

The Flanagan Foundation

Advancing Blended and Online Learning

July 2024 | Final Report | Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Start something.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Innovation in Online Learning: A Cumulative Review of Key Deliverables	4
Priorities	4
Priority 1: Strengthen resources, supports and initiatives that promote research-informed practices for meaningfully engaging and assessing students in blended and online formats.	5
Learning Technologies Coaches	5
Blended and Online Teaching and Learning Resources	5
Collaborative Resource and Expertise Building	7
Priority 2: Strengthen mentorship and leadership networks that share knowledge and expertise in online and blended learning across disciplines.	8
Working with Students as Partners	8
Teaching Academy Guide: Fostering Student Success in Online Learning	10
Online Community of Practice: Large Enrolment Courses	10
Blended and Online Workshop Series: Large Enrolment Courses	11
Online Community of Practice: Open Education	12
Open Education Talks.....	12
Teaching Days	12
Priority 3: Build expertise and leadership in online and blended learning across faculties.	13
Academic Staff Certificate Course: Blended and Online Learning Pedagogy and Practice	13
Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Scholars' Certificate Badge: Blended and Online Learning Pedagogy and Practice	14
Blended and Online Workshop Series	15
Priority 4: Contribute research related to innovation and creativity in online and blended learning	15
Research Snapshots	16
Peer Reviewed Publications.....	16
Conference Presentations.....	16
Priority 5: Advise on strategies, policies, structures, and processes that support the integration of quality online and blended courses and programs at the University of Calgary.	18
Educational Leaders in Residence.....	18
Lessons Learned in Higher Education During Covid-19 and Beyond	21
Guiding Principles for Blended and Online Course Design	21
Award for Blended and Online Learning Criteria	21
UCalgary's Commitment to Online and Blended Learning: Looking Forward	23

Executive Summary

The Flanagan Foundation gift to the University of Calgary has significantly impacted the landscape of blended and online learning in higher education. This initiative, now in its final year, has expanded beyond its initial goals to influence high-quality educational opportunities for students in all disciplines. The generous gift has enabled the development, delivery, and evaluation of dedicated programming, resources, and campus engagement related to blended and online learning, greatly enhancing the university's ability to support educators and students.

Since its inception, the initiative has expanded connections with educators and staff across academic units. It has influenced the development of over 493 courses, engaged over 676 educators, and reached over 12,500 students at the University of Calgary. The impact has been further extended through the Flanagan Foundation website, which provides open access to resources created, benefiting institutions globally. Participant feedback indicates increased confidence, capability, innovation, and connection, as well as improved student engagement and use of active learning strategies.

Key highlights of the initiative are exemplified by:

- The successful hosting of the 2023 University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching. This conference, focused on collective transformation in blended and online learning, attracted over 440 delegates and featured sessions addressing various aspects of online and blended learning, including quality, equity and inclusion, Indigenous engagement, and student experiences.
- Supporting the appointment of two Educational Leaders in Residence, who have played crucial roles in advancing strategic institutional teaching and learning priorities. Additionally, the initiative has produced innovative educational resources, including a video interview series and a podcast, focusing on innovative teaching techniques and experiences during COVID-19.
- Working with more than 40 students as partners throughout the project to enhance meaningful student engagement and the quality of project outcomes, exemplified by the successful Learning Technologies Coaches program and student-led publications. A series of interviews with our student partners highlighted themes of mentorship, resilience, teamwork, and cross-disciplinary collaboration, demonstrating a commitment to student partnership and innovative learning practices.

- Contributing significantly to promoting excellence in blended and online learning through various programs, workshops, and collaborations. These efforts have enhanced professional development opportunities for academic staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars, impacting thousands of courses and students.

The following key impacts are also highlighted:

- **Resource Development:** The initiative has led to the creation of over 35 workshops, programs, and scholarly resources, as well as the issuance of 110 new badges/micro-credentials on blended and online learning. Through its [website](#), the initiative has made resources available to institutions worldwide, enhancing the global understanding and practice of blended and online learning.
- **Educator Engagement and Impact:** Feedback from participants in the Flanagan Foundation programs indicates increased confidence, capability, innovation, and connection among educators, leading to more student engagement and the use of active learning strategies.
- **Educational Leadership:** The appointment of two Educational Leaders in Residence has furthered strategic institutional teaching and learning priorities, including the development of standards and regulations to support online and blended learning at UCalgary.
- **Innovative Projects:** The initiative has supported innovative projects, such as video interviews and podcasts highlighting innovative teaching techniques, as well as the Open Pedagogy Talks and Working Group.
- **Professional Development:** Various programs, such as the Academic Staff Certificate Course and the Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Scholars' Certificate Badge, have supported the professional development of academic staff and graduate students in online and blended teaching practices.
- **Community and Collaboration:** The initiative has fostered a strong sense of community and collaboration, allowing participants to blend personal interests with professional projects and contribute to transformative research in teaching and learning.

Overall, the Flanagan Foundation Initiative at the University of Calgary has set a new standard for blended and online learning, emphasizing collaboration, innovation, and student-centered approaches. As the initiative concludes, its impact will continue to shape future-focussed teaching and learning in higher education, both at the University of Calgary and beyond.

Innovation in Online Learning: A Cumulative Review of Key Deliverables

In the fall of 2020, the University of Calgary (UCalgary) received a transformative \$1,000,000 investment from the Flanagan Foundation, igniting a paradigm shift in blended and online learning. This generous funding empowered the Taylor Institute (TI) to embark on a visionary three-year plan: (a) identifying and harnessing the innovative teaching methods spurred by COVID-19, (b) fostering the development of new online and blended courses across disciplines to broaden educational access, and (c) equipping academic staff with cutting-edge technological tools to create engaging learning experiences. This investment has accelerated innovation and positioned UCalgary to meet the evolving demands of higher education.

As we reflect on the impact of the Flanagan Foundation gift in its fruition, we are thrilled to share the profound transformation it has brought to the UCalgary community.

