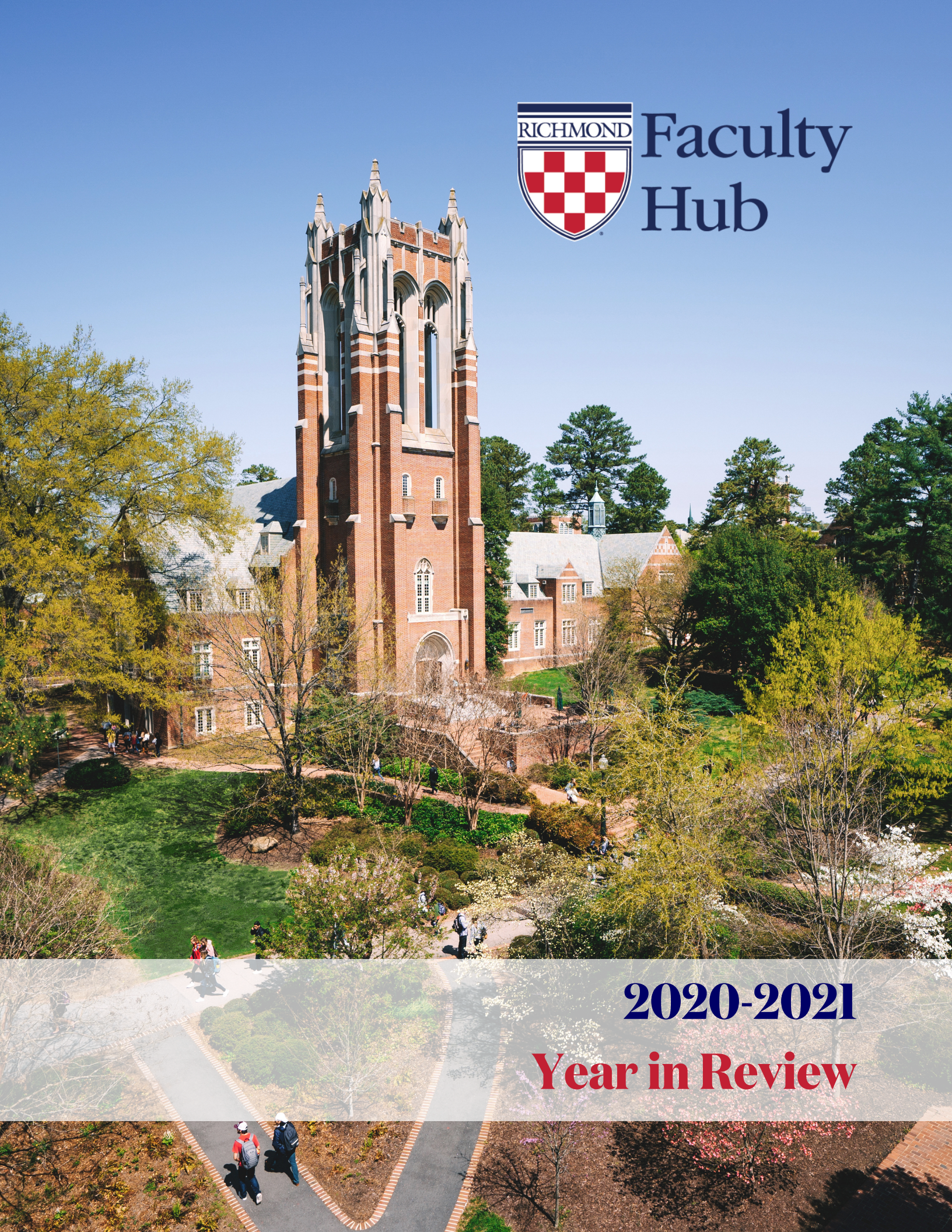




Faculty Hub



2020-2021

Year in Review

From the Director's Desk

As I report on the work of the Faculty Hub in our second year of operation, it is clear that no words will adequately capture the breadth and depth of the challenges we all faced this year, from classroom to campus, from home to community. As faculty, we faced the challenges of revising our modes of teaching and determining how to best support our students. The Faculty Hub experienced similar issues as we worked to guide and support faculty in their pedagogical choices. We continually asked, what do faculty need most in order to sustain the educational mission? How should we structure our programming to support faculty explicitly and implicitly? How could we be helpful and hopeful while personal hardships and societal problems exist all around us?

