



# The CFD Monthly

Workshops, Events, Resources, and More

March 2026

## From the Director

Happy March, everyone! I want to open this month's newsletter with a brief orientation to some of the information we are providing for you in this edition. In particular, we have two main types of content to advertise to you.

First, you might have noticed an email from Dr. Kelly Lester, Vice Provost for Faculty Success, about ACUE Complete and the ACUE Commons. USM has partnered with ACUE (the Association of College and University Educators) for about 10 years to bring our faculty high-quality, nationally-recognized certifications for *Effective Teaching Practices*. You might be familiar with or might have already completed some of our ACUE programming. USM was recently

awarded the Department of Education Strengthening Institutions Program grant, which, among other things, has allowed us to expand our ACUE offerings beyond the 3-semester certification program to include *Effective Teaching Practices* geared specifically to nursing faculty (and could likely be applied to other related fields), and a new crash course in teaching and learning called *Effective Teaching 101*. This new course will be open to everyone, including faculty, staff who teach, and Graduate Teaching Assistants, and will be encouraged for all new faculty and graduate students joining us this summer.

In addition, our new contract with ACUE allows open access for all faculty, staff who teach, and graduate students to the ACUE Commons. I affectionately call The Commons "the Netflix of professional development". This platform is where ACUE houses Quick Studies, webinars, blogs, resources and materials, and facilitates discussion threads related to teaching and learning. This is also where you will go to apply for our ACUE *Effective Teaching Practices* cohorts and join *Effective Teaching 101*. ACUE is expanding their credentialing to include endorsements; there are currently two endorsements, but there will eventually be many more. I believe there are around eight in the works. Much of this newsletter is structured to give you a more in-depth look at The Commons and what it has to offer you, so please look below for more information and guides.

**This is really important** - You should have received an email from ACUE to direct you to The Commons to activate your account. ACUE is not part of USM's single sign on, and you will need to go to the ACUE Commons to set up your account using your USM email and whatever password you choose. You can also click "reset password" and you will be directed to basically the same place in ACUE's system. If you haven't seen that email, make sure you look in your "Other" tab in Outlook and/or in your spam. Some of you may already have an account in The Commons because you have completed a course with us in the past year or two, and if that's you and it's been a while since you've visited The Commons, you may need to reset your password. Once your account is set up, make sure you join our USM group so that we can connect there. Gayle Solfrank, our Assistant Director of the CFD, walks you through The Commons in the video below. The video includes chapter breaks for your convenience.



Aside from our exciting ACUE expansion, we are already at the recruitment time for our 2026-2027 programs, namely the ACUE *Effective Online Teaching Practices* certification and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning cohorts. Both programs will meet in small groups throughout the 2026-2027 academic year. Please see below in the newsletter for those applications. We would love to have you with us!

As always, please let us know how we can support you. The CFD is here for you. Best wishes on a happy and productive month!

Ashley D. Allen, PhD  
Director, Center for Faculty Development



The University of Southern Mississippi is now part of ACUE Complete. Within this platform, faculty will have access to a wide array of teaching resources, including “Foundations of Effective Teaching,” Quick Studies on trends and emerging instructional topics, the commons areas with resources, and events. This video walks new ACUE Commons members through basic navigation and where to build connections with colleagues.



**Quick Studies and Endorsements**

Earn Endorsements by completing 10 points. Watch at least 50% of a live event and earn 2 points. Complete a Quick Study to earn 3 points. Endorsements are given at the end of each month.

