

**September 2022
News Update
Center for Teaching
and Learning**

**Recognition
Won by Thank-
a-Teacher
Nominees**

Dr. Tsu-Ming Chiang,
Department of
Psychological
Science, received the
[2020 Southeastern
Psychological Society
Mentor Award](#).

Dr. Brooke Conaway,
Department of
Economics and
Finance, received the
[2021 Georgia College
Excellence in Teaching
Award](#) and the [2022
University System
of Georgia Felton
Jenkins, Jr. Hall of
Fame Faculty Award](#).

Dr. Diane Gregg,
Department of
Professional Learning and
Innovation, received the
[2019 Georgia College
Excellence in Online
Teaching Award](#).

Dr. Damian Francis,
Department of Health
and Human Performance
and Director of the
Center for Health
& Social Issues, is
a member of the
[University System of
Georgia High Impact
Practices Team](#).

**Check out teaching tips
from these instructors
on the third page
of the newsletter!**

Community-based Engaged Learning Framework for Success Spotlight

Last year, several faculty committees convened over the summer to create frameworks that support the concepts of various transformative learning experiences, including Community-based Engaged Learning (CbEL), Capstone, Global Learning/Study Abroad, Internships, and Undergraduate Research. These frameworks were created by faculty for faculty to support efforts to implement high-impact practices within courses. In other words, the frameworks help evaluate how well the given high-impact practice in a course addresses characteristics that lead to quality results. All the frameworks are available under the Faculty Resources tab on the [GC Journeys website](#). We are excited to spotlight each of these frameworks, their development, and their use on campus for our readers, beginning with the [CbEL Framework for Success!](#)

To briefly introduce this framework, it describes the following characteristics of a CbEL student experience:

- Student integration of theory and practice.
- Direct experiences in community settings.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships with community organizations.
- Critical reflection on community-based experiences.

The framework rates these characteristics from one to four, with one being missing or low impact, two being high impact, three being higher impact, and four being highest impact. Experiences are also rated on the same scale for exposure, complexity, responsiveness, and quality of the program.

As a committee, Dr. Stefanie Sevcik, Department of English; Dr. Kelley Ditzel, Department of Government and Sociology; Dr. Liz Speelman, School of Health and Human Performance; and Dr. Virginia Teran, Department of World Languages and Cultures, worked together over six weeks during the summer semester last year to develop the CbEL Framework for Success. While Dr. Teran no longer works at Georgia College, we were excited to talk with Drs. Sevcik, Ditzel, and Speelman about their interest in CbEL and the development of the CbEL framework.

Each committee member has had different experiences that led them to use CbEL in the classroom. Dr. Sevcik approaches her CbEL work through a critical lens of viewing power structures and injustice, stemming from volunteer experiences with Habitat for Humanity in Romania and her local Big Brothers Big Sisters of America chapter during and after her high school years. Even though Dr. Speelman's work at the Outdoor Center utilizes experiential learning, she finds that "the use of community-based engaged learning makes the classroom work come alive for [her] students," as they receive more comprehensive feedback and the opportunity to witness the difference their contribution makes. Dr. Ditzel's teaching philosophy of student-centered, experiential learning is based on building authentic relationships over time with local nonprofits and communities to help students bridge from theory to practice and gain cultural competency. Through these efforts, she has seen tremendous growth in her students and a continued increase in the capacity for students to serve in the Baldwin County community.

While the CbEL Framework for Success is intended for an instructor's use, Drs. Sevcik, Ditzel, and Speelman kept the perspectives and interests of students and community partners in mind during development. Mutually beneficial relationships are a tenet of CbEL, meaning that power should be equally distributed and project creation should involve all parties. The CbEL project must start with the community partner's needs and leave that partner in a better place than before. The committee's goal was to create a framework that would reflect these priorities and allow for continued growth on the part of an instructor.

