Equity-Focused Teaching: A Summer Institute on Curriculum & Instruction Designed to Meet the Needs of Our UHart Students

May 15 & 16, 2024, 9:30AM-3:30

Applications **DUE: April 30, 2024**

# Overview

The summer Institute (SI) will support instructors interested in making significant curricular or pedagogical changes to increase equity in learning in one or more courses. This SI will engage a group of cross-disciplinary colleagues in exploring the concepts and practices of [equity-focused teaching](https://crlt.umich.edu/equity-focused-teaching/research-basis) and developing curricular and pedagogical strategies to implement in their own courses. We recognize that instructors are likely at various places in this complex, ongoing learning, and development and as such, are offering two paths to support them. One path will be facilitator-directed, focusing on course design to increase transparency and relevance while focusing on removing barriers that exist in our curricula. [Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi9ld--9c2EAxXIkokEHWflCJ8QFnoECAcQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fudlguidelines.cast.org%2F&usg=AOvVaw0o6kesNigUS2FdL1jKjEgd&opi=89978449) will facilitate this work. The first path is intended for faculty in the beginning phases of this work or those with an interest in Universal Design for Learning principles. The second path will be self-directed; an advanced path whereby participants share their individual goals, identifying which equity-focused strategies/approaches they already use, and which they would like to build next through focused time and commitment. The second path is intended for faculty further along in this work. In recognition of commitment to this challenging and important work, each participant will receive a $1500 stipend for participation in all sessions and submission of teaching artifacts described below. The first half of the stipend will be distributed by June 30, 2024. The second half will be distributed upon completion and submission of teaching artifacts.

# Participant Outcomes:

Participants will:

* Increase awareness and understanding of the concept and practices of equity-focused teaching through different lenses (UDL and others) and the relevance and benefits for student learning and success.
* Enhance skills and confidence in critically examining and revising curricula considering the diversity, needs, and interests of our UHart students.
* Foster a supportive and collaborative community of practice where they exchange ideas, resources, and experiences on equity-focused teaching.
* Contribute to the university’s mission of promoting academic excellence, social justice, and global citizenship through inclusive and transformative education.

# Participant Paths: 2 Options

1. Universal Design for Learning: This path will be facilitated the CTEI Director and focus on increasing transparency and applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to the redesign of assignments, materials, and assessments. UDL is a framework that promotes inclusive pedagogy by ensuring that all students, regardless of their diverse needs and backgrounds, can access and engage with learning effectively.
2. Self-guided, Equity-focused Teaching: Some faculty/teaching staff have taken steps to increase belonging and inclusivity by adjusting structures or providing more representative examples to help students see themselves in the materials being used. Others have focused on inclusive pedagogies. These individuals will share what they have done already and set new goals that further their work. This path will focus on supporting student learning through the inclusion of additional strategies/content (e.g., anti-racist; indigenous ways of knowing to name only a couple, sample options).

# Structure of the Summer Institute (SI)

**A two-day workshop May 15 and 16, 2024,** just following Commencement, will include 2 virtual speakers and activities to apply the learning from those speakers. On day one, Allison Posey, an expert on UDL, will introduce the theoretical and practical benefits of UDL principles, sharing examples and best practices. On day 2, Dr. Tracie Addy will present and engage participants in conversation to build on their previous efforts developing equity-focused teaching practices. Workshop activities will include both discussion and ample time to work on individual projects to help all participants reflect on their own experiences, assumptions, and biases, to identify areas for improvement in their curricula/pedagogy. Further, spending time exploring who our UHart students are will be important. What percentage are first generation? What percentage is ethnically diverse? Digging deeper into what these identities mean for learning and instruction will set a foundation for the types of curricular and pedagogical revisions made across the remainder of the institute. All SI participants will participate in both virtual presentations regardless of the path they choose to broaden perspectives and benefit from cross-disciplinary discussions.

**A monthly, hour-long, virtual meeting will occur in June and July**, facilitated by the CTEI Director. The meetings will provide opportunities for all participants to share their progress, challenges, and feedback on their revision projects. The meetings may also feature guest speakers from different departments who have successfully revised elements of their courses or programs and who will offer insights and tips for overcoming common obstacles and resistance to making curricular or pedagogical changes. UDL tips and examples will also be shared. **Virtual check-ins for all SI participants, across the 2024-2025 AY (3 in total)**, will offer ongoing support.

Who should apply?

Full-time faculty members or teaching staff who have completed at least one year at the institution are encouraged to apply.

Part-time faculty members who have taught at least 5 courses for the institution and are scheduled to teach in the 24-25 academic year are encouraged to apply.

# Participant Deliverables

Participants will complete a curriculum/pedagogical revision project that demonstrates their application of decolonial principles (including UDL) and practices in their courses. That project may include the following:

1. Participants will ideally report increased knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors related to equity-focused teaching, as measured by pre- and post-questionnaire, self-assessments/reflections, and/or peer feedback. (These will not be reported in Aug/Sep as the teaching will not yet have occurred- Due May 30, 2025).
2. Participants will produce a portfolio of artifacts that document their learning journey and highlight their revised curricula/pedagogical moves. Portfolio to include the following:
   1. a rationale statement,
   2. initial and newly revised syllabi,
   3. sample revised/new assignments and/or assessments,
   4. instructor self-reflection (presurvey in May at two-day SI, then postsurvey after implementing submitted by May 2025),
   5. student perceptions of course/curricular/pedagogical changes.
3. Participants will disseminate their portfolio/learning to their departmental colleagues or other faculty who are interested in equity-focused teaching (e.g., Teaching & Learning Collaborative F2025; Learn@Lunch). Department chair or other to sign off on completion prior to May 30, 2025.

# To Apply

Please click the application link: [Application for Summer Institute](https://forms.office.com/r/Nk8w9DnXJ0). For ease of sharing for department chair and dean approvals, the content of the Microsoft Forms application is also included below.

Resources: [UDL](https://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl) [Equity-Focused Teaching](https://crlt.umich.edu/equity-focused-teaching/research-basis)

Summer Institute 2024 (SI) Application

The application information below will be submitted through the link above via Microsoft Forms. Please share also your answers below and forward this doc via email to your department chair and dean for approvals. Please forward those approval emails to [CTEI@hartford.edu](mailto:CTEI@hartford.edu) with Subject Line: *Summer Institute Application*. Applications and approvals due April 30, 2024.

**Personal Information**

- Name:

- Email:

- Department:

**Focal Course(s) Information**

Course Name(s), Semester(s), Estimated Enrollment (i.e. EDR 444, Sp 25, 25 students):

**Path Selection**

Please select one of the following paths:

- [ ] Facilitator-Directed Path: This path focuses on course design to increase transparency and relevance while intentionally addressing barriers that may exist in our curricula. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles will facilitate this work.

- [ ] Self-Directed Path: This advanced path allows participants to design their individual goals.

**Equity-Focused Teaching Practices**

**Current** Equity-Focused Strategies: In 2 paragraphs or fewer, any equity-focused strategies or approaches you currently use in your course(s).

**Desired** Equity-Focused Strategies: In 3 paragraphs or fewer, please describe your specific goals for this project. Explain why these matter to you. Please also include any equity-focused strategies or approaches you would like to build or improve upon.

**Equity-Focused Teaching Practices**

Please share any titles of texts/resources that might serve your project.

**Commitment**

By submitting this application, I commit to participating in all sessions and submitting deliverables described. I understand that I will receive a stipend for my participation and submission of project deliverables.

Participant Signature: Date:

Department Chair signature: Dean signature:

(Email confirmation in lieu of signature is also acceptable if easier for Chair and Dean)