Priorities

There are five priority areas that the Flanagan Foundation Gift established including:

1. **Strengthening resources, supports and initiatives** that promote research-informed practices for engaging and assessing students in blended and online formats, including the implementation of open-access resources, workshops, and communities of practice.
2. **Strengthening mentorship and leadership networks** that share knowledge and expertise in online and blended learning across disciplines.
3. **Building expertise and leadership** in online and blended learning across our academic units by bringing together an interdisciplinary cohort of academic to develop 15-20 new high-quality online courses each year.
4. **Contributing to research and scholarship** related to innovation and creativity in online and blended learning, by investigating and reporting on the impacts of COVID19 on learning innovations in courses across disciplines.
5. **Informing strategies, policies, structures, and processes** to support the integration of quality online and blended courses and programs at an institutional level.

Priority 1: Strengthening resources, supports, and initiatives that promote research-informed practices for meaningfully engaging and assessing students in blended and online formats.

The Flanagan Foundation gift has accelerated our capacity to develop meaningful and timely resources to support blended and online learning at UCalgary. Resources are available through the Taylor Institute's open-access [Resource Library](#), where teaching and learning resources are openly available and freely accessible to internal and external audiences.

The TI offers a variety of professional learning opportunities such as certificates, workshops, and learning modules, consultations with academic staff and students, learning technologies supports, and teaching and learning resources. The project team has led and collaborated on the development of the following resources to strengthen online and blended learning.

Learning Technologies Coaches

The Learning Technologies Coaches provided hands-on technology support to educators across campus. **Between May 2020 and August 2021, during the height of the global pandemic, the coaches provided over 1,500 consultations with academic staff. Since 2021, two to five graduate student coaches have provided 420 consultations to educators across disciplines.**

It is great to know that the resource is available when needed.

[The learning technology coaches] were very helpful when there were updates on the software that occur with no notice. In addition, having another "brain" to puzzle out how to make the system work for one's pedagogy.

- Feedback from those who consulted with the learning technology coaches

Blended and Online Teaching and Learning Resources

In the first of the year of the initiative, we developed the Flanagan project website, which provided a one-stop access point for blended and online learning at UCalgary. The website provided viewers with a high-level overview of the Flanagan Foundation gift and key deliverables and priorities of the project.

The Flanagan Foundation gift has supported the development of several open-access teaching and learning resources related to blended and online learning. Two new self-directed, open-access learning modules have been created through the project. The [Adaptable Course Design Learning Module](#) which

prepares instructors for potential disruptions that can occur in times of uncertainty, such as the global pandemic, and the [Blended and Online Learning Module](#), which provides instructors with four blended course design models that can be used in diverse learning and disciplinary contexts.

The Learning Technology and Design Team at the TI has created video resources to accompany written instructions on eLearn, UCalgary's institutional resource repository for learning technology tools. These videos support instructors as they navigate updates and new features of institutionally supported learning technology tools. Important developments in resources continue to be related to the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI). Resources created by the team related to generative AI have been highlighted across the national teaching and learning landscape, and are included below:

- Anselmo, L., Eaton, S.E., Jivani, R., Moya, B. and Wright, A. (2024) STRIVE Emerging considerations when designing assessments for artificial intelligence Use. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/Resources/AI/STRIVE-Resource-2024.pdf>
- Anselmo, L., Kendon, T., Moya, B. (2023). A First Response to Assessment and ChatGPT in your Courses. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/first-response-assessment-and-chatgpt>
- Eaton, S. & Anselmo, L. (2023). Teaching and Learning with Artificial Intelligence Apps. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://taylor-institute.ucalgary.ca/teaching-with-AI-apps>
- Kendon, T. (2023). Articles and Resources for ChatGPT. elearn.ucalgary.ca. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/articles-and-resources-for-chatgpt/>
- Learning Technology Design Team. (2023). Instructional videos to support institutionally supported tools. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://yuja.ucalgary.ca/Library/0541bd81-3c7f-48e3-9496-a6254a31c55c>
- Kendon, T. (2023). *Updates to quizzing in D2L/Brightspace*. eLearn. <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/updates-to-quizzing-in-d2l-brightspace/>
- Wright, A. C., & Anselmo, L. (2023). *A resource for mid-semester feedback*. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. Kendon, T., & Anselmo, L. (2022). SAMR and TPACK: Two models to help with integrating technology into your courses. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/SAMR-TPACK>
- Wright, A. C., & Anselmo, L. (2022). Online remote teaching checklist. *Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning*. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/online-remote-teaching-checklist>
- Anselmo, L., Kelly, P., Yu, L., Bair, H. (2022). Innovative approaches to course design. *Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning*. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/innovative-approaches-to-course-design>

- Bair, H., Pletnyova, A., & Anselmo, L. (2022). Connecting remote and face-to-face students: Instructional strategies and learning technology tools. *Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning*. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/connecting-remote-and-face-to-face-students>
- Wright, A. C., & Biswas, S. (2021). Strategies for promoting positive learning environments. *Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning*. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/resources/strategies-for-promoting-positive-learning-environments>

Collaborative Resource and Expertise Building

First-Year Student Orientation – Blended Learning

This collaboration with the Schulich School of Engineering resulted in the development of a first-year student orientation week to prepare students to be successful in blended Engineering courses. The four-day orientation blends online asynchronous learning with in-person workshop blocks, with a focus on developing students' capacity for time management, self-directed learning skills, and collaboration with peers in online and face-to-face environments. **600 students engaged in the orientation**, along with more than a dozen instructors and support staff from Engineering.

Connecting Remote and In-Person Students – Faculty of Nursing Workshop

The Faculty of Nursing has a group of remote students who are members of an in-person student cohort. To ensure that these students continued to be meaningfully included in their courses as instruction returned to fully in-person delivery, several faculty members requested a workshop to learn about strategies and approaches for connecting remote and in-person students simultaneously. The workshop was designed and delivered in May 2023 and **six instructors attended, impacting nine courses and more than 400 students.**

Faculty who attended were grateful for the opportunity to have a space to discuss their excitement and trepidation teaching the remote and in-person students, especially given the large class size.

