

CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEWSLETTER



WHAT'S INSIDE?

- Laptops & cell phones in the classroom? Yea, nay, or a 3rd way?
- Communities of Practice winter preview
- Course workload estimator - How long does it take your students to read?
- An all new May Conference: a celebration of teaching!
- Save the date! First day of class syllabus workshop on Jan 9th!



DE-STRESS FEST!



Why do students get all the fun de-stress events during finals week? This is a stressful time for educators too. Join CITL for three opportunities to relax, rejuvenate, and just have some fun for De-stress Fest. **Pick up a finals week grading survival kit** at any of the on-campus events or just dropping by CITL during the week. Spin the prize wheel all week long and win some fun prizes!

Wednesday Dec 14th - 8-9:30 am, Morning Mug Mingle. Drop-in to fill your cup and enjoy a light breakfast. Dana 216

Thursday Dec 15th - 4:00-6:30 pm, Happy Hour! Bates Out and About at Side by Each Brewing Co in Auburn, ME.



Friday Dec 16th - 9-11 am, Grab a coffee and snack and go or stay to grade in community. Dana 219

STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS

Don't forget to remind students to complete their course evaluations (open Dec 5-23).

CITL will offer the workshop on talking about course evaluations with students again on **December 2nd at 11 am in Dana 204. Register now** for a reminder!

You can access the CITL resource document on how to talk to students in advance to mitigate influences of unconscious and unintentional biases in your evaluations.





How much should we assign? Use a Course Workload Estimator

Calculating student workload can be tricky. One of the most common questions I get as a director of a teaching center is "How much work should I be assigning?"

The Carnegie Unit recommendation is 8-10 hours per week per course of outside of class work. The Course Workload Estimator may prove helpful as it can give you a rough estimate of the time it takes your students to do their course work each week.

The Course Workload Estimator is intended to support you in planning the appropriate out-of-class workload for your students, not to reduce rigor, but to reduce barriers to student success. In fact, with clearer communication about course workload expectations, student learning can be enhanced and faculty frustration can be reduced.

It is very common for faculty to underestimate how much time it would take students to complete the reading and other assignments for a course.

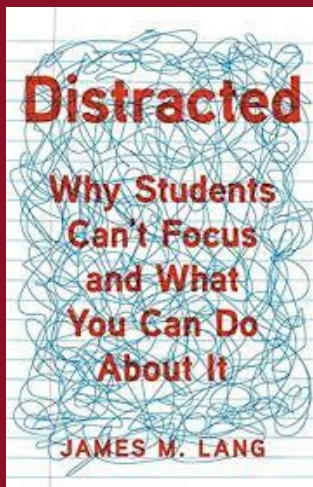
Enhanced Course Workload Estimator
 Research & Design: [Betsy Barre](#) | [Allen Brown](#) | [Justin Esarey](#)
[Click Here for Estimation Details](#)

COURSE INFO	WRITING ASSIGNMENTS	DISCUSSION POSTS	OTHER ASSIGNMENTS
Class Duration (Weeks): <input type="text" value="15"/>	Pages Per Semester: <input type="text" value="0"/>	Posts per Week: <input type="text" value="0"/>	# Per Semester: <input type="text" value="0"/>
READING ASSIGNMENTS Pages Per Week: <input type="text" value="0"/>	Page Density: <input type="text" value="250 Words"/>	Format: <input type="text" value="Text"/>	Hours Per Assignment: <input type="text" value="0"/>
Page Density: <input type="text" value=""/>	Genre: <input type="text" value="Reflection/Narrative"/>	Avg. Length (Words): <input type="text" value="250"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent
	Drafting: <input type="text" value=""/>	Estimated Hours: <input type="text" value="0 hours / week"/>	CLASS MEETINGS <input type="text" value=""/>

If anything in your estimate surprises you, please reach out for a Consultation to discuss strategies to align your workload.

- *The Course Workload Estimator can be accessed on the CITL website.*

Laptops and cell phones in the classroom? Yay, nay, or a third way?



Why is it so hard to get students to pay attention? Conventional wisdom blames iPhones, insisting that access to technology has ruined students' ability to focus. The logical response is to ban electronics in class.

