# CITL | Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning

## What's inside?

Faculty Fellows - **Apply Now!**

Structured reading groups to engage readings

Student evaluations - how should you talk to your students about it?

Book reviews - Vote on the next **Guilt-free Book Club** selection

**Save the Date!** Register for upcoming programs

**Have you joined us yet in the CITL lounge for coffee or tea?**

## APPLY NOW! FACULTY FELLOWS!

The Faculty Fellow Program is designed to offer a successful applicant the opportunity to serve in a leadership role in expanding campus capacity for inclusive and evidence-based pedagogical practices.

**Who should apply?**
Any Bates College faculty (all titles and all disciplines encouraged to apply) who have taught at Bates College for 4+ consecutive years with a desire to learn about and support colleagues in implementing inclusive teaching practices.

Learn more and apply on the CITL website (www.bates.edu/CITL)

November 2022 Newsletter

# Structured Reading Groups



I want to share a clever strategy to overcome student disengagement that addresses two related questions I hear often from faculty: How do you get students to do the reading? And how do you structure small group discussions so they actually work?

Back in 2011, sociology professors Heather Macpherson Parrott of Long Island University and Elizabeth Cherry of Manhattanville College published an article called "Structured Reading Groups to Facilitate Deep Learning" in Teaching Sociology. In structured reading groups, *students are assigned a reading to complete before class along with a role they will play during small-group discussion of that reading during class.* While I've heard of this technique in lots of places, I find myself returning over and over to Parrott and Cherry's work because they have detailed some of the most useful ideas of student roles in group work (I share the roles on the right panel).

The structured roles give each student something to focus on as they're "doing" the reading. Students often find academic readings for their courses overwhelming. By having a specific focus for their reading and a deliverable to bring to their small group (Parrott and Cherry recommend using a pre-class worksheet of sorts for each role), students are in a much better position to get something useful out of the reading.

What's more, each student is bringing something different to the group discussion, so there's a natural role for everyone in the discussion. This interdependence prepares the way for more *equitable participation* within the small group. Structure is one way to practice more inclusive teaching (see our Guilt-free Book Club selection with that name by Kelly Hogan and Viji Sathy for more on this notion), and structures where students have time to prepare their contribution (like a think-pair-share) or are equipped to make a unique contribution (like a jigsaw) are particularly good at supporting engagement by all students. Structured reading groups includes both of these attributes.

## Group Roles

**Discussion Leader:**
Student develops questions for the group to discuss and facilitates group discussion

—

**Reporter:**
Student provides a summary of the reading group discussion including points of agreement and disagreement, points of confusion, and what the group found most interesting

—

**Passage Master:**
Student chooses and summarizes a few key passages from the readings that they think the group needs to discuss

—

**Creative Connector:**
Student make connections between the readings and other social, cultural, political, or economic ideas either from earlier in the course or from outside the course, like maybe some aspect of pop culture

—

**Devil's Advocate:**
Student thoughtfully questions or takes issue with the arguments the reading's author makes

Request a CITL consultation if you'd like to brainstorm ways structured reading groups might help you engage your students.

# How to talk about
## STUDENT EVALUATIONS



Often, evaluations are impacted by characteristics unrelated to actual instructor quality. Classes with lighter workloads or higher grading distributions do have better scores from students. Students also rate nonelective and quantitative courses lower. Evaluations for upper-level, discussion-based classes are higher than those for larger introductory courses. Furthermore, many studies find that factors including an instructor's gender, race, ethnicity, accent, sexual orientation, or disability status impact student ratings.

The good news is that research has shown that cueing students to be aware of their biases, providing motivation to not rely on them, and demonstrating ways in which to focus evaluations on teaching effectiveness can mitigate the bias in student evaluations.

## Join us!

Register now for a the first part of a CITL workshop series on student evaluations of teaching. This first session on Thursday November 10th at 4:15 pm, will center around talking with students about evaluations before they complete them. The second workshop in the series next semester will focus on interpreting student feedback in evaluations.
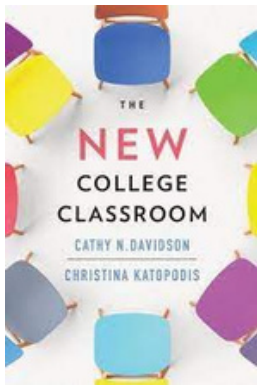
## Tips

There are several steps that instructors can take to reduce the effects of potential student biases and prepare students to deliver constructive feedback about their experiences in the course.

- Align student-instructor course expectations

- Teach students how to deliver good feedback and model effective practices

- Gather student feedback in multiple ways at multiple times

- Encourage students to complete their evaluations and share that you value their feedback

- Remind students about the purpose of course evaluations

- Mitigate bias by discussing with students implicit bias in evaluations

www.bates.edu/CITL

# BOOK REVIEWS: <u>VOTE</u> FOR YOUR PICK FOR NEXT SEMESTER

**2022**

**2020**

**2022**

*You're Invited!*

**JOIN OUR ON-GOING GUILT-FREE BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS SESSIONS:**

**NOVEMBER 15TH
DECEMBER 7TH
JANUARY 19TH**

**TWO CHANCES TO JOIN
8 AM OR 4:15 PM**

**COFFEE, TEA, AND SNACKS!**

"The learning process is something you can incite, literally incite, like a riot." — Audre Lorde

In the NEW College Classroom, Cathy N. Davidson and Christina Katopodis present the latest research on inspiring, effective, and inclusive learning. They share teaching strategies that anyone can adapt easily and effectively in every field. Additionally, they provide case studies of the participatory syllabus, flipped classrooms, ungrading, anti-racist pedagogies, and grab-and-go activities that educators around the world use every day to ensure their students' success.
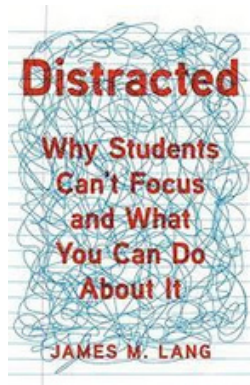
"Whenever we are attempting challenging cognitive work, distraction sings to us sweetly, beckoning us into easier and more pleasurable pursuits." —James Lang

In Distracted, Lang makes a compelling argument that 'attention is an achievement' and that we should be cultivating 'attention renewal' rather than preventing distractions. He presents practical classroom activities for fostering curiosity and community–with the research to back them up. Candid insights on effective laptop policies, inviting students into the conversation, and the role of assessments may change how you think about learning.
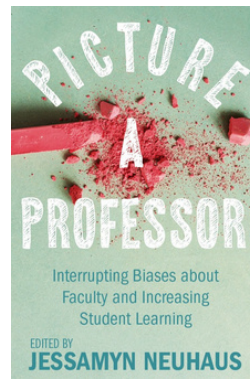
Picture a Professor is a collection that aims to inspire transformative student learning while challenging stereotypes about what a professor looks like by offering practical advice for effectively navigating student preconceptions about embodied identity and academic expertise.

Each contributor recognizes the pervasiveness of racialized, gendered, and other biases about professors and recommends specific ways to respond to and interrupt such preconceptions —helping students, teachers, and others reenvision what we think of when we picture a professor.
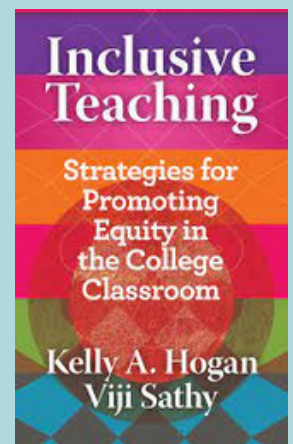
# <u>VOTE</u> FOR THE NEXT GUILT-FREE BOOK CLUB SELECTION

Each semester, CITL will pick a book for our our Guilt-free Book Club. Our philosophy is that it's easier to read the books if they are sitting beside you. When you register, you will receive a free, no-strings attached, copy of our pick.

The entire book club strives to be guilt-free in every way possible. You can register for a copy of the book and never attend any discussion sessions. You don't have to have read to attend a discussion session.

Our goal is to provide a guilt-free way to motivate your thinking about teaching and connect with other pedagogically-inclined colleagues.

Everyone gets to **VOTE** for the next selection in the Guilt-free Book Club series. Which of the titles above most intrigues you? Don't fret if your pick doesn't win this round as that book may be a future pick in upcoming semesters.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Ongoing Services

### CONSULTATIONS

CITL offers one-on-one and group consultations on a wide range of pedagogical practices with the goal of having faculty who are excited to teach and whose students are excited to learn. CITL's goal is to tailor each consultation to meet your needs. Drop by Lindsey's office (Dana 220) or use the form to request a consultation.

**REQUEST A CONSULTATION**

### OBSERVATIONS

CITL uses a collaborative observation model for classroom observations where we first meet with you to discuss your pedagogy and what you want the focus of the observation to be, then attend your class, and then meet with you to share our feedback and reflections. All class observations are confidential and formative.

**REQUEST AN OBSERVATION**

## Featured November Events: Register Now



**Community of Practice: LAVA**
Tuesdays: Nov 1, 15, 29
12 pm, Commons 211



**Student Evaluations of Teaching Workshop**
Thursday, Nov 10th
4:15 pm, Dana 219



**On the Menu: Inclusive Group Work**
Wednesday, Nov 30th
12 pm, Commons 221