

Associated Colleges of the South Teaching and Learning Workshop

Staff Manual & Handbook

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Overview

The Associated Colleges of the South (ACS) Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop has been held each summer since 1993, with a hiatus in 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic. Typically held in the first week of June, the workshop lasts four full days and one evening. The foundational practice of the workshop is microteaching, a unique form of feedback where workshop participants, referred to as fellows, convene in small groups to teach and receive feedback from other participants. Participants and staff members are drawn from instructors across the sixteen ACS institutions.

Mission

The ACS Summer Teaching & Learning Workshop emphasizes teaching and learning as central to the mission of residential liberal arts colleges, grounded in the belief that all educators must continuously improve their teaching practice through intentional professional development and reflection. Using microteaching (a form of small-group, peer-to-peer feedback), interactive plenary sessions, and supportive social environments, the Workshop prompts experimentation and growth for educators in the ACS.

Learning Objectives

Workshop fellows will:

- Affirm and build on existing teaching strengths.
- Explore evidence-based, inclusive, and emerging instructional strategies and techniques.
- Increase awareness of one's own learning experiences and the diversity of learners' experiences.
- Reflect on how instructors' choices affect learners and learning.
- Contribute to and learn from a collaborative community focused on educational and professional development.

History

The Workshop was initiated by history professor Jack Lane at Rollins College, who considers it his "most enduring accomplishment academically" (https://winterparkmag.com/2020/07/02/lets-just-ask-jack/). Prof. Lane and colleagues adapted the basic structure of the Workshop from Peter Frederick's work with the Great Lakes Colleges Association while at Wabash College. The ACS Summer Teaching & Learning Workshop is the longest-standing faculty professional development opportunity in the ACS and has received significant and ongoing support from presidents of the consortium, including founding president Wayne Anderson, and presidents, deans, and provosts across the ACS. Since its inception, more than 700 faculty members from sixteen ACS institutions have participated; and more than twenty-five facilitators have taken responsibility for small groups and leading innovative plenary sessions. The Workshop was held at Rollins from 1993 to 2011. In 2012, the Workshop began rotating to different ACS institutions. The mission and learning outcomes were first articulated at a staff retreat in 2011 and revised in 2022.

Site Selection

The Workshop was held at Rollins College for the first 19 years. In a strategic planning retreat held in summer 2011, staff members chose to begin rotating to a new ACS campus every three to four years. Rotating campuses emphasizes that the workshop is an ACS-wide program and allows member institutions to showcase their campuses and expands geographical access to attendees. In this way, multiple campuses can participate in the privilege of hosting the workshop.

Site History

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1993-2011	Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida
2012-2014	Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas
2015-2017	Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina
2018-2019	Sewanee: The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee
2020	hiatus due to COVID-19 pandemic
2021	virtual due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic
2022-??	Centre College, Danville, Kentucky

Site Selection Criteria

New sites should be selected at least two years in advance to ease the transition, allow adequate time for logistical preparations, and ensure support from relevant senior administrators. Selecting sites is a collective decision of the Workshop staff. The criteria below are considered when selecting workshop sites. Two elements are paramount: a Workshop staff member willing to serve as campus coordinator and the campus infrastructure.

Location

Accessibility and ease of travel to the campus is an important factor to consider, whether proximity to a major airport and/or driving distance from other member institutions. For example, Trinity University has the advantage of being both near San Antonio's airport and driving distance from Southwestern University. Although Sewanee is somewhat far (60 minutes) from the nearest airport, it is driving distance from Birmingham-Southern, Rhodes, Centre, and Furman.

Support from the host institution's administration

Support from the host campus's president and provost/dean is vital. Often, one or more campus administrators attend opening receptions to provide a welcome to the Workshop staff and participants and may host one or more meals, as well as other forms of support. The ACS can help by communicating to the presidents and provosts that hosting the Workshop is beneficial to them because faculty from other institutions learn about the campus and, given the longstanding nature of the workshop, hosting can be understood as an honor.

Affordability

Consideration of total cost is essential. It should not be radically out of line with what has been spent in the past. Some expenses will vary from campus to campus: e.g., cost of food (catering vs. dining hall), conference fees, cost of lodging (whether sheet/towel service is provided, etc). Historically, costs at each campus have been comparable, though costs should be reviewed relative to other campuses prior to site selection.

• Staff member is a faculty member at host campus

Having a Workshop staff member at the host campus is important for many reasons. Prior to the Workshop, she/he/they will make logistical arrangements and work closely with the provost/dean, conference services, dining/catering, and other offices to ensure logistics are organized and ready for the event. During the Workshop, she/he/they continue to serve a liaison role, troubleshooting issues as they arise and ensuring participants and staff members feel welcomed and supported during their time on campus. Afterward, she/he/they are responsible for cleanup, turning in keys and borrowed media items, storing supplies, and additional follow-up work as needed.

• Classroom space

Host campuses must have at least five flexible and well-equipped classrooms in reasonable proximity to one another. Preferably an additional classroom (or two) can be held in case a last-minute change is needed. The classrooms must have flexible furniture rather than fixed seating (e.g., auditorium spaces are not appropriate). See below for technology specifications.