But acclaimed educator James M. Lang argues that this solution obscures a deeper problem: how we teach is often at odds with how students learn. Classrooms are designed to force students into long periods of intense focus, but emerging science reveals that the brain is wired for distraction. We learn best when able to actively seek and synthesize new information.

In his book, *Distracted*, Lang rethinks the practice of teaching, revealing how educators can structure their classrooms less as distraction-free zones and more as environments where they can actively cultivate their students' attention. Brimming with ideas and grounded in new research, *Distracted* offers an innovative plan for the most important lesson of all: how to learn.

Want to have some deeper discussion around this topic? The votes are in and James M. Lang's *Distracted* in the Winter semester Guilt-free book club selection. [Register for Guilt-free Book Club](#) and receive a free copy of *Distracted* in January. We will divide the book into thirds and discuss 3 chapters at each session: Feb 8th, Mar 8th, and April 5th.

REGISTER NOW >



What's the problem?

Students, and let's be honest, all of us, have daydreamed, doodled, or otherwise not paid full attention in class or meetings long before laptops and cell phones were around. However, most instructors feel that laptop use is different. Why?

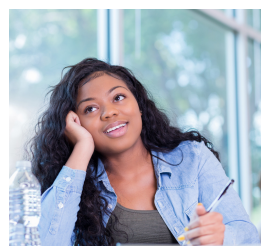
- Students can't learn unless they are paying attention or otherwise engaged in what they are learning. Laptops and cell phones compete with us for our students' attention in class.
- The presence of laptops creates a physical barrier between students and the instructor. The instructor usually can't see what the student is doing on the laptop.
- Laptops are a particularly strong distraction because they contain instant access to multiple sources of information and activity such as email, the Internet, games, calendars, etc.
- Such access encourages multitasking by students, what Linda Stone calls "continuous partial attention." This type of thinking is not conducive to deeper critical or reflective thought.

What are the benefits?

Even with its distractions, let us not forget some of the numerous benefits of laptop and wireless technology and why they have become so common in higher education..



- Many students find it useful to take notes electronically and organize all their course materials in one place.
- Students with certain disabilities or who are English-language learners benefit greatly from using their laptops to take notes or from specialized software on their laptops.
- Laptops and wireless technologies allow students to immediately access information relevant to class topics.
- Laptops can be used for in-class group work, poll questions, to work through interactive web resources, to contribute to class discussion boards, or even comment on a lecture back-channel such as a twitter feed.




Distraction is the problem, not the device

The presence of electronic devices in the classroom is not, in and of itself, the problem. Rather, it's the way we incorporate electronic devices into situations in which we are already inclined to pay attention to too many things.

Broadly, we are not wired to multitask well (e.g. Mayer and Moreno, 2003), which is precisely the temptation that many students report experiencing when they are in the classroom. Boredom is one of the main reasons that students report using a digital device during class (McCoy, 2016). By keeping your students engaged, thinking, and doing activities during class, they are less likely to be tempted by digital distractions.

Winter Communities of Practice

"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" (Wenger, 2014).



CITL Communities of practice will officially begin this winter with 4 opportunities to collaborate and connect with colleagues: LAVA (Lecturer, AI, Visiting, and Applied Faculty), Grading for Equity, Inclusive STEM, and Staff Educators.

Each community of practice will meet monthly this winter led by a facilitator.



[REGISTER NOW](#)



Hang on to this beautiful image and let your anticipation for May Conference build all winter semester long!

MAY CONFERENCE

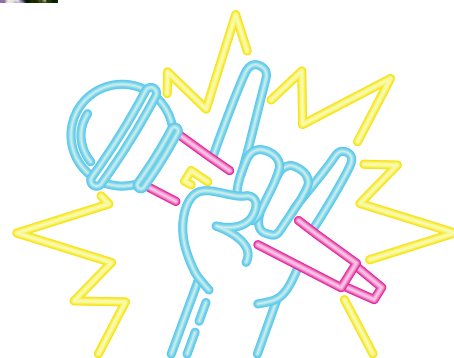
IT'S BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!

May Conference will be a pedagogical celebration of the amazing teaching and learning at Bates College. No longer confined to one day, May Conference will span one week of short term with many smaller events to participate in and culminate with a pedagogy party.

