



TEACHING & LEARNING NETWORK

YEAR 2 REPORT
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2024

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

OFFICE of THE PROVOST AND
VICE-PRESIDENT (ACADEMIC)

UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

OFFICE of
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	3
Membership.....	4
Meetings.....	4
Accomplishments and Progress	5
1. Drafted Recommendations for Evaluating SoTL and ER in T&P.....	5
2. Advanced Educational Leadership	5
3. Engaged in Institutional Collaboration	5
4. Updated Teaching and Learning Initiatives and Activities Inventory.....	5
5. Community Building.....	6
6. Created a Knowledge Base of Teaching Support Tools	6
Challenges and Recommendations	6
Conclusion	7

Executive Summary

In 2024, the [Teaching and Learning Network \(TLN\)](#) made significant progress in building educational leadership capacity and fostering a culture that values and recognizes teaching and learning at the University of Guelph. Key achievements included the development of recommendations and a framework for evaluating the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and Educational Research in tenure and promotion, providing feedback on new OTL resources and programs, supporting a culture that values SoTL through an invited speaker, contributing to teaching and learning programming, as well as hosting a workshop on decolonizing the university classroom. The TLN's activities in 2024 have laid the groundwork for future initiatives that aim to support institutional culture change and enhance educational practices.

TLN Priorities and Status: the TLN identified three main priorities in 2023:

Priority	Desired Outcome	Status
(1) Knowledge base of teaching support tools	Create a webpage resource for instructors; include internal (OpenED) and external sources; ensure wide distribution and awareness; hosted on OpenEd/OTL websites	Internal and external resource scan complete and document created and available for distribution upon request. Organizational shifts in OpenED/OTL have delayed the development of a web-based resource.
(2) Recommendations for evaluating SoTL and Educational Research in the tenure and promotion process	Develop recommendations and framework based on an internal and external environmental scan, literature review; to be shared with Colleges, departments, administration, UGFA, FASR for consultation and feedback.	Phase 2 – Recommendations and Framework complete. Phase 3 – Communications and Feedback to begin in early 2025.
(3) Instructor mentoring system(s), resources, and programming	Establish instructor mentoring resources and programming at various career levels, with an initial focus on new faculty.	With the launch of the Early Career Faculty Community of Practice via OTL and the focus on priority #2, this initiative is currently on hold. TLN members have been volunteering as part of the ECF CoP program.

The TLN will begin a new priority selection process in February 2025.

Introduction

The Teaching and Learning Network (TLN) serves as a collaborative forum for faculty, staff, and student representatives dedicated to improving teaching and learning. The TLN met 10 times in 2024 to discuss ongoing projects, address teaching and learning challenges, and develop

initiatives. This report highlights TLN's activities, accomplishments, and challenges from January to December 2024, providing an overview of its contributions to the university community.

Membership

In 2024, TLN's membership reflected its commitment to diverse representation, including faculty, staff, and student voices. Current membership of the TLN in December 2024 stood at 16 members.

Key transitions included:

- **New members welcomed:**
 - Emily Minard (Graduate Representative)
 - Maya Liddell (Undergraduate Representative)
 - William Coleman (Undergraduate Representative, CSA VP Academic)
 - Sara Fulmer (Acting Director, OTL)
- **Departing members:**
 - Martin Williams (TLN Chair, OTL Director)
 - Kerry Ritchie (CBS)
 - Shauna Kechego-Nichols (COA)
 - Julie Vale (CEPS)
- **Role transition:**
 - Christie Stewart transitioned from Network Coordinator to TLN Chair.

At the end of 2024, several inaugural members completed their 2-year commitments to TLN. However, seven chose to extend their terms as representatives for their units for an additional 1-2 years.

Meetings

The TLN meetings alternated between virtual and hybrid formats throughout the year to maximize accessibility and participation. These meetings provided a platform to:

- Provide feedback on documents and teaching and learning modules developed by OTL
- Work together in small groups to develop "Recommendations for Evaluating SoTL and ER in T&P", discuss progress and challenges, and brainstorm solutions
- Request for volunteer participation in the Early Career Faculty Community of Practice (classroom observations, guest panel and networking session) to share their experiences and expertise
- Share teaching and learning initiatives and events happening across campus
- Share resources, challenges, stories, opinions and experiences on a range of topics related to teaching and learning
- Address emerging challenges, such as the integration of AI tools in education
- Collaborate on the development and next steps of key deliverables and priorities

Accomplishments and Progress

1. Drafted Recommendations for Evaluating SoTL and ER in T&P

The TLN's primary accomplishment in 2024 was the finalization of a set of recommendations and a framework to support the evaluation of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and Educational Research (ER) in tenure and promotion (T&P) processes at UofG. The TLN conducted an internal and external environmental scan, reviewed relevant literature, and developed a framework with recommendations. A communication and feedback strategy are set to begin in 2025 to support broad institutional engagement. The recommendations aim to address inconsistencies and challenges faculty face when their contributions to SoTL and ER are assessed under traditional research criteria.

