selection of Brightspace as UB's new LMS. The project to transition to Brightspace is currently underway, with a target of full implementation of Brightspace as our primary LMS by the fall of 2023. Stay tuned...