Plenary space

One plenary space is generally sufficient; however, more than one can provide helpful variety. An ideal plenary space accommodates 41 people comfortably with flexible seating options, with both lecture-style and seated tables available. Chairs and tables need to be reconfigurable by staff members quickly and easily. The plenary space should be close in proximity either to the dining facility or the residence hall, to ease return to the residence hall after evening plenaries. Social spaces in the residence hall may also be used for plenary sessions. See below for technology needs.

Residence hall

Host campuses need a residence hall space to accommodate 40-42 single individuals, ideally each with a private bath. The Workshop should not share a residence hall with young children or undergraduates while on campus. Apartment or suite-style accommodations with sufficient bathrooms work well. Typically, sheets and towels are provided. Daily housekeeping within rooms and bathrooms is not necessary, though trash and recycling should be removed from common areas regularly. Laundry facilities should be available; if they are not, their absences should be communicated with participants beforehand. If possible, identify a residence hall near the classroom, dining, and plenary locations.

• Social space within the residence hall

The residence hall requires a dedicated social space not shared with other residents. The social space is used for both formal and informal gatherings, including some meals, meeting to walk to locations together, and informal conversations. The social space needs a refrigerator and counter/cabinet space for snacks and office supplies.

Parking

Free and ample, centrally located parking is needed for participants who drive. Consider additional costs that might be incurred if any.

Food / dining

Participants need access to breakfast, lunch, dinner on most days, as well as snacks during microteaching breaks. Using the cafeteria or dining hall, if open, is the best and most cost-effective option for most meals. As a break from the dining hall, a meal can be catered or arranged via take out. Catering is a viable alternative if the dining hall is not open, though the total cost tends to be higher. Snacks and drinks for the social space are purchased by Workshop staff members often at a nearby warehouse club.

Technology and media services

A fully functioning Helpdesk and access to IT support professionals is needed at least from 8-5 on weekdays and preferably after hours.

Classrooms require up-to-date technology: either a projector and screen or large LCD screen with included classroom computer; connectors or adapters for participant laptop connection (ideally, for both PC and Mac laptops); speakers and audio connections for both; WiFi access and Internet; whiteboard or chalkboard; and access to power outlets in the back of the room.

Staff facilitators require at least five, and preferably six, small video cameras and tripods, one for each microteaching group. Depending on space, extension cords may be necessary. Workshop budget can cover SD cards if needed. Also useful is a dedicated computer for uploading videos for participant access and a cloud space (e.g. Google drive, Box, or Dropbox).

Plenary space, as described above, needs the same flexible computing and projection set up, as well as a lectern or lapel microphones for the speaker(s) and a hand-held microphone or two for the audience.

Staff members and participants need printing capability for the duration of the Workshop and staff training. Ideally, a printer will be located near the classrooms, in the residence hall, or another easily accessible location (such as a library).

Staff and participants need reliable and easily accessible WiFi for the duration of the Workshop and staff training.

Administrative staff or work-study to support co-director/campus liaison

Admin support can be very helpful, especially in the last few weeks leading up to the Workshop, though is not necessary. An admin or work study student can help with tasks like printing handouts, assembling name tags, creating and posting signage, purchasing and organizing supplies, setting up the rooms, and so on. During the Workshop, having someone available to transfer video files from the SD cards to the cloud allows the co-directors to focus on other tasks and on the participants.

Conference services

Although the co-director / liaison can handle much of the logistical planning, a Conference Service office, where available, saves time and effort before and during the Workshop as needs arise.

Center for teaching & learning

A CTL can help in various ways, from providing space to admin support to participating in plenary sessions as desired.

Exercise facilities for participants

Participants appreciate access to athletic facilities during the Workshop, sometimes for a small additional fee. Access to outdoor facilities (trails, tracks, tennis courts, etc.) is also useful.

Excursions and down time

Participants have some down time to explore the area; a location that is walking distance to restaurants and shops is useful though not required. Easy access to tourist attractions and recreational activities is also beneficial so participants have interesting options to explore during their free time.

Staffing

Staff members are drawn from the pool of prior participants. Potential candidates demonstrate facility and understanding with the microteaching process and potential for effectively leading plenary sessions. Determining participants is considered throughout the duration of the workshop. We identify potential facilitators from microteaching groups, with a list of candidates maintained in staff meeting minutes or other means. New staff selection occurs as needs arise. In January 2022, all participants from the prior four years were invited to apply for open facilitator spots. Going forward, each class of participants will be asked to indicate their interest in becoming a facilitator through a formal application process. The process should be semi-regular (e.g., each year or every other year) to ensure equity of opportunity.

Directors are drawn from the existing staff, having demonstrated a willingness, commitment, and potential to serve as director. Identifying directors is an open and deliberative process conducted among the staff members, with the expectation that individuals speak openly and constructively. Potential self-nominate or may be nominated by other staff members. As necessary, staff members may vote to determine directors. In the case of a tied vote or lack of consