

A Continuum of Teaching Expertise

Postsecondary teaching is complex, multi-faceted, and ever-evolving, which makes it challenging to describe and document in clear terms that can apply across contexts. Kenny et al. (2017) have created a Developmental Framework for Teaching Expertise that captures and articulates the complexities of teaching, recognizing it as a process involving ongoing growth and development. The framework has been expanded upon in an Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness guide (Kenny et al., 2018) that offers examples of how to document teaching expertise and impact using evidence from multiple sources. The document to follow draws upon the previous two to provide a simplified version of the framework by summarizing its key elements and priorities.

The Continuum of Teaching Expertise is organized around Kenny et al.'s (2017) five areas of focus or domains that combine to capture the breadth and complexities of teaching in a postsecondary setting:

- Teaching and Supporting Learning;
- Professional Learning and Development;
- Mentorship;
- Research, Scholarship and Inquiry;
- and Educational Leadership.

The developmental continuum is comprised of three categories or stages of teaching expertise:

- Explore / Becoming Aware;
- Engage / Ongoing Participation;
- and Expand / Contributing and Leading.

It's useful to note that, the activities within each domain and across the continuum are fluid, recognizing that the development of teaching expertise is seldom experienced as a linear, step-by-step process. This means that, an individual may simultaneously locate themselves at various levels of expertise within or across the various domains of teaching. For example, within the Research, Scholarship, and Inquiry domain, you might relate to both the Explore and Engage categories of development as you identify gaps and achievements related to your skills and knowledge. Alternatively, you might see yourself at the Expand stage in the Teaching and Supporting Learning domain and at the Explore stage of Educational Leadership at a certain point in time in your academic career. The boundaries between domains are also permeable: activities identified in Mentorship might also apply to Educational Leadership.

As with the previous work it is based on, this document is intended to be used: to articulate and make visible the many and complex activities that are involved in developing postsecondary teaching expertise; as a guide for self-reflection and growth; and to generate discussion and dialogue about teaching and learning expertise with peers and educational leaders across the institution (Chick et al., 2017). We invite readers to share, use, and adapt this document and the framework as suits their context.