The committee found that the biggest challenge they faced was that their work was unprecedented, as other institutions have not created similar documents to use as examples. Hence, they had to dig deep to avoid improvisation and generalization. They were limited to six weeks to complete the work while still wanting to ground the framework in research and allow for program assessment from a non-punitive perspective. Initially, the frameworks were referred to as rubrics, but this language was changed to framework to emphasize a non-punitive viewpoint. The committee's goal was to set best practices while not making the framework too overwhelming for instructors new to CbEL. Creating the framework was essential to making CbEL more accessible for instructors to implement at Georgia College and beyond. In Dr. Speelman's words, their hope was "not to limit the frameworks to the work we were already doing but instead create something that can help us all continue to grow."

All three committee members found their conversations on developing the framework gave them an opportunity for self-reflection and self-assessment on their current CbEL projects. Dr. Speelman began the assessment process for her projects before the framework was even complete, realizing that it was an opportunity to critically assess ways to improve. Dr. Sevcik used the framework to score a CbEL project from a previous semester and an updated version, helping to discover minor adjustments that may significantly impact course quality. For example, she had not realized that the research supports adding two extra hours of direct community contact for students, making the experience more impactful. She has used these findings in conference presentations (e.g., AAC&U's 2022 Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success). Dr. Sevcik has found that "developing and using the framework has enabled me to be more transparent with [my students] about [their] project." She believes this transparency lets students know what made them have a transformative experience in the class, helping them to think critically and replicate course strategies in other settings. One of the challenges of implementation is the many approaches to CbEL. For example, Dr. Sevcik's community partner, the Georgia College Women's Center and LGBTQ+ Programs, is on campus, so the way she approaches the concept of direct experience with the community is quite different from instructors who partner with community nonprofits. Dr. Ditzel has heard "positive feedback from others who utilized the framework to start or improve a [CbEL] project; [which] was very encouraging."

We also spoke with two faculty members, Dr. Suzanna Roman-Oliver, Department of Teacher Education, and Dr. Mariana Stoyanova, Department of World Languages and Cultures, who have used the frameworks for their courses. They have utilized the framework to refine existing courses and develop new ones. To prioritize building strong community relationships, teacher candidates studying under Dr. Roman-Oliver this semester are planning ways to implement CbEL and build connections with administrators, other teachers, and local organizations to engage parents and the community in the school's goals for science education. For next semester, they can implement the plan by hosting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) nights at their schools, literacy nights in a local library, or monthly book clubs. Dr. Stoyanova has been involved with CbEL since 2015 and is developing a new project to be implemented tentatively next year, in which students will learn and practice interpretation and translation to and from English and Spanish in local schools during parent-teacher conferences.

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Dr. Stoyanova sees CbEL as a way to help students improve their skills, learn about ethical practices in their chosen field, explore possible employment niches, and give back to the community. She hopes to implement elements of the CbEL framework into non-service-learning courses to improve student critical thinking skills and spark interest in the many applications of Spanish.

Are you thinking about starting your venture into CbEL? Here is some advice from the CbEL committee members and CbEL framework users:

- When starting your own CbEL course, remember that CbEL projects can be complicated and time-consuming, so start small.
- Do not expect the first time to be perfect; let the framework guide you as you make your idea a reality.
- Ask your department chair to tag your course as CbEL as soon as you start incorporating CbEL components – the course can be tagged regardless of its score on the framework.
- Ask others engaged in CbEL projects inside and outside your department for advice and network with them to find community partners.
- Developing reciprocal relationships with community partners is crucial, and continuing to check in with community partners and students can guide needed adjustments during and after the semester. Work to increase the agency of all parties involved in meaningful ways!

The CbEL framework serves as a roadmap to ensure that students receive the full benefit of this high-impact practice. The committee members involved in its creation and other instructors at Georgia College have found the framework helpful. Are you interested in implementing the CbEL Framework for Success in your courses? Do not hesitate to get in touch with the Center for Teaching and Learning for assistance using the framework for your courses! In other news, Dr. Ditzel and Dr. Sevcik recently presented the framework at the Engagement Scholarship Consortium. They plan to collect data from community partners and students, with an eventual publication of this work. We eagerly anticipate the results of their research!