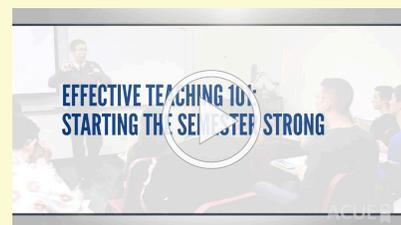
<p><b>Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Generative AI</li> <li>Writing Effective AI Prompts</li> <li>Leveraging AI to Develop Course Resources</li> <li>Empowering Students to Use AI Responsibly</li> <li>Transforming Assignments in the Age of AI</li> <li>Teaching with AI: Inclusive and AI-Resistant Learning Experiences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Preparing Career-Ready Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embedding Career Guidance into Your Course</li> <li>Connecting with Alumni and Peers</li> <li>Connecting Course Goals to Career Readiness</li> <li>Preparing Students for Experiential Learning</li> <li>Developing Students' Teamwork Skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Essential Student Skills &amp; Literacies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing Students' Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills</li> <li>Developing Students' Media Literacy</li> <li>Establishing a Culture of Constructive Conversations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facilitating Deliberative Dialogue</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is Deliberative Dialogue?</li> <li>Integrating Deliberative Dialogue into Your Course</li> <li>Preparing for Deliberative Dialogue Through Practice</li> <li>Launching a Deliberative Dialogue</li> <li>Facilitating a Deliberative Dialogue</li> </ul>	<p><b>Enhancing Courses &amp; Assessments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing Authentic Tasks and Assessments</li> <li>Integrating Open Educational Resources</li> <li>Fostering Connections: Implementing Learning Communities in Your Course</li> </ul>	<p><b>Student Support &amp; Well-Being</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Wellness Lens: Supporting Student Mental Well-Being</li> <li>Teaching Neurodivergent Students: Classroom Strategies That Support All Learners</li> </ul>

The Commons provides many resources to continue your education through live events (webinars), webinar replays, blogs, discussion threads, and Quick Studies. I want to focus this month's Tiny Teaching Tips on the Quick Studies and Endorsements. Quick Studies are stand-alone, one-hour training sessions that provide information about a variety of subjects. ACUE has them primarily grouped into six topic areas including *Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education*, *Preparing Career-Ready Students*, *Essential Student Skills and Literacies*, *Facilitating Deliberative Dialogue*, *Enhancing Courses and Assessments*, and *Student Support and Well-Being*. Everything in The Commons is gamified, so complete Quick Studies and earn points! In addition, ACUE is releasing Endorsements in these areas, with a new Endorsement being released regularly. Currently, you can earn Endorsements in AI in Higher Ed and Preparing Career-Ready Students, but more are on the way. To earn your Endorsement, get 10 points in on of those subject areas, and your Endorsement will be automatically credited to you by the end of your completion month. You get 2 points for participating in at least 50% of a live event and 3 points for completing a Quick Study.

The CFD is also offering Endorsement Cohorts for the AI in Higher Ed Endorsement this month. We can't wait to see your badges in those email signatures and on LinkedIn! We will also celebrate your continued excellence in teaching and learning at our annual ACUE Celebration in August.

## Introducing ACUE Effective Teaching 101

Are you new to teaching and/or course design or wish you knew more about teaching and learning? USM is now able to offer you a new ACUE course called *Effective Teaching 101*. This 6-module, asynchronous course will walk you through the nuts and bolts of where to begin with planning and implementing student-centered instruction. This course is open enrollment and does not require any cohort meetings, though we hope you will engage with others in our USM group on The Commons.



[Enroll Here](#)

This fall, individuals can apply for the *Effective Online Teaching Practices* certification. This three-semester series is focused on evidence-based teaching practices and course design in online courses and leads to earning the Certificate in Effective College Instruction. Individuals who have already completed the *Effective Teaching Practices* series can enter this course to earn their Advanced Certificate. Cohorts will meet weekly throughout the academic year, with breaks planned for a few weeks at the ends of each semester. We are currently scheduling the cohorts for either Wednesdays or Fridays. Please click the "Apply Here" link for more information.

**Applications Due April 15!**

[Apply Here](#)



## Meet the AI Fellows!

The Center for Faculty Development is thrilled to announce that we have two CFD Fellows who are tasked with promoting the AI training and programming for USM faculty and staff. Dr. Melissa Ziegler (Assistant Teaching Professor of Kinesiotherapy) has been tasked to lead our ACUE *AI in Higher Ed* endorsement program, and Dr. Andrew Herridge (Assistant Professor of Educational Research and Administration) will be building a repository of AI best practices and facilitating other AI training. We are thrilled to have them and look forward to learning with them.