Participants expressed that it was great to know that there were several options available in terms of technology but expressed feeling slightly overwhelmed about the possibility of learning new technology while navigating teaching remote and in-person students for the first time.

Participants appreciated the focus on course design and delivery and emphasis on teaching and learning combined with the integration of the technology to support quality teaching and learning.

- **Feedback from faculty organizer**

Faculty of Social Work Teaching Development Symposium

The Faculty of Social Work hosts an annual Teaching Development Symposium that provides educators with discipline-specific teaching and learning workshops. The symposium is offered over two days and is open to more than 75 faculty, staff, and students who teach or support courses. In 2022, we were invited to present two workshops about blended and online learning in social work education. The first session focused on how to incorporate the [Guiding Principles for Blended and Online Course Design](#) into online course design. The second session focused on intentionally using learning spaces to enhance blended learning offerings. In 2023, we were invited to present a workshop about artificial intelligence, academic integrity, and blended and online learning in social work education. **These sessions were attended by 45 instructors, impacting 40 courses and more than 300 students.**

Priority 2: Strengthening mentorship and leadership networks that share knowledge and expertise in online and blended learning across disciplines.

UCalgary has a robust community of educational leaders in blended and online learning. The Flanagan Initiative has highlighted the leadership and mentorship efforts happening across campus and have worked to make these organic connections more visible.

Working with Students as Partners

The Flanagan Initiative was predicated upon working meaningfully with students as partners, evidenced in the successful Learning Technologies Coaches program and numerous student-led research and resource publications. To capture the experiences of the student partners more meaningfully, two graduate research assistants led a series of interviews with several research assistants who had contributed to various aspects of the Flanagan work. These graduate student research assistants participated in a student-led one-on-one interview and a supervisor-led group interview. Both interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to produce the findings reported here. These conversations sprouted a vision of student-led change, growth, and collaboration, demonstrating our shared commitment to working with students as partners in higher education (Figure 1).

Voices of Change: Highlights from the Flanagan Foundation Initiative

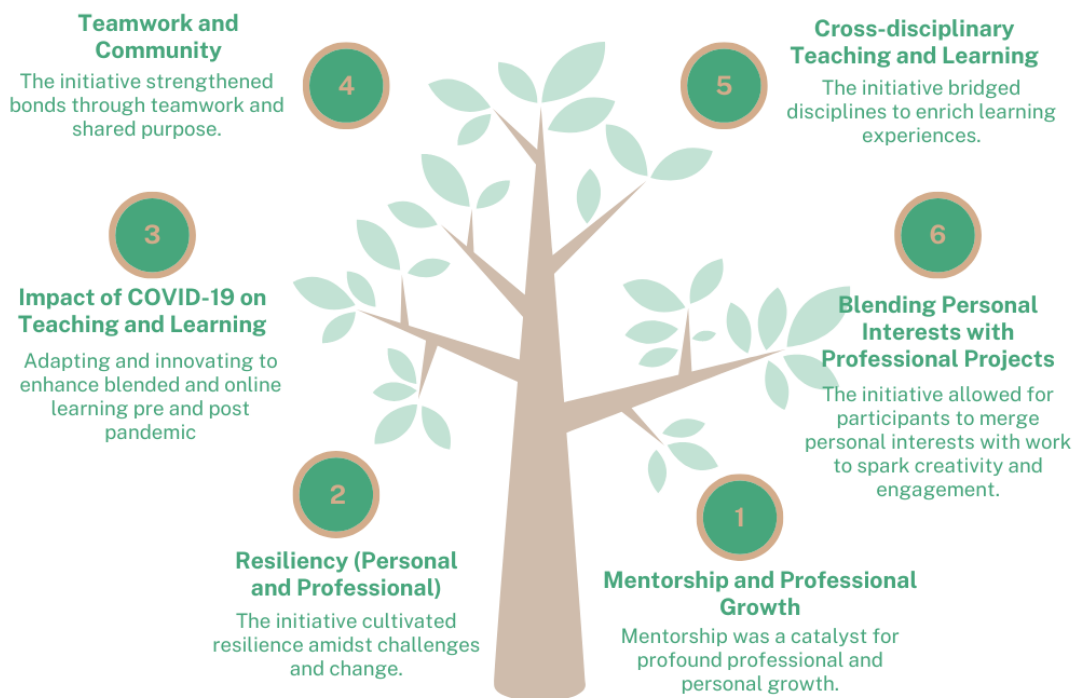


Figure 1: Capturing the experiences of graduate research assistants

Mentorship and Professional Growth

The student partners highlighted the initiative's nurturing environment, praising the mentorship that fostered significant professional and personal growth. They appreciated the balance between professionalism and a sense of joy and playfulness, and the mentors' ability to identify and leverage individual skills for stronger team dynamics, promoting empathy, understanding, and flexibility.

Resilience

Students emphasized resilience in facing the pandemic's challenges, finding strength in community support and the initiative's culture that embraced unfamiliarity as an opportunity for growth. They learned to value personal well-being alongside professional success, fostering a culture of continuous learning and mutual support, and developing skills in reflection and self-awareness.

Engagement with Educational Shifts

The initiative provided a unique opportunity for student researchers to engage with transformative research, particularly in understanding the shifts in teaching and learning practices due to the COVID-

19 pandemic. They found this research significant and relevant, contributing to discussions on how the pandemic affected learning and teaching practices.

Teamwork and Community

Partners valued the initiative's collaborative nature, which allowed for deeper connections and a strong sense of community and belonging. They emphasized the importance of recognizing individual strengths and challenges to foster a collaborative atmosphere, boost confidence in professional settings, and encourage open communication about needs.

Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration

The initiative celebrated cross-disciplinary collaboration, driving creativity and innovation by blending personal interests with professional projects. Students appreciated the opportunity to learn from professionals and educators from diverse backgrounds, fostering an inclusive and engaging academic environment.

