

December 2023



## Message to Faculty

This semester, Kate Stanton and I had the pleasure of speaking with several departments during their faculty meetings to share some of McGraw's resources, but more importantly to hear about the kinds of pedagogical support faculty need right now. Several faculty members asked for guidance on mentoring graduate students as both teachers and scholars. We heard concerns about academic integrity—especially in the face of AI technology—and an interest in exploring AI tools for classroom use. Some faculty wanted to know more about approaches to active learning and flipped classrooms. Others were surprised to hear that McGraw's flexible spaces in Frist and Lewis Library are available for class use. (Read more about these "[active learning classrooms](#)" on our website.) These valuable departmental conversations will guide our development of new resources and inform the planning of our spring programs.

We welcome the opportunity to work with your department by attending a faculty meeting to share resources or by creating workshops or other programs tailored to your needs. If your department could benefit from our support on anything from generating learning goals for core courses, to strategies for teaching large lectures, to approaches to supporting new assistant professors, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Wishing you a wonderful end of the semester!

All my best, Jessica

## Program Preview

We're looking forward to some exciting faculty programs this spring. In particular, I am thrilled to announce that award-winning STEM instructors Kelly Hogan and Viji Sathy will be on campus this April to offer a workshop on inclusive teaching. In advance of their visit, McGraw will host a biweekly discussion group in which we will read their book, ***Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom***. If you would like to join our Inclusive Teaching Book Club, please complete this **brief questionnaire** to express your interest.



Professors Dr. Kelly Hogan and Dr. Viji Sathy  
Photo by **Jake Hogan** / The Daily Tar Heel

## Resource Reminder

Our teaching—and our students' learning—are affected by events that occur outside of the classroom, whether in our own campus community or in the world beyond. This semester, we heard from faculty members about the challenges of teaching amidst the Israel-Hamas war. **Teaching in the Context of Complex Political Events** may help you decide how, if at all, to address this or other crises with your students.

## Program Highlight

This fall, we launched our “How to/Why to” series featuring faculty workshops that offer both demonstrations of digital tools and discussions of their pedagogical purpose. In one such session, on “**flipping the classroom**,” we heard from faculty whose students engage with course content outside of class, freeing up class time for more challenging activities. The session provided a variety of examples of flipped classrooms: a language course that asks students to complete assignments in an interactive textbook before putting the concepts studied into practice during class; a course in which video demonstrations supplement other assigned material; and a seminar that uses videos to model skills such as close reading. Whether you're interested in flipping a lesson, a unit, or your whole course, McGraw can support you in that endeavor. Please be in touch with **Mona Fixdal** for more information.



## Teaching Tip

As you plan your semester's final assignments, consider creating a rubric for how you will evaluate student work. A rubric articulates your expectations for the assignment and, when shared with students, can help them to understand the assignment's components and their relative importance. The upfront work of designing a rubric pays off by making grading more efficient and consistent, both for you and for any AIs working with you. See the [Canvas Field Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions on how to add rubrics to your assignments.

As you create your rubric, revisit your course's learning goals. Start by asking yourself how this assignment will help you to know whether students have achieved those goals. Then, outline the criteria on which you will evaluate the assignment. In other words, what are the assignment's essential elements? What skills or attitudes do you want students to demonstrate through it? Finally, establish a range of quality for each of the criteria. You can create an analytic rubric by setting weights for and assigning point values to the quality ratings (for example, using a 3, 4 or 5-point scale), or you can simply use your rubric as a guide and grade more holistically. You can find examples of holistic and analytic rubrics for STEM and social science assignments [here](#). Princeton's Writing Program offers [grading standards](#) and [suggestions for evaluating writing](#) on their website. In my own classes, I adapt [this rubric from the University of Michigan](#) to grade student essays and end-of-semester [reflection papers](#), but take a more holistic approach when [assessing lower stakes assignments](#).

Do you have a rubric that you find useful for a particular assignment in your course? If so, please consider submitting it to [Jessica Del Vecchio](#) for inclusion in a login-protected database on our website.

## Applications Open

We are currently [accepting proposals](#) from faculty, or a faculty member in partnership with a graduate student, to develop digital pedagogy projects related to courses offered during Spring '24 or Fall '24. Through this initiative, we seek to encourage creative uses of digital technology that promote active learning and support course learning goals. The McGraw Center will work closely with the awardees to help conceptualize, create, manage, and implement projects. Upon completion of the project, we will award applicants a one-time honorarium of up to \$1,800 for each project participant, depending on the project scope. Proposals are due January 22nd, 2024. For more information, see the call for [Digital Pedagogy Grants](#) on our website. If you would like to discuss your ideas and how we might collaborate on implementing them, please contact [Ben Johnston](#) and [Mona Fixdal](#).



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