# INTRODUCING OUR AI FELLOWS



DR. ANDREW HERRIDGE  
Assistant Professor



DR. MELISSA ZIEGLER  
Assistant Teaching  
Professor

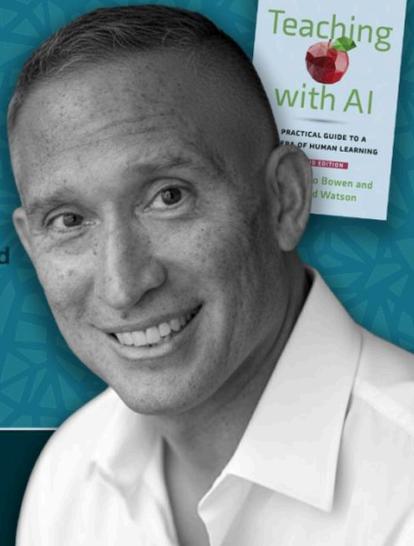
## AI Workshop with José Bowen

Bowen Innovation Group L.L.C., Stanford Distinguished  
Alumni Scholar, author of *Teaching with AI*

- 8:30–9:30 a.m. Thinking and Working with AI
- 9:45–10:45 a.m. Tools, Emotions, Agents & Beyond
- 11 a.m. –12 p.m. Teaching with AI: Customization,  
Writing & Reflection
- 1-2:45 p.m. Creativity, AI Assignments and  
Custom Bots

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026  
ELIZABETH HARKINS HALL 120

► Register at [usm.edu/cfd](https://usm.edu/cfd)



## Save The Date!

The Center for Faculty Development is thrilled to announce our Spring 2026 guest speaker, Dr. José Bowen, author of *Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning*

(2024). Dr. Bowen will lead a full day, hands-on training on best practices to incorporating AI in to your curriculum and course design. Lunch will be provided. More information about this training, as well as registration details, are linked below and can also be found on the [CFD's website](#). **Register by March 27** to receive a copy of *Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning* (2nd ed). Books will be limited to faculty, and up to 100 registrants.

### About the Presenter

**José Antonio Bowen** has been leading innovation and change for over 45 years at Stanford, Georgetown and the University of Southampton (UK), as a dean at Miami University and SMU and as President of Goucher College. Bowen worked as a [musician](#) with Stan Getz, Dave Brubeck, and many others and his symphony was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Music (1985). Bowen holds four degrees from Stanford and has written over 100 scholarly articles and books, including the [Cambridge Companion to Conducting](#) (2003), [Teaching Naked](#) (2012 and the winner of the Ness Award for Best Book on Higher Education), [Teaching Change: How to Develop Independent Thinkers using Relationships, Resilience and Reflection](#) (2021) and [Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning](#) (2024; 2nd edn 2026) with C. Edward Watson. Bowen has appeared in [The New York Times](#), [Forbes](#), [The Wall Street Journal](#), has three [TED talks](#), and he has presented more than 500 [keynotes and workshops](#) in 47 states and 24 countries around the world. In 2010, Stanford honored him as a Distinguished Alumni Scholar and in 2018 he was awarded the [Ernest L. Boyer Award](#) for significant contributions to American higher education and is now a senior fellow for the American Association of Colleges and Universities. He lives in Dallas and also does innovation and inclusion consulting for a wide variety of Fortune 500 companies.

[Register](#)

## Upcoming Events

March 3, 10, 24, 31  
**Show Up & Write!**  
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Teams | [Register](#)

March 3  
**Graduate Program Mentorship Series**  
12-1:30 p.m. | IC 319 & Zoom | [Register](#)

March 30  
**Promotion Tenure Innovation & Entrepreneurship (PTIE)**  
12:00–1:00 p.m. | IC 319 & Virtual | [Register](#)

March 31  
**Experience AI in Action: MAIN, Google, and Carahsoft Host a Gemini and Notebook LM Workshop**  
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. | Thad Cochran Center, Grand Ballroom | [Register](#)



## Advancing Excellence in Teaching Grants

Have you ever wanted to attend a conference or workshop to improve your teaching in some way? Have you ever wanted to take students to an event or invite a speaker into your class to bring your content to life? Is there something you would like to do in your course to improve student success or career readiness, but you need a little bit of funding? The Advancing Excellence in Teaching Grant was designed to help with these kinds of special funding needs. Apply today, and feel free to contact the CFD if you need help developing your idea.

# ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING GRANTS



**Funding up to \$2,000 can be used to advance teaching excellence through one or more of the following areas:**

- ✓ Supporting travel to a teaching-focused conference or workshop
- ✓ Funding discipline-specific teaching development
- ✓ Supporting alumni or guest speakers in your courses
- ✓ Supporting discipline-specific teaching development
- ✓ Supporting community-engagement or service-learning in a course
- ✓ Aiding in the implementation of high-impact practices in the classroom
- ✓ Building career-readiness strategies into the classroom



*Priority given to applications submitted by mid-March.*

**APPLY  
NOW!**

Questions? Email us at:



For more information, visit



[Apply Here](#)



## Fall 2026 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Cohort

Wonder what's working in your classes or not? Interested in building your scholarship activity? Consider the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Faculty Fellows program. This three-semester program helps faculty build a foundation of research skills related to SoTL methodologies, create interdisciplinary connections and collaborations, and enhance your scholarship. We are currently recruiting for three subject areas specifically, with hopes that our cohort will complete

projects together as research teams. Research teams will meet in the first and third Mondays of each month, from 3:00 - 4:15, in the CFD.

We are soliciting for three topic areas for Fall 2026 that include **Neurodiversity**, **Cultivating Civic and Social Skills**, and **Student Agency**. Please use this application to indicate which topic is of interest to you.

**Applications are due April 15.**

[Apply Here](#)

## Turnitin Takeaways with Dr. Kendrick Buford

Academic Integrity Director and Assistant Teaching Professor in STEM Education



Did you know that there is a word count *minimum* for Turnitin to be effective? Last month, The Center for Faculty Development hosted a webinar with Turnitin Onboarding Specialist, Danielle D'Andrea, who provided some guidance on what Turnitin tells us and how we can best use it. Dr. Kendrick Buford, Academic Integrity Director and Assistant Teaching Professor in STEM Ed, has compiled a document with some key takeaways and items to think about as you make assignments with Turnitin in mind.

[View the Document](#)



We invite you to join us for a one-hour informational session hosted by the **Office of Innovation Management (OIM)** to learn more about our work, available funding opportunities, and how **Promotion Tenure Innovation & Entrepreneurship (PTIE)** can support and amplify your research, scholarship, and creative activity.

This session is designed to be practical and informative, offering a clear overview of how OIM supports faculty and staff across disciplines—from early-stage ideas to translational research, community engagement, and broader impact.

**Meeting Details:**

**Date:** Monday, March 30, 2026

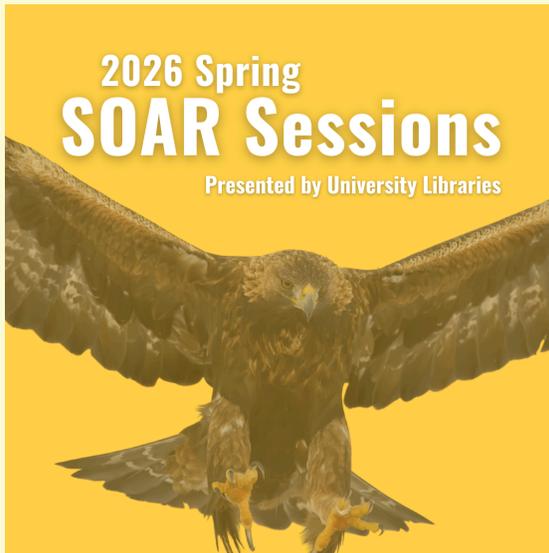
**Time:** 12:00–1:00 PM

**Location:** International Center 319

### Agenda Overview:

- Introduction to the Office of Innovation Management
- Overview of current and upcoming funding opportunities
- PTIE: What it is, why it matters, and how it applies across disciplines
- Examples of how faculty and staff can engage with OIM
- Q&A and discussion
- Whether you are actively pursuing funding, seeking to broaden the impact of your work, or simply curious about innovation and translational pathways at USM, we encourage you to join us. Lunch will be provided for the first 25 in-person registrants, and a virtual option will be available once in-person capacity is reached.

[Register Here!](#)



## 2026 Spring SOAR Sessions!

The SOAR Sessions are a series of workshops featuring experts on a variety of topics pertaining to scholarship, open access, and research. Each session will include an overview of the topic, examples and best practices, and a time for audience questions and participation. The sessions are open to anyone, but faculty are especially encouraged to attend.

The 2025–26 SOAR Sessions will focus on the challenges and changes shaping today's publishing landscape, with sessions on research integrity, scholarly publishing, and new

publishing models planned for the spring.

### **Innovative Approaches to Peer Review**

March 11 | 11 a.m.

Presented by Sara Rouhi, AIP Publishing

### **Research and Publishing Integrity**

April 1 | 2 p.m.

Presented by Reese Richardson, Northwestern University

[Registration and More Information Here!](#)





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