News from the CTL

Now Open: Small-Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) Request Period

The goal of the Small-Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) is to provide instructors with important feedback that helps them adjust their teaching and improve student learning outcomes. This process, vetted in research, supports the continuous quality improvement of the teaching and learning process.

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Advice from Award-Winning Faculty and Thank-a-Teacher Nominees for New Instructors

Each of these four instructors shared great advice for new instructors teaching in higher education. We'll summarize below!

Dr. Tsu-Ming Chiang

- Be both kind and firm.
- Be a mentor, not just an instructor.
- Scaffold the information you provide and help your students understand how this builds a solid foundation for real-world experiences.
- Teach your students to evaluate the validity of the knowledge they learn and how to generate new knowledge.
- Focus on growing your students as individuals rather than improving your course evaluations.
- Consider the legacy you want to create.

Dr. Brooke Conaway

- Think about the purpose of your course and focus on what you want your students to take away.
- Less is more. Consider covering fewer topics in greater depth.
- Allow yourself to learn through trial and error.

Dr. Damian Francis

- Take at least your first semester, or even your first year, to learn the lay of the land and the craft of what makes Georgia College excellent.
- Use your students as a think tank; allow them to give you guidance.
- Take advantage of resources and opportunities to improve your teaching. The Quality Matters and Transformative Experiences/Essential Learning Outcomes courses were very helpful. Touch base with CTL for teaching, learning, and technology support. Check with the Library for instructional technology and digital resources.

Dr. Diane Gregg

- Don't try to be that instructor everyone loves or the instructor who is gaining all the awards; be yourself.
- Have a passion for your content and be willing to share what you know.

After completion, the requestor will receive a letter from the Center for Teaching and Learning that certifies participation; however, the results are entirely confidential. For Fall 2022, the SGID opened September 26 with a deadline to request a diagnostic by September 30 and subsequently closes on October 7. If you are interested in scheduling an SGID, please contact the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#).

Student Rating of Instruction Survey (SRIS): Verify Your Courses by October 7

Did you know that not all of your courses are automatically included in the student end-of-semester survey? Well, it's true. If you want to ensure your courses are included in the Student Rating of Instruction Survey (SRIS), where you get student feedback on your courses collected at the end of the semester, you should verify that your courses are included by October 7. Most departments ask their admins to mark courses for the survey, but you can also follow up with your department chair to verify that your courses are included.

Opening Soon: Second Peer Feedback on Teaching (PFoT) Session for Fall 2022

The goal of Peer Feedback on Teaching (PFoT) is to provide support to help you improve the quality of learning in your classroom. Deliberate, continuous improvement of one's teaching is one of the great joys of being a professor. Our trained observers utilize a strengths-based method to help you discover and build upon your skills in the classroom. For the second session of Fall 2022, PFoTs are offered from October 10 through October 28 for both in-person and synchronous online courses. If you are interested in scheduling a PFoT, please contact the [Center for Teaching and Learning](#), providing a week's notice for scheduling.

Call for Proposals: GC Journeys Community-based Engaged Learning Grants

The Center for Teaching and Learning is pleased to announce the availability of the Community-based Engaged Learning Grant opportunities sponsored by GC Journeys and Academic Affairs. The grant provides from **\$500 to \$1,000**. The purpose of this grant is to provide instructors with seed funding to develop and implement a community-based engaged learning project that incorporates theory and practice within the community, local or international, and to enable students to think critically about the issues in the world around them and find ways to address those issues. Incorporating student learning into real-world activities allows students to see the work they are doing and witness the impact of their efforts on the lives they serve. Additionally, it expands the opportunities for students to participate in GC Journeys.

Application Period: **October 3, 2022, to 5 p.m. EST on October 17, 2022**

Winners Announced: **On or before November 7, 2022**

For more information and to get started with your application, please [visit our website](#).



Center for Teaching and Learning

Upcoming CTL Workshops

[Teaching Square @ GC Information Session](#) - October 20, 12 noon

[REPEAT: Teaching Square @ GC Information Session](#) - October 21, 3 p.m.

Register for any of these workshops through [this form!](#)

Have Suggestions? Need Help?

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