In addressing these questions, we focused on encouraging faculty to build community and connections, despite masks, distancing, and computer screens. We reinforced the importance of inclusive practices and engagement with students by the intentional use of technology and tools. The virtual Faculty Hub became a place for faculty to share and learn together and to acknowledge the importance of giving grace to ourselves



Faculty Hub Staff Members from left to right: Ryan Brazell, Kylie Korsnack, Jane Bise, and Andrew Bell



and our students by recognizing that everyone is doing the best they can do under the circumstances. With time and reflection, it is my hope that many will be fulfilled not by identifying what was not done this year, but by clarifying what goals were accomplished, despite the challenges.

I am grateful for the work of faculty and staff this year as we all gained a new understanding of what it means to be vulnerable, flexible, and to continue to grow and learn. I am particularly grateful for the dedication of the Faculty Hub staff who never wavered in their creativity and flexibility to meet every challenge that came our way this year. This report represents our team's work, and we welcome your feedback and comments.

I hope that everyone will take time for rest and recovery and reconnecting with family and friends this summer. When the new academic year begins, please join us in the physical Faculty Hub and rediscover how connection brings joy and value to our work.

With gratitude,

Linda M. Boland, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
Director, Teaching and Scholarship Hub



278 faculty

across all five schools
engaged in Faculty Hub
programming specifically
designed to prepare them
for blended or virtual
teaching

Helping Faculty Respond to COVID-19

To help faculty prepare to teach a full semester using remote and blended modalities, the Faculty Hub developed many programs that faculty could engage in both live (in the classroom and via Zoom) with Hub staff or asynchronously in our learning management system, Blackboard. We engaged faculty from all five schools and saw strong participation across our tenured, tenure-track, continuing, visiting, and adjunct faculty. The duration and intensity of programming were varied for the flexibility of faculty participation.

Responsive and Flexible Teaching

A series of six aligned but independent online learning modules packaged inside Blackboard. These modules, which included Online Essentials, Assessment, and Learning Activities, incorporated synchronous meetings, workshops, and invited talks from nationally known educators Dr. Flower Darby and Dr. Claire Howell Major.

Blended Classroom Experiences

A series of workshops that gave faculty hands-on experience navigating the technology required to teach in-person and remote students simultaneously (blended teaching).

Back to Teaching

A seminar that brought together campus partners (Information Services and Human Resources) involved in blended teaching before the fall 2020 semester.

Effective Online and Hybrid Teaching

A three-day series of workshops aimed at helping faculty transition from a traditional to an online or blended classroom.

“

My takeaway from this session was the various ways to making teaching / learning less stressful and more productive. It was very helpful to hear what worked last semester and what didn't.

”



Programming Overview

12 distinct programs

340 faculty attended at least one event

101 total events offered across all programs

91% of Hub-engaged faculty attended more than one event

1903 courses were taught by Hub-engaged faculty



The Inclusive Pedagogy initiative provides full-time faculty opportunities to deepen knowledge of inclusive, student-centered teaching practices and develop new strategies to ensure that all students feel welcome, supported, and able to succeed.



Faculty Hub Associates are full-time faculty who support faculty development projects. This year, they led a book club on data literacy, facilitated a working group on alternative assessments, and consulted with other faculty.



The Early Career Faculty Seminar provides new faculty with opportunities to build community among colleagues and receive targeted professional development related to teaching.



Faculty Hub Conversations and Panels are informal, interdisciplinary discussions providing faculty opportunities to share with one another and build community with colleagues from across campus.



The Mid-Career Faculty Group is a program for newly tenured faculty interested in exploring the transition to Associate Professor and establishing a path toward the next promotion.



The Faculty Hub Institute is a deep dive into a specific professional development opportunity. This year's focus was creating data visualizations with the coding language R.



Book Clubs and Talks promote discussion on contemporary topics in teaching and scholarship.



Morning Blend is a brief weekly presentation and discussion on a topic that impacts teaching and/or scholarship. After the sessions, a recording and tip sheet are made available on our website.

Inclusive Pedagogy

The Inclusive Pedagogy Cohort met every two weeks throughout the fall and spring semesters to discuss strategies for creating more inclusive classroom spaces on campus. This year’s cohort brought together faculty and staff at various stages of their academic careers with representation from two schools and nine different departments or programs. In the fall, the cohort explored research and teaching practices around topics such as student belonging, course accessibility, teaching about race and racism, and approaching class discussions before and after the 2020 presidential election. The group welcomed Emily Helft, Director of Disability Services, to lead a workshop on universal design for learning (UDL) and attended a virtual presentation by UVA Acts on student belonging.

In the spring, the group split into four working groups to facilitate deeper engagement with specific topics related to inclusive pedagogy. Together, the four groups accomplished a variety of outcomes including a summer working group proposal to the Associated Colleges of the South to continue cross-institutional conversations around the topic of student belonging, a curated set of questions and resources to aid faculty in developing anti-racist teaching practices, a survey to gather student perspectives about inclusive teaching, and a list of inclusive pedagogy-focused questions to aid faculty in revising and reflecting on their own course syllabi and teaching materials.

UVA Acts

The Faculty Hub sponsored a virtual presentation by UVA Acts, a group out of the University of Virginia’s Center for Teaching that uses facilitated dialogue and performance to engage audience members in discussions about inclusive and equitable teaching practices. See takeaways from participants.



“
IP is an ongoing process. It is a mentality rather than a set of fixed practices.

Regardless of your career stage, there are always ways to improve your pedagogy to be more inclusive.
 ”

“
(I took away) the importance of belonging to student success and the need to intentionally structure my syllabus and teaching to foster belonging.

I especially appreciate the suggestions and actions in the CARE rubric, and plan to apply several of them in my teaching.



Early Career Faculty Seminar

The Early Career Faculty Seminar (ECFS) met every two weeks throughout the fall and spring semesters to help participants connect with other early career colleagues and to provide targeted professional development related to teaching. This year, the ECFS brought together new faculty from 13 departments and all five schools and discussed topics such as inclusive teaching, universal design for learning, facilitating mid-term course assessments, leading class discussion, assessing student participation, and creating student-centered learning objectives. The group also shared resources for developing professional practices for time management, critical reflection, and scholarly writing.

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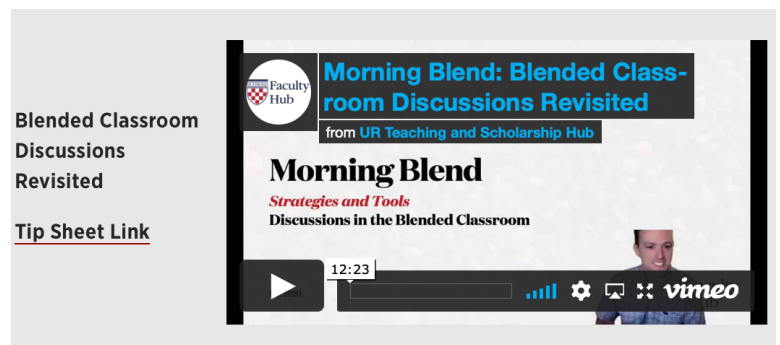
What will you take away for future use in your career?

Time management techniques, course design suggestions, discussion ideas, and so much more. Frankly, the unexpected delight was finding a wonderful community of supportive colleagues.

”

Morning Blend

Designed to create timely professional development opportunities for faculty, the Morning Blend program offers faculty a weekly presentation, conversation, and resources on both scholarship and teaching topics. With two sessions per week, asynchronous recordings, and tip sheets, the Morning Blend program has many ways of engaging faculty while being mindful of their time.



Example from Morning Blend Archive

AY20-21 included topics such as Tips for Using your Digital Tablet, Strategies for Virtual Office Hours, Managing Challenging Discussions: 2020 Election, Portfolio Grading, Strategies for Gathering Midterm Student Feedback, Group Work, and Adapting Media Projects for Remote and Blended Teaching.

Faculty Hub Institute

Data Visualizations with R

For the inaugural offering of our Faculty Development Institute, the Faculty Hub developed a day-long workshop, Data Visualizations with R. Faculty from the Robins School of Business, Jepson School of Leadership Studies, and the School of Arts and Sciences worked together to build their R programming skills and their data visualization knowledge base. See below to learn what some of the 23 participants took away from the institute for future use in teaching.