Blending Personal Interests with Professional Projects

Finally, student partners were able to integrate personal passions into professional endeavours, combining skills and feeling more confident in their work. The initiative also encouraged the use of past experiences and skills from various fields, allowing participants to apply their diverse experience in an academic setting.

Teaching Academy Guide: Fostering Student Success in Online Learning

The Teaching Academy is a group of past UCalgary Teaching Award recipients dedicated to helping other educators across campus strengthen their teaching and learning approaches. One of their annual efforts is the development of an open-access, peer-reviewed guide that focuses on a relevant topic that supports both students and educators in their efforts. In 2022, the Teaching Academy created a guide that focused on [fostering student success in online learning](#). In this guide, 20 Teaching Academy members and students from disciplines including science, sociology, education, social work, business, engineering, medicine, and health sciences, contributed ten chapters about course design, assessment, engagement, and evaluation in online courses.

Online Community of Practice: Large Enrolment Courses

Through a series of online learning consultations across campus, instructors of large-enrolment courses spoke to the need for teaching and learning supports that reflected the nuanced complexities of teaching large-enrolment courses online. After initially meeting with these instructors and faculty

online, we recognized their desire and willingness to discuss their new experiences and share ongoing issues related to teaching large-enrolment courses.

This online community of practice provided a space for course instructors to share experiences, strategies, and resources. This community of practice continues to be a success. **There are currently 40 members from 8 faculties who meet monthly.** More than a dozen members have subsequently contributed to and/or led professional development offerings in partnership with the TI, most recently by co-authoring a book chapter and facilitating workshops for other educators across campus.

Keep the community of practice going- it is incredibly useful. It's helpful to have discussions about problem solving.

Thanks again for the OCoP forum, I really enjoy the opportunity to learn about all these tools etc. that I would not know about otherwise.

Not only we are able to gain additional knowledge to improve teaching and learning, but we also have had the opportunity to get to know each other and build relationships of trust.

- **Feedback from LE OCoP Members**

Blended and Online Workshop Series: Large Enrolment Courses

To support instructors of large enrolment courses, we collaborated with members of the Large Enrolment Community of Practice to create a series of workshops that were focused on the complexities of teaching large enrolment courses online. **Nine instructors from the Large Enrolment Community of Practice** facilitated three panel discussions about online large enrolment courses in January 2022. **More than 20 participants attended each session**, where they learned about course design, active learning strategies, and assessments. The session was scheduled during block week, which meant that participants were able to incorporate what they learned into their winter courses.

I really appreciate this letter [recognizing panelist contribution]. I know you understand the value of political capital in the academy and it means a lot to have this recognition as a junior Faculty member. I am grateful for all of your support!

I'm planning on using different tips from the panelists as I plan my Winter 2022 courses, including using student surveys at the beginning and middle of the course to check in and better form relationships with students.

- **Feedback from panelist and participant**

Online Community of Practice: Open Education

In collaboration with the University of Calgary's Library and Cultural Resources, we created an online community of practice for open education. This online community of practice is a space for educators, staff, and students to share open educational practices, pedagogy, and resources. The community of practice met four times, starting in September 2022. **We invited more than 100 people who had expressed interest in promoting open educational practices at UCalgary**, including people from student groups, faculty and staff members from various faculties, and non-academic units. As the Flanagan Initiative closes, stewardship of the OCoP has transitioned to Libraries and Cultural Resources at the University of Calgary.

Open Education Talks

Open education is a teaching approach that prioritizes collaboration, active learning, use of accessible learning materials, and student-led or centered design. The Open Education Talks is an interprovincial educational initiative between the University of Calgary, University of Alberta, and Thompson Rivers University. This symposium aimed to create an accessible, virtual space for educators and learners to engage in conversations about open pedagogies and the future of online education. Due to the success of the *Talks*, the collaborators have expanded to include the University of British Columbia and have created the Open Pedagogy Working Group, which will continue to promote multi-institutional partnerships that advance high-quality online and open learning opportunities for students. **More than 700 students, educators, instructional designers, and staff from international regions have attended the Open Pedagogy Talks since 2021.**

Teaching Days

The Taylor Institute Teaching Days provides a meaningful and concentrated opportunity for instructors, graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and staff to prepare for the upcoming academic year, connect, reflect and strengthen teaching and learning practices across campus. The event is offered over three days and includes 12 workshops on engagement, mental health and wellness, assessment, learning technologies, and transferability of skills. The Flanagan Initiative team have facilitated four workshops at the event, averaging 70 attendees across sessions. **More than 600 students, educators, and staff from UCalgary participated in Teaching Days since 2021.**

- Flynn, C. (2023, August 24). Ensuring effective engagement everywhere. Teaching Days 2023, University of Calgary. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/teaching-days>

- Tézli, A., & Wright, A. C. (2023, August 22). *Exploring the purpose of learning through an interdisciplinary conversation*. Teaching Days 2023, University of Calgary. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/teaching-days>
- Wright, A. C., & Wert, V. (2023, August 24). *From the classroom to the workplace: Developing transferable skills for workplace success*. Teaching Days 2023, University of Calgary. <https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/teaching-days>
- Pletnyova, A. & Kendon, T. (2023, August 26) How we use our learning tools for student-centered learning: An adventure in learning tools. Taylor Institute for Teaching & Learning Teaching Days 2023 (University of Calgary conference - online).

Priority 3: Building expertise and leadership in online and blended learning across faculties.

In 2019, one of the inaugural Educational Leader in Residence (Online Learning), Dr. Jessica Ayala, designed and delivered a 2-year teaching development initiative in partnership with colleagues in the TI called the *Online Course Project*. The program launched in the Fall of 2019 and was cut short due to the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic in the winter of 2020. Building upon the lessons learned from the evaluation of the *Online Course Project*, we have designed three intensive teaching development programs for blended and online learning. These programs help academic staff, postdoctoral scholars, and graduate students build expertise and leadership in online and blended learning.

Academic Staff Certificate Course: Blended and Online Learning Pedagogy and Practice

The *Blended and Online Learning Pedagogy and Practice* course is an advanced, immersive 12-week program offered as part of the *Academic Staff Certificate in University Teaching and Learning*. This course is core to the Flanagan project's goal of helping academic staff develop confidence and expertise in designing and teaching online and blended courses and ensuring the development of online and blended courses that meaningfully engage students. Over a semester, participants explore blended and online learning pedagogy, engage with blended and online learning strategies and technology, and re(design) their online or blended course. The course was offered once per academic year over the course of The Flanagan Foundation Initiative, and **40 academic staff completed the course, impacting more than 60 courses and 3,000 students.**

I was totally impressed with the work that has been done to understand best practices in online learning and I hope to spread the word and continue learning as well!

I have much more depth and confidence in the variety of ways to enhance my online teaching.

I really appreciated the time to decompress and catch up at the beginning. I loved learning from everyone else. And I also really enjoyed the process of both giving and receiving constructive feedback. That was fantastic.

It's helped solidify the best practices I was already aware of or using. It also gave me new ideas and solutions to issues in my courses.

- **Feedback from course participants**

Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Scholars' Certificate Badge: Blended and Online Learning Pedagogy and Practice

Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars are emerging academics actively involved in teaching and supporting courses across disciplines. To support their growth and development of diverse teaching skills, we developed a 12-hour badge focused on blended and online teaching approaches. Participants engage in interactive and interdisciplinary online learning experiences facilitated by educators across campus with demonstrated blended and online learning expertise. There are five sessions in which participants will learn about the foundations of online learning pedagogy, develop course design skills, and enhance their capacity to design and facilitate high-quality blended and online learning experiences. **A total of 105 badges were issued during the program, impacting 33 courses and approximately 2,000 students.**

Many thanks for such a great badge! I learned so much from each session and I am looking forward to applying this knowledge to my teaching practice!

Thank you for giving us the opportunity of having important discussions about teaching and learning in blended and online environments.

As someone with a very technical background, the introduction of the idea of having flexibility in what is covered in a course is very refreshing.

Thanks so much for an insightful and engaging course. I've learned many new techniques and strategies to create meaningful experiences for students in online learning environments.

This course has provided resources to make my teaching innovative and engaging. Thanks for that!

- **Feedback from course participants**

Blended and Online Workshop Series

The [Blended and Online Workshop Series](#) are interactive workshops focusing on research-informed blended and online learning practices. Series topics include foundations, assessments, course design, learning technologies, and equity, diversity, and inclusion. Each workshop creates informal opportunities for focused professional learning and fosters meaningful sharing with academic staff from various disciplines. **Over three years, 21 workshops were developed, and 566 participants have engaged in this series, impacting approximately 400 courses and more than 7,500 students across UCalgary.**

It was a great session with the involvement of everyone and group discussions are always a great way to learn from each other.

I will incorporate the building teaching presence in my online class with maximum participation and engagement with the students.

[the most valuable thing I learned in this course was] strategies for more interactive class activities. I plan to revise my class activities right away before my class on Thursday!

[the most valuable thing I learned in this course was] learning from peers and hearing their perspectives.

It was great to hear what educators are doing in other areas and about what works/doesn't work for them. It is incredibly helpful to get real life examples from our peers who also teach in similar contexts.

- Feedback from workshop participants

Priority 4: Contributing research related to innovation and creativity in online and blended learning.

The TI is a hub of innovation and research, contributing novel research to teaching and learning communities nationally and internationally. The Flanagan Foundation gift has supported the development of seven peer-reviewed publications and 22 conference presentations. Three graduate research assistants are attributed to these research contributions, which has helped to support their personal academic goals related to designing, conducting, and publishing research findings.

Research Snapshots

In addition to these formal scholarly outputs, the project team has committed to making blended and online learning resources accessible and inclusive of diverse ways of knowing and being in digital pedagogy. All teaching and learning resources created because of this initiative are publicly available in the [TI Resource Library](#). Research snapshots of the conference presentations and publications are available on the Flanagan Initiative website.

Peer Reviewed Publications

- Wright, A., Carley, C., Alarakyia-Jivani, R., & Nizamuddin, S. (2023). Features of high-quality online learning in higher education: A scoping review. *Online Learning Journal*, 27(1). <https://olj.onlinelearningconsortium.org/index.php/olj/article/view/3411>
- Aparicio-Ting, F., Arcellana-Panlilio, M., Bensler, H., Brown, B., Clancy, T. L., Dyjur, P., Radford, S., Redwood, C., Roberts, V., Sabbaghan, S., Schroeder, M., Summers, M. M., Tézli, A., Wilks, L., & Wright, A. C. (2023). *Fostering student success in online courses* (M. Arcellana-Panlilio, P. Dyjur and A. C. Wright, Eds.). Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Guide Series, University of Calgary. <https://taylor-institute.ucalgary.ca/resources/fostering-student-success-guide>
- Dyjur, P., & Wright, A. C. (2023). ePortfolio assignments to demonstrate learning in online courses. In P. Dyjur, M. Arcellana-Panlilio, and A. C. Wright (Eds.), *Fostering student success in online learning*. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning Guide Series, University of Calgary. <https://taylor-institute.ucalgary.ca/resources/fostering-student-success-guide>
- Anselmo, L., Stepanchuk, A., & Wright, A. C. (2023). Advancing scholarship of teaching and learning in large enrollment courses: Lessons learned from an online community of practice. *Imagining SoTL: Selections from the Banff Symposium*.
- Wright, A. C., Jardine, L., Anselmo, L., & Dyjur, P. (in press). An online community of practice framework for higher education. In K. Rainville, D. Title, and C. Descrochers (Eds.), *Expanding the vision of faculty learning communities in higher education: Emerging opportunities for faculty to support and engage with each other*. Information Age Publishers.
- Alarakyia-Jivani, R., Carley, C., & Wright, A. C. (in press). Blended and online learning policy development in higher education: A proposed framework. *EPIGREP Special Issue- Designing Digital Futures*.
- Fedoruk, L., Wright, A., Anowai, A., & Osondu, Y. (2021). Students as partners in a COVID-19 online teaching and learning environment. *International Journal on Innovations in Online Education*, 5(1). Available at: <https://onlineinnovationsjournal.com/streams/scholarship-of-online-teaching-and-learning/22c62f2d451dba6b.html>

Conference Presentations

- Mason, D. (2023, November 10). *Struggling with scale: Ungrading in the context of high-enrolment classes*. International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL), Utrecht, Netherlands.