TEACHING AND SUPPORTING LEARNING	EXPLORE Becoming Aware	ENGAGE Ongoing Participation	EXPAND Contributing and Leading
<i>Demonstrates disciplinary knowledge of content & pedagogy in design of course materials. Aligns learning goals, activities and assessments</i>	Demonstrates awareness of pedagogy. Learning goals are articulated; approaches to assessment demonstrate some alignment with learning goals.	Understanding of content and pedagogy are evident. Learning goals are connected to program outcomes and assessments are transparent to students. Plans take students' prior knowledge and experience into account.	Demonstrates understanding of learning in the discipline. Learning goals, activities, assessments and program outcomes are clearly aligned and transparent to students. Plans incorporate adaptability and flexibility to adjust to student learning needs.
<i>Creates inclusive learning environments and establishes a culture for learning and high academic achievement. Demonstrates awareness of the effective use and management of course learning environment/community</i>	Demonstrates awareness of basic characteristics of an effective learning environment and community (respect, inclusivity, clear expectations) and awareness of the impact of learning spaces.	Demonstrates understanding of how to develop and maintain inclusive learning environments. Expectations for respectful, inclusive and high-quality learning environments are clearly communicated. Expectations for student and instructor/teaching assistant conduct are clear.	Involves students in developing and ensuring learning environment is respectful, inclusive, effective and high quality. Works collaboratively with students to maintain and improve learning environments.
<i>Uses a range of instructional practices that support learning. Uses questions and discussion effectively for assessment of understanding. Instructional practices are designed for context and to meet learning needs</i>	Occasionally creates opportunities for student engagement in instructional practices. Demonstrates awareness of different instructional practices and when to use them.	Creates frequent opportunities for student engagement. Instructional practices are appropriate to the class context. Assessment of learning is embedded in instructional activities. Implements frequent communication with students on learning. Communicates to students how instructional practices connect to learning.	Creates frequent opportunities for high-level student engagement and provides frequent opportunities for them to demonstrate learning. Frequently and iteratively uses assessment strategies to adjust teaching and learning practices as needed to support student learning and success.
<i>Demonstrates reflective practice on effectiveness of learning experiences (lessons, assignments, environment) on student learning and student experience</i>	Identifies general aspects for how instructional practices, design and/or student experience could be improved.	Identifies specific aspects for how practices, design and/or student experience could be improved. Applies changes to lesson design or instructional practices.	Identifies specific aspects for improvement. Articulates why changes are being made. Applies changes to lesson design or instructional practices. Demonstrates reflection from the stance that the instructor is working 'in alliance with students'; reflection is ongoing and iterative. Frequently discusses and reviews reflections with others.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	EXPLORE Becoming Aware	ENGAGE Ongoing Participation	EXPAND Contributing and Leading
<i>Demonstrates ongoing reflection on teaching and takes actions in alignment with these reflections</i>	Establishes a process for regular reflection on their teaching.	Provides evidence of connection between their reflections on teaching and their mindset towards teaching expertise.	Shows understanding of the purpose and need for reflection on teaching practice. Includes evidence of reflection on their teaching practice and a growth mindset toward teaching expertise.
<i>Seeks out feedback and uses feedback to improve practice</i>	Uses feedback regularly provided on their teaching (e.g. end-of-semester student surveys) to reflect on and plan teaching activities.	Uses feedback regularly provided on their teaching (e.g. end-of-semester student surveys) and also seeks out additional feedback on teaching from students or peers.	Gathers feedback from multiple sources (students and peers) during course and post-course to inform teaching practice. Shares with colleagues how feedback is a part of their teaching practice.
<i>Participates in professional learning networks and communities with colleagues within and outside Faculty related to their teaching practice</i>	Participates in professional learning networks and communities, within or beyond their Faculty/unit.	Contributes actively to the professional learning networks and communities, within or beyond their Faculty/unit.	Contributes to professional learning networks and communities, within and beyond their Faculty/unit, and promotes professional learning by taking on leadership roles within professional communities.
<i>Enhances knowledge and skills in content area and in pedagogy</i>	Participates in professional learning activities relevant to content area or pedagogy.	Regularly engages in professional learning activities relevant to content area or pedagogy and provides evidence of how these activities have affected their teaching practice.	Facilitates and leads professional learning activities relevant to content area or pedagogy.

MENTORSHIP	EXPLORE Becoming Aware	ENGAGE Ongoing Participation	EXPAND Contributing and Leading
<i>Seeks out opportunities to be mentored by others, reflects on mentorship practice, and engages in mentorship development</i>	Begins to explore and find opportunities to mentor and be mentored by others, while exploring professional learning and development opportunities in mentorship.	Engages in mentorship with others, and explicitly articulates a desire to become a better mentor and mentee. Engages in professional learning and development around mentorship.	Demonstrates a desire to become a better mentor and mentee, reflects on and documents the influence of mentorship in one's professional growth, and seeks feedback on mentorship skills and opportunities to be mentored by others.
<i>Demonstrates initiative, builds relationships, and actively seeks out opportunities to engage in formal and informal mentorship of undergraduate and graduate students</i>	Participates in mentoring, builds mentoring relationships, and makes themselves available for mentorship when required to do so.	Participates in formal and informal mentorship, building mentoring relationships, and actively grows their understanding of mentorship needs and practices.	Creates opportunities for formal and informal mentorship, builds strong mentoring relationships using an open and proactive approach that fosters trust, confidence, and results. Shares knowledge on mentorship of students with others.
<i>Demonstrates initiative, builds relationships, and actively seeks out opportunities to engage in formal and informal mentorship of colleagues</i>	Participates in formal and informal mentoring of faculty and staff when required to do so and is beginning to develop mentorship skills.	Participates in formal and informal mentorship partnerships and demonstrates evidence of relationship building with colleagues. Can articulate impact of mentorship.	Creates opportunities for mentoring of colleagues and does so with skill and follow-through, using a proactive approach that fosters trust and confidence. Shares knowledge of mentorship of colleagues with others.
<i>Demonstrates leadership in developing mentorship initiatives, models effective mentorship skills, and informs the development of mentorship programs and procedures</i>	Engages in mentorship initiatives as mentor or mentee while developing awareness of what mentorship entails, how to provide mentorship to others, and institutional regulations, policies, and procedures with regards to mentorship.	Regularly engages in mentorship initiatives as a mentor and mentee, demonstrates understanding and models effective mentorship skills, and applies knowledge about institutional regulations, policies, and procedures with regards to mentorship.	Initiates and/or leads formal mentorship programs and mentorship training opportunities for mentors and mentees. Provides evidence of impact of mentorship initiatives, models effective mentorship skills, advises on programs and procedures with regards to mentorship.

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND INQUIRY	EXPLORE Becoming Aware	ENGAGE Ongoing Participation	EXPAND Contributing and Leading
<i>Engagement with teaching and learning research and scholarship</i>	Asks questions about teaching and learning, and consults teaching and learning research and scholarship.	Consults teaching and learning research and scholarship. Incorporates research/scholarship-informed approaches in their work.	Consults, incorporates, and generates teaching and learning research and/or scholarship.
<i>Involvement in professional development related to teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry</i>	Is aware of professional development opportunities related to teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry.	Makes use of professional development opportunities related to teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry.	Participates in mentorship and/or leadership capacities in professional development opportunities related to teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry.
<i>Generation of teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry</i>	Reflects upon their approaches to teaching and learning, inquires about and gathers evidence of student learning in relation to teaching approaches.	Ethically designs and studies teaching and learning as objects of inquiry, involving sound research questions, appropriate methodological and analytical approaches, research outcomes, and disseminates this work.	Develops, leads, and disseminates ethical teaching and learning studies, and develops models, frameworks, and/or toolkits for others' use.
<i>Conversation and/or collaboration with students and/or colleagues about teaching and learning research, scholarship, and inquiry</i>	Explores relevant research, scholarship, and inquiry with students and/or colleagues.	Has conversations about research, scholarship, and inquiry about teaching and learning with students and/or colleagues.	Involves students and/or colleagues in research, scholarship, and inquiry about teaching and learning.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP	EXPLORE Becoming Aware	ENGAGE Ongoing Participation	EXPAND Contributing and Leading
<i>Engagement in professional learning communities related to teaching and learning</i>	Explores and develops emerging connections with professional learning communities related to teaching and learning.	Regularly connects with and contributes to professional learning communities related to teaching and learning.	Takes on leadership roles and responsibilities with professional learning communities. Builds new professional learning communities and networks related to teaching and learning.
<i>Engagement in initiatives, committees, policy development, and/or roles to advance teaching culture, practices and student learning</i>	Identifies and explores engagement in initiatives, committees, policy development and/or roles to advance teaching culture, practices, and student learning.	Actively engages in and contributes to initiatives, committees, policy development, and/or roles to advance teaching culture, practices and student learning within the context of formal or informal leadership roles.	Leads initiatives, committees, policy development related to teaching and learning, within the context of a formal or informal role. Has a formal leadership role with responsibilities to advance teaching culture, practices and student learning.
<i>Seeks feedback on and reflects on educational leadership approaches, impact, strengths and further opportunities for growth</i>	Develops awareness of educational leadership approaches, impact, strengths and further opportunities for growth.	Intentionally reflects on and communicates educational leadership approaches, the outcomes of initiatives led, strengths, and further opportunities for growth.	Provides evidence of and reflects on the impact of teaching and learning initiatives led. Regularly seeks feedback on educational leadership from others and reflects on strengths and further opportunities for growth.
<i>Shares teaching expertise and develops relationships to help other colleagues strengthen their teaching practice</i>	Informally shares teaching strategies or resources with department colleagues. Explores relationships with teaching colleagues outside of the department.	Develops constructive relationships and connections beyond the department to share teaching and learning knowledge and expertise. Actively shares teaching strategies or resources with others through workshops, mentorship, and/or networks.	Is recognized for teaching expertise across and/or beyond the institution. Fosters meaningful relationships beyond the academic unit to share teaching and learning knowledge and expertise. Creates and leads activities, engages in mentorship, and/or creates networks to help colleagues strengthen their teaching practices.

References

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