2. Advanced Educational Leadership

The TLN continued to serve as a model for interdisciplinary networking and faculty development, with members actively engaging in attending and presenting at conferences and sharing their insights with the network. Members attended key conferences, supported by the TLN funds. These included the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the Academy of Management Annual Conference (including its embedded Teaching and Learning conference), and the Learning Outcomes Symposium. Upon their return, they shared key takeaways and best practices to further enrich TLN discussions and initiatives.

The Teaching and Learning Network's role as an interdisciplinary hub for faculty development and educational leadership was highlighted in a recent publication by TLN members Christie Stewart and Sara Fulmer.

- **Stewart, C. L. & Fulmer, S. M.** (2024). *The Teaching and Learning Network: A Model of Interdisciplinary Networking as Educational Leadership and Faculty Development*. [The Journal of Faculty Development](#), 38(3), 83-85.

3. Engaged in Institutional Collaboration

The TLN members collaborated across disciplines to:

- Provide feedback on the "[Managing Difficult Conversations in the Classroom](#)" and "[Critical Reflection](#)" modules for faculty and students.
- Co-author the previously mentioned "Recommendations for Evaluating SoTL and ER in T&P".

4. Updated Teaching and Learning Initiatives and Activities Inventory

Each College-level representative engaged with their Colleges and departments for the annual update of the [Teaching and Learning Initiatives and Activities Inventory](#) to ensure the database accurately reflected ongoing and completed initiatives.

5. Community Building

The TLN engaged in community-building activities to foster connections among faculty, instructors and SoTL practitioners.

TLN members:

- Supported early-career faculty by participating in a mentorship initiative and inviting them to observe experienced educators through classroom visits.
- Participated in the “Decolonizing Education in the University Classroom” workshop, offered by Laurier’s Centre for Indigegogy in January 2024. The TLN received a UofG EDI Enhancement Grant in Fall 2023 to support this workshop. It explored relational approaches to learning and strategies for incorporating Indigenous knowledge and practices into teaching. Eight members of the TLN and seventeen members of the UofG community attended the workshop. Participants represented faculty, instructors, staff, and graduate students from the following units:
 - CBS (IB, HHNS), CEPS (Chemistry, Engineering), COA (SOLAL), CSAHS (Geography, Environment & Geomatics, SOAN), Lang School of Business & Economics (Management, Dean’s Office), McLaughlin Library, OAC (Ridgetown, Academic Quality, Horticulture), Office of Teaching and Learning.
- Sponsored a guest speaker, Dr. Nancy Chick, to deliver a talk for the University of Guelph community titled “Valuing, Conducting, and Supporting SoTL.”. Her presentation highlighted the importance of integrating SoTL across the institutions and provided actionable strategies for supporting SoTL practitioners across disciplines. This event was well-received, with 86 attendees from UofG, and inspired further discussions about institutional support for teaching and learning.

6. Created a Knowledge Base of Teaching Support Tools

The TLN engaged with OpenEd to create a centralized resource to support faculty in navigating various internal and external teaching tools and applications. This resource titled “Technologies recommended by the Instructional Technology Support team in Open Learning and Educational Support” identified and compiled a list of internally supported and third-party teaching tools. This document requires a review and update to ensure recent and upcoming software and unit changes are reflected before being placed on OTL's website.

Challenges and Recommendations

- Limited capacity to contribute by most members constrains the scope and progress of TLN initiatives. Moving initiatives forward requires significant, ongoing support from OTL.
 - **Recommendation:** With the establishment of new TLN priorities in 2025, feasibility and workload considerations will be central. Exploring mechanisms for securing administrative or graduate student support to assist with initiative implementation could alleviate some of the support required by OTL.
- TLN members expressed concerns about adapting to the rapidly changing landscape of high education generally, and specifically at UofG. Increased enrollment and emerging

technologies, such as AI, require ongoing redevelopment of courses and programs, with support and time to do so.

- **Recommendation:** Institution-wide strategies to support faculty, instructors and students' adaptation to technological advancements and increased student enrollment is needed. This could include targeted professional development programs and additional funding and time for course redesign.
- Lack of a dedicated hybrid meeting space. OTL does not have the appropriate space to accommodate a hybrid or in-person meeting for the group. Significant time is spent finding the appropriate space elsewhere.
 - **Recommendation:** Given the space limitation, the TLN will primarily hold virtual meetings while ensuring at least one hybrid meeting per term. Future space planning for OTL should include space that can support hybrid meetings for a group such as the TLN.

Conclusion

The TLN's achievements in 2024 underscore their pivotal role in fostering the development of educational leadership and collaboration in teaching and learning at the University of Guelph. As the TLN transitions to new priorities in 2025, it remains committed to advancing educational leadership and institutional change at the University of Guelph.