- Wright, A. C., Chang, S., Li Sheung Ying, M., & Squires, S. (2023, June 15). Teaching teachers how to teach: The role of teaching experience in educational development. 2023 Annual Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. <https://virtual.oxfordabstracts.com/#/event/3575/submission/322>
- Dias, K., Wright, A. C., & Flynn, C. (2023, June 15). *Expanding the SaP framework: Working with students as partners in educational development to re-imagine postsecondary education*. 2023 Annual Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. <https://virtual.oxfordabstracts.com/#/event/3575/submission/203>
- Norman, D., Behjat, L., Flynn, C., Steele, J., & Jinnah Morsette, S. (2023, April 28). Ignite Presentations and Panel Discussion. University of Calgary, Conference on Post-Secondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, AB, Canada.
- Kelly, P., Din, C., Ginn, C., & Paul, R.M. (2023, April 28). Online offline: poetry readings with a turn and a twist. University of Calgary, Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, AB, Canada.
- Wright, A. C., Brown, B., Roberts, V., & Hurrell, C. (2022, October 25). *Mobilizing open educational practices in higher education: an interdisciplinary plenary discussion* [Plenary]. Association for Educational Communications and Technology Conference, United States.
- Virtue, X., Carley, C., & Wright, A. C. (2023, April 28). Queer pedagogy in higher education classrooms: A scoping review [Digital Poster]. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, Canada.
- Wright, A. C., & Dyjur, P. (2023, April 28). Co-creating 100 UDL activities in blended & online courses [Workshop]. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, Canada.
- Alarakyia-Jivani, R., Carley, C., Virtue, X., Dias, K., Wright, A. C. (2023, April 28). *Communicating effectively with TAs in blended & online learning environments* [Workshop]. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, Canada.
- Dias, K., Alarakyia-Jivani, R., Wright, A. C., & Flynn, C. (2023, April 27). *Re-visioning higher education post-pandemic* [Workshop]. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, Canada.
- Grant, K. A., Wright, A. C., & Anselmo, L. (2023, April 27). From 2020 to 2023: Updating principles for meaningful online assessment [Workshop]. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, Calgary, Canada.
- Alarakyia-Jivani, R., Carley, C., & Wright, A.C. (2022, November 10). *The future is online/blended learning: An overview of the U15 Group of Canadian Research Universities' online and blended learning policies*. 2022 Symposium for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. <https://isotlsymposium.mtroyal.ca/>
- Dyjur, P., & Wright, A. C. (2022, November 25). *When in-person is out: A range of possibilities for professional development* [Paper]. Online Education Berlin, Germany.
- Wright, A. C., & Dyjur, P. (2022, November 24). *Integrating principles of online course design into practice* [Learning Café]. Online Education Berlin, Germany.

- Wright, A. C., Brown, B., Roberts, V., & Hurrell, C. (2022, October 25). *Mobilizing open educational practices in higher education: An interdisciplinary plenary discussion* [Plenary]. Association for Educational Communications and Technology Conference, United States.
- Carley, C., Jivani, R., & Wright, A. C. (2022, August 3). *Beyond (dis)ability: Promoting accessibility in blended and online learning environments* [Engagement session]. Distance Teaching and Learning Conference, United States.
- Wright, A. C., Dyjur, P., & Ayala, J. (2022, June 2). *A framework for faculty development in online learning* [Workshop]. International Consortium for Educational Development, Denmark.
- Anselmo, L., & Wright, A. C. (2022, May 18). *Enhancing the student learning experience with Universal Design for Learning in blended and online learning* [Workshop]. TLTCon 2022, United States.
- Wright, A. C., & Dyjur, P. (2022, February 22). *Curating online teaching and learning resources to support faculty and students* [Oral presentation]. Educational Developers Caucus Conference 2022, Canada.
- Dyjur, P., Wright, A. C., & Biswas, S. (2022, February 15). *Strategies and approaches for worthwhile and positive online consultations* [Workshop]. Educational Developers Caucus Conference 2022, Canada.
- Wright, A. and Anselmo, L. (2021, May) Covid Coffee Chats: Showcasing Online and Blended Learning Practices During Covid-19. University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching. Calgary, AB.
- Wright, A. C., Anselmo, L., & Stepanchuk, A. (2021, November). *Advancing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Large Enrollment Courses: Lessons Learned from an Online Community of Practice*. Mount Royal University, Forum for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. <https://isotlsymposium.mtroyal.ca>

Priority 5: Advising on strategies, policies, structures, and processes that support the integration of quality online and blended courses and programs at the University of Calgary.

UCalgary is committed to advancing high-quality blended and online learning opportunities through its [Ahead of Tomorrow](#) (2023-30) strategic vision and plan.

Educational Leaders in Residence

The Flanagan Foundation funds supported the appointment of two Educational Leaders in Residence (Online and Blended Learning) - Drs. Derritt Mason (Faculty of Arts) and Corey Flynn (Faculty of Science). The [Educational Leaders in Residence](#) program ignites change to advance strategic institutional teaching and learning priorities. These Leaders in Residence are scholars and educators from across the academy who leverage their expertise, experience, and passion to build vibrant teaching and learning cultures. The Educational Leaders in Residence (Online Learning) collaborate with the Taylor Institute and the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) to:

- Review and advise on the development of standards and regulations to support and advance online and blended learning at UCalgary;
- Facilitate campus conversations related to online learning through existing campus networks and committees;
- Advise and consult with academic programs on meaningfully integrating online and blended learning in new program proposals, in collaboration with academic staff in the TI and the program innovation hub;
- Advise on and develop resources and supports needed to support academic staff, teaching assistants, students and other university stakeholders in development of teaching expertise in online and blended learning;
- Contribute to scholarship related to online and blended learning, including evaluating and disseminating the success and impact of initiatives implemented to strengthen online and blended learning; and
- Participate in the development of an institutional strategy related to online and blended learning at the University of Calgary, including capturing the lesson learned and how we have transformed teaching and learning through COVID.

Innovator/Educator Series

Dr. Corey Flynn is producing a series of video interviews focused on educators that employed innovative teaching techniques during COVID. These exceptional instructors faced the challenges of emergency remote lecture delivery with new and exciting strategies that enhanced student engagement and learning. The interviewees share the details of the techniques they utilized during COVID and describe how these lessons learned continue to inform their return to in-person instruction. They also include the student perspective on how these innovative teaching techniques enhanced their learning experience. These interviews will help to capture how we met the challenges of COVID and ensure that the lessons we learned will continue to inform our future teaching practices. The interviews can be viewed on the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning YouTube page ([view videos here](#)).

This project involved extensive student partnerships. We have had several graduate student research assistants at both the Masters and PhD levels. Our graduate student partners engaged in several stages of video production including videography/editing (Blake Evernden, Neil Christensen), audio engineering (Berenice Cancino) and management (Brennan Chaudry). The project also engaged undergraduate student by holding a music production contest. The organizer of the contest (Carter Tam) was guided to solicit, collect, and evaluate music submitted by several other undergraduate students.

The first 2 episodes of the video series have received over 350 views and have been shared on several social media sites. As we publish more videos, our hope is to further extend the audience. We also plan to publish this work in one of several scholarship of teaching and learning journals.

3QTL: Three Questions about Teaching and Learning

Dr. Derritt Mason produced a ten-episode podcast series called *3QTL: Three Questions about Teaching and Learning*. This podcast, which aired from September 2023 through April 2024, features interviews with ten faculty members from across disciplines and institutions about their experiences teaching and learning during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of May 2024, the series is undergoing peer review in collaboration with the scholarly journal *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*. Following review (and the implementation of any recommended additions or edits), the season will be published by the journal.

This project represents two years of planning, research, and delivery, and has involved hiring an external consulting producer (Dr. Stacey Copeland), as well as the training and mentorship of three UCalgary students: Xenia Reloba de la Cruz (PhD student, podcast producer); Tarini Fernando (MA student, editor); and Eric Xie (B.Ed. student, editor and sound designer). This podcast highlights the expertise of six UCalgary faculty members in addition to five outside teaching and learning experts and represents an innovation in the mobilization of peer-reviewed, accessible, public-facing teaching and learning research.

As of May 2024, 3QTL episodes have been streamed over 1,200 times. Our most popular episodes include interviews about the “pedagogy of kindness” (with [Dr. Cate Denial](#)), reimagining assessment practices (with [Dr. Jesse Stommel](#)), and practicing reciprocity in classroom and library spaces (with [Jessie Loyer](#)). All ten episodes of 3QTL can be accessed [here](#).

Producing the 3QTL podcast has been a deeply meaningful opportunity to reflect on how COVID-19 has profoundly and permanently transformed the higher education teaching and learning landscape, while sharing resources and knowledge from a diverse array of thoughtful, creative, and dedicated faculty members. It was also rewarding to contemplate how and where we disseminate such knowledge in academic contexts, and to undertake a learning journey—alongside my wonderful student collaborators—as we collectively produced our very first scholarly podcast. This experience has forever changed the way I think about “scholarship.”

- **Feedback from Dr. Derritt Mason**

Lessons Learned in Higher Education During Covid-19 and Beyond

We collaborated with the Vice Provost Teaching and Learning, Educational Leaders in Residence, and student partners to gather the lessons learned from teaching during Covid-19 and drew upon recommendations to support a sustainable transformation of teaching and learning practices at UCalgary. Educators, staff, and students shared their perspectives about what was learned through the pandemic via podcasts, conversations, blogging, and other multimedia opportunities to create a robust and crystallized rendering of where we have been and where we can go from here. The final report, published in July 2023, highlighted the importance of flexibility in teaching and learning, the centrality of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) in decision-making and planning, and the role of institutional practices, analysis, and infrastructure in supporting future-focused, human-centred learning experiences moving forward. The summary and full report are available for viewing and download [here](#), and will continue to inform strategic priorities for UCalgary moving forward.

Dias, K., Jivani, J., Wright, A. C., & Flynn, C. (2023). *Lessons learned in higher education during Covid-19 and beyond*. Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning.

<https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/flanagan-foundation-initiative/lessons-learned-2023>

Guiding Principles for Blended and Online Course Design

The project team led a collaborative initiative to develop guiding principles for blended and online course design in higher education, which can be found [here](#). We refined these principles through conversations with academic and non-academic staff across campus and have used them to inform presentations to the Learning Technologies Advisory Committee and at the Faculty of Social Work Teaching Development Symposium. These principles have informed the design and delivery of several workshops, the new blended and online learning badge for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, and numerous courses across campus. This working document is intended to spark conversations about blended and online learning and introduce practical strategies for consideration as educators design quality online learning experiences. It is meant to be shared, adopted, and adapted for utility in diverse contexts and disciplines. We are in the process of creating a peer-reviewed publication of these principles and facilitated a workshop about using these principles in international contexts to [Online Educa Berlin](#), a global conference on digital learning and training.

These principles shouldn't just contribute... they should guide. We should encourage instructors to build online courses around these principles.

- **Feedback from Learning Technologies Advisory Council member**

Award for Blended and Online Learning Criteria

We were invited to review and revise the criteria for the University of Calgary's Award for Blended and Online Learning. This award recognizes teaching excellence of individuals who have developed and taught two or more blended or online courses. We submitted recommendations for updated award criteria that drew upon the principles of blended and online course design developed by the team. The revised criteria more fulsomely capture the nuances and complexities of blended and online teaching and learning contexts.

