

MEET THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026 UAGC FACULTY FELLOWS

As a learning organization, UAGC continuously asks how we might grow, evolve, innovate, and solve problems toward creating opportunities for our students' success. In that spirit, the inaugural UAGC Faculty Fellows Program asks:

How might we augment a year of learning by deliberately focusing and connecting faculty and staff on shared aims?

The Faculty Fellows program is designed to support full-time faculty who are interested in developing administrative leadership skills while contributing to strategic institutional initiatives aligned with their expertise and professional interests. To that end, this one-year appointment embeds Faculty Fellows in relevant Academic Affairs staff units to lead the design and implementation of a cross-departmental project or program. In July, a team of Academic Affairs support unit leaders, the deans of the College of Integrative Learning and College of Professional Advancement, and our Vice Provost reviewed a strong set of proposals and selected seven that both promised institution-wide impact and signaled concrete plans for completion.

UAGC is excited to announce the AY 25-26 Faculty Fellows:



Dr. Nikola Prendergast Lucas, Assistant Professor in the Department of Health and Human Services Professions, is the Faculty Fellow for Institutional Assessment Strategy. Nikola proposes a method of mapping instructional practices to student learning outcomes, an approach to structuring and leveraging student learning outcomes assessment data that is novel to UAGC. Nikola's project suggests a data analysis workflow that could have implications for how the institution defines standard instructional expectations, how faculty define instructional strategies that optimize the curriculum they've developed, and beyond.



Dr. James Meetze, Professor in the Department of Communication and Humanities Studies and Program Chair of the UAGC Honors Program, is the Faculty Fellow for Interdisciplinary Curricular Innovation. James proposes a transdisciplinary modular course experience in which students choose learning activities according to their fields, passions, or personal-professional experiences. The transdisciplinary approach combines UAGC students' lived experiences with their academic learning toward solutions to issues in their communities. And, as tested in the Honors Program, the modular approach could serve as a model for creating super-customized stackability through learning activities, versus credits alone.



James Bond, Instructor in the Department of Learning and Information Studies, proposes an interactive curriculum that infuses instructional practice with evidence-based conflict management strategies. Informed by literature review, stakeholder interviews, and James' years of experience in conflict resolution, counseling, and student affairs, this curriculum has implications for both faculty and staff development strategies and for faculty-advising relationships, which is a critical academic affairs-student success and engagement shared aim.



Dr. Nate Pritts, Professor and Program Chair for First-Year Writing in the College of Integrative Learning, is the Faculty Fellow for AI Strategy and Pedagogy. Dr. Pritts will help guide our exploration of meaningful, ethical, and innovative uses of AI in teaching and learning. Please see Nate's article in this edition, which includes information on how you can get involved.



Bill Davis, Assistant Professor and Program Chair in the College of Professional Advancement, is the Faculty Fellow for User Experience (UX) Design. Bill will work with a UX researcher we are partnering with and UAGC stakeholders to improve student and faculty experience within key platforms (Canvas, Library, Writing Center).



Dr. Teresa Handy, Assistant Professor and Program Chair in the College of Integrative Learning, is the Faculty Fellow for Open Educational Resources (OER). Teresa will partner with the faculty, librarians, as well as the Learning Support, Learning Resources, and Products teams to advocate for adopting, adapting, and creating high-quality OER. She will also collaborate with other Faculty Fellows. Teresa will further the work started with the university-wide UAGC Open Educational Resources Day and UAGC OER Create Day held last spring. Furthermore, this initiative will benefit students because the use of OER supports affordable, inclusive learning by reducing student barriers to course materials created or adopted by our esteemed faculty.



Dr. Ted Ellis, Assistant Professor and Program Chair, College of Professional Advancement, is the Faculty Fellow for Accessibility Design. In this role, Ted supports accessibility as a guiding principle of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in course delivery. Ted is proposing two initiatives in collaboration with members of the UAGC curriculum and assessment teams, and with leadership and members of UA Online, which include construction of an accessibility rubric and tool with a corresponding pilot study, and a webinar on standards and practices. These initiatives will support faculty and advance proactive, collective innovation on the provision of flexible and accessible online higher educational experiences for all learners.

The AY 25-26 Faculty Fellows will be communicating with the UAGC community throughout the year on the status of their work and about how you can be involved. You can stay engaged by visiting the Faculty Fellows section of each quarterly UAGC Chronicle edition and by attending monthly CASA roundtable meetings.