Excellent skill building for teaching with R Studio Cloud.

Ideas about how to best present data, and importantly, a heightened awareness regarding how to build a beautiful and impactful figure, starting from the ground up.

Network of interested faculty -- who share similar goals. Ability to continue learning in this area of R and analytics for teaching/research.



Conversations

Throughout the academic year, the Faculty Hub facilitated a variety of informal, interdisciplinary conversations around timely topics of shared interest. These conversations provided faculty with opportunities to share knowledge and practices with one another, to ask questions and get feedback from other faculty, and to build community and connection with colleagues from across campus.

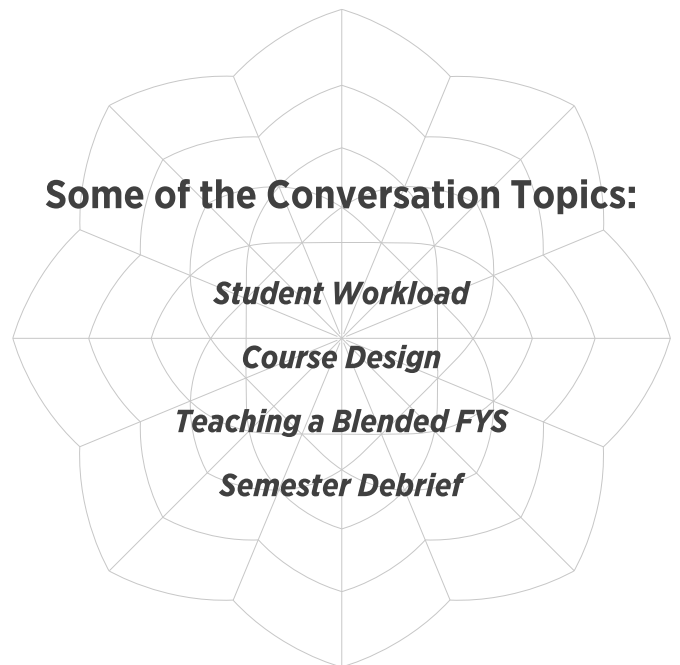
Some of the Conversation Topics:

Student Workload

Course Design

Teaching a Blended FYS

Semester Debrief



The 2020-21 Faculty Hub Associates Projects

Book Club on Data Literacy

The book for this year's Faculty Hub Book Club was "Calling Bullsh*t: The Art of Skepticism in a Data-Driven World" by Carl Bergstrom and Jevin West. The focus on data and information literacy aligned with the work of Faculty Hub Associates, Dr. Kristine Nolin (Chemistry), and Dr. Kristine Grayson (Biology), who led the discussions. The book club met this spring with 24 participants. The sessions focused on the role of data and information literacy in research, teaching, and daily life. Outcomes included a resource collection sourced from the group discussion and the expertise of the leaders.

“

I love the cross-disciplinary aspect of this book club - I learned a lot from folks in different fields and found more similarities with folks in some fields than I expected!

(I learned about) new critical analysis tools for students to apply in the analysis of data figures.

”

“

Thank you again for organizing and hosting the discussions - they are so helpful as I develop my pedagogy!

”

Working Groups on Alternative Assessments

The two working groups provided an opportunity to discuss specifications grading, portfolio grading, oral exams, ungrading, student self-evaluation, and other alternative assessment methods. The 14 participants were considering implementing an alternative form of assessment in one or more of their classes or had already done so. The discussions were led by Faculty Hub Associate, Dr. Libby Gruner (English), and took place over the course of the semester in order to share ideas and resources, promising practices, and pitfalls.

Book Talks

The Faculty Hub hosted two timely presentations and discussion time with authors of recent books lauded for their contribution to the national scene for teaching and learning. Dr. Terri Givens' book "Radical Empathy: Finding a Path to Bridging Racial Divides" addresses issues of structural racism and the persistence of inequality and offers practical steps for calling out racism and affecting radical social change. Dr. Givens called for us to move beyond an understanding of others' lives and pain to understand the origins of our biases.