Share a favorite teaching strategy in a roundtable discussion! Join a playful pedagogy workshop! Drop by to spill the (teaching) tea! Get paired with a partner for a Socratic walk around Lake Andrews! Pontificate pompously about pedagogy and/or laugh until you cry at Powerpoint karaoke! Participate in some or all events! Win prizes! Eat snacks! Guess how many May puns Lindsey will use throughout the week (the over/under is set at 12 right now)!



This won't be a celebration of teaching and learning without you! What type of events would you like to see? Tell us! Please email Lindsey at lhamilto@bates.edu to let CITL know how we can make May Conference even better! Will we see you there? **MAY**-be!



POWERPOINT KARAOKE

I know you are asking yourself what in the world is Powerpoint Karaoke? Think of it like academic improv: you give a spontaneous presentation using 10 slides (20 seconds a slide) that you don't see in advance. You just make it all up as you go along and try to tell a coherent story in the process. This will be a friendly competition where the winner takes home the Powerpoint Karaoke Trophy! Come present your heart out or just cheer on your colleagues as they give the most dramatic presentation of their academic lives!

SAVE THE DATE

Upcoming Programs from the Center for Inclusive Teaching & Learning



STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING

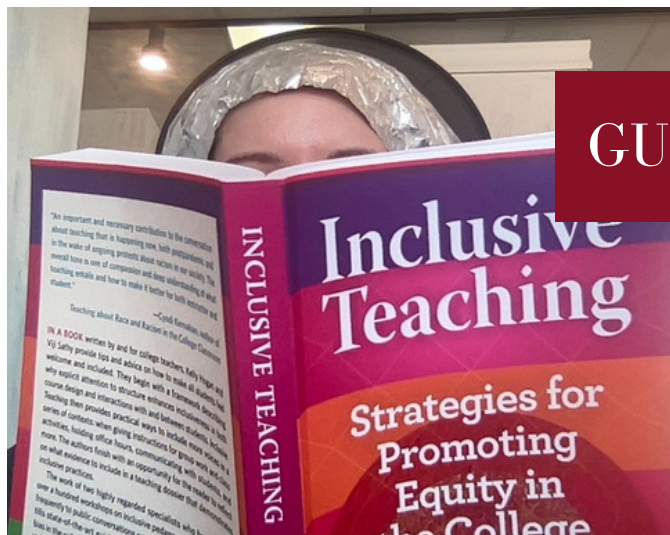
Dec 2nd - 11 am-12 pm - Dana 204

We will discuss factors that impact student evaluations (including bias) and then share practical tips and suggestions for how to elicit better feedback from students. [Register now.](#)

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING PANEL

Dec 6th - 12-1 pm - Dana 206

Hear from faculty colleagues about how to incorporate community-engaged learning into their teaching practices. Lunch from Mother India! Panel co-sponsored by the Harvard Center. [Register now.](#)



GUILT-FREE BOOK CLUB

Dec 7th - 8 am/4:15 pm - Dana 216

*Join us for a discussion of chapters 3-5 of *Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom*. Coffee, tea, and delicious snacks provided!*



DE-STRESS FEST: MORNING MUG MINGLE

*Join CITL for three opportunities to relax, rejuvenate, and just have some fun for De-stress Fest. Pick up a **finals week survival kit** at any of the on-campus events or just dropping by CITL during the week.*

Dec 14th - 8-9:30 am - Dana 216

Join us to fill your mug with coffee or tea and enjoy a light breakfast at this drop-in event.

DE-STRESS FEST: HAPPY HOUR

Dec 15th - 4-6:30 pm

Side By Each Brewing Co. Auburn, ME

Join us for a celebration of the semester in this Bates Out and About happy hour.



DE-STRESS FEST: GRADING IN COMMUNITY

Dec 16th - 9-11 am - Dana 219

Grab a quick snack to recharge and go or stay awhile to grade in community with colleagues while listening to some atmospheric focus music.



Winter syllabus workshop

JANUARY 9TH: 9-11:30 AM

DANA 219

Save the date for a syllabus finalization workshop and great ideas for making the first day of the course as effective as possible. Bring your winter course syllabi!



[Register now](#)

www.bates.edu/CITL