Institutional Conversations Related to Teaching and Learning

Members of the Flanagan Foundation initiative team contributed to ongoing institutional conversations related to policies, structures and processes related to teaching and learning. Some highlights include:

- Contributing to UCalgary's Learning Technologies Advisory Committee (LTAC);
- Contributing to discussions related to the launch of UCalgary's new strategic plan [Ahead of Tomorrow and the Academic Innovation Plan](#);
- Participating in institutional discussions related to the assessment of student learning and the planning, design, and use of learning spaces;
- Co-Leading a new institutional working group developing principles for the assessment of student learning;
- Co-chairing the 2023 University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching; and,
- Contributing to streamlining assessment regulations in UCalgary's Academic Calendar.

2023 University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching

Building upon the momentum and success of the Flanagan Foundation Initiative, in 2023, we hosted the [University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching](#). The theme was *Collective Transformation: How Blended and Online Learning have Changed Postsecondary Education*. The conference took place from April 26-28, 2023, and over **120 conference sessions** were offered over the three days. More than **440 delegates registered** for the event which was one year in the making, involved hundreds of conference presenters, and had an impact far beyond the University of Calgary. Through the support of The Flanagan Foundation, this immense undertaking advanced all priorities identified in The Flanagan Foundation gift. [Four local and international keynote presenters](#) presented on current and diverse topics related to online and blended learning:

- Dr. Maha Bali (American University in Cairo): The Role of Intentional Equity and Care in Collective Transformation

- Dr. Sarah Eaton (University of Calgary, Werklund School of Education): Academic Integrity in an Age of Educational Transformation (or Why Robots Won't Inherit the Earth)
- Dr. Aubrey Hanson (University of Calgary, Werklund School of Education): Stories from the Pandemic: A Métissage on Digital Environments, Embodiment, and Indigenous Education
- Dr. Jesse Stommel (University of Denver): Ungrading and Alternative Assessment (<https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/news/ungrading-and-alternative-assessment-q-and-jesse-stommel>)

The conference had a variety of session formats including pre-conference workshops, online poster sessions, 60-minute interactive sessions, 30-minute presentations, a panel ignite session, and drop-in discussions. Approximately 90% of participants who completed the conference evaluation felt that it provided a meaningful opportunity for them to reflect on their teaching and learning practices within the context of their role.

Well done. Not only did benefit from the topics over the two days, but I learned a few things about designing a high-quality online conference.

It was a professionally energizing 3 days.

I did not expect to be so engaged in Zoom sessions, but the conference far exceeded my expectations.

- **Feedback from 2023 conference participants**

The conference brought together hundreds of people to share their experiences and resources, report on research, discuss emerging trends in blended and online learning, hear about the successes and challenges of others, make connections, and reflect on how new learning might affect future teaching and learning policies and practices.

UCalgary's Commitment to Online and Blended Learning: Looking Forward

Through the University of Calgary's [Ahead of Tomorrow](#) vision, we have set a bold vision for teaching and learning moving forward to 2030. The institution has committed to educating transformative leaders and increasing access to impactful and future-focussed education. UCalgary will increase enrolment by 10,000, embracing new technologies and new discoveries to support innovation in teaching and learning.

UCalgary will expand its academic programming and increasingly embrace a variety of formats and modalities to ensure access and equip students with the skills needed to succeed into the futures. At the forefront of this work, UCalgary will create a Digital Learning Strategy that includes strategic

priorities for growing online learning opportunities, and the platforms, technologies and resources required to offer high-quality online and accessible learning across the institution. We will continue to expand and provide meaningful professional learning opportunities for academic staff who are teaching in flexible modalities. At the same time, the institution will lean into emerging important conversations and actions related to the ethical and creative use of generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) applications in teaching and learning. The work of the Flanagan Foundation Initiative has propelled UCalgary’s commitment to blended and online learning and will continue to provide a strong foundation to ensure our leadership in blended and online learning into the future continues. This impact continues to be captured in the naming of The Flanagan Foundation Learning Studios (TI 110) on the first floor of the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning.

Budget Summary

Budget actuals related to the Flanagan Foundation Initiative are \$1,000,000 as of July 31, 2023 (Table 1). Most of the Flanagan Foundation budget was allocated to staff and graduate student salaries, which enabled this innovative work to move forward. The ability to work with students as partners throughout this project was transformative, as further detailed throughout this report.

Spending was initially delayed because of the time associated with the recruitment of academic staff and due to the COVID pandemic restrictions. Spending increased substantially over the past two years because of expanded programming, research, knowledge sharing, and dissemination. Meeting expenses were slightly higher than anticipated due to costs associated with recruiting international speakers for the conference in 2023. Projected salaries were also slightly higher than anticipated due to increased engagement of graduate student researchers. We were able to reduce spending in other areas to accommodate these changes. The full budget will be allocated by July 1, 2024.

Table 1: Flanagan Foundation Initiative Budget

Item	Description	Total Projected Cost (\$)	Spending to date*
Salaries	<p>Academic, support staff and graduate student research assistants and learning technology coaches, to lead and support initiative activities.</p> <p><i>Dr. Alysia Wright (Educational Development Consultant), appointed Jan. 1, 2021</i></p> <p><i>Lorelei Anselmo (Learning Technology Specialist), hired Nov. 1, 2020</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Derritt Mason (Educational Leader in Residence), appointed April 1, 2022</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Corey Flynn (Educational Leader in Residence), appointed Jan. 1, 2022</i></p> <p><i>10 part-time communications support staff, graduate students and research assistants hired to date</i></p>	960,000	971,848

Research Support	Travel, accommodations, conference registration and research funding/publication support to disseminate initiative findings, for initiative team.	30,000	14,722
Meeting Expenses	Meeting expenses related to the 2023 Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching	10,000	13,430
Total		1,000,000	1,000,000

***Actuals projected as of June 19, 2024**