Dr. Terri Givens,
author of "Radical
Empathy:
*Finding a Path to
Bridging Racial
Divides*"

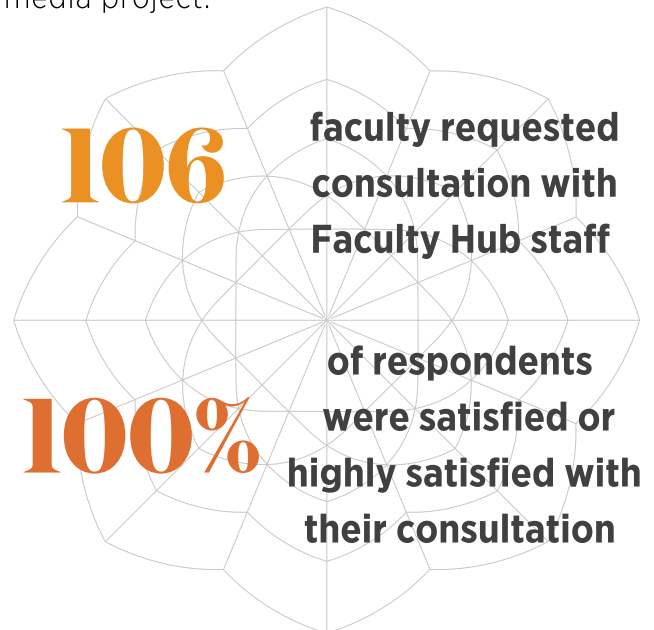
Dr. James Lang discussed his most recent book, "Distracted: Why Students Can't Focus and What You Can Do About It." Lang described how the brain continually seeks novelty and how teachers can help students focus on the hard work of gaining new knowledge and understanding. He also addressed claims about the role of the internet and mobile devices in distraction and challenges and solutions in cultivating student attention.



Dr. James Lang,
author of
"Distracted:
*Why Students Can't
Focus and What You
Can Do About It*"

Consultations

In addition to group programming and events, Hub staff consulted individually with over 100 faculty via phone, email, and Zoom to address their unique concerns, questions, and needs. Some examples of topics requested by faculty include choosing a classroom polling tool, creating accessible course materials, and developing a digital media project.



“

*Made me much more thoughtful.
Helped me be more consistent
and transparent with students.
Made me more confident in my
teaching.*

*Course blogs help me manage
student research and make it
more collaborative for students.*

”

Associated Colleges of the South Virtual Workshop Series

In July 2020, the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS) hosted 10 faculty/staff-developed workshops and 12 working groups to help participants prepare for teaching during the pandemic. Among the 465 participants in these events, the University of Richmond was the most well-represented school with 95 faculty and staff attending at least one workshop. Eight UR faculty/staff co-facilitated workshops. The facilitators also prepared resources and shared them on the ACS website.

List of ACS Events Facilitated by Faculty Hub Faculty/Staff

Purposeful Planning for the Distinctive Learning Experiences of Small Residential Liberal Arts Colleges.

Ready When You Are: Flexible Delivery and Excellent Pedagogy in Blended Delivery Active Learning Classes.

Designing Student-Centered Class Activities for Blended, Synchronous Equation-Based Courses.

Across all of our programming, the majority of ranked faculty engaged in at least one Faculty Hub event.

*(66% of Professors,
79% of Associate Professors,
73% of Assistant Professors)*

Mid-Career Faculty Group

A mid-career faculty professional development program was initiated as a pilot project this year. Designed to address challenges identified in the 2019 COACHE survey, the group spent five sessions exploring the transition from assistant to associate professor. Participants appreciated having the opportunity to share experiences, engage in self-reflection, and discover resources for planning a rewarding post-tenure pathway. More plans are underway for future professional development support for mid-career faculty.

Welcome to the New Faculty Hub Space

Construction and interior design of the new Faculty Hub space were completed in August 2020. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we have not been able to use the space to host programs and make connections as we had intended. As restrictions change, we will welcome faculty to the space. The space contains offices for Faculty Hub Staff and Associates, as well as rooms that are designed and equipped for faculty development, consultations, and community building among faculty.



Gain experience and get feedback on teaching approaches in the experimental classroom, which also serves as meeting space for Hub programs and Faculty Learning Communities.



Record podcasts and videos for teaching, conference presentations, interviews, and other faculty needs in the studio.



Connect with faculty colleagues in the touchdown space and kitchen.



Gather, write, read, share, meditate, etcetera in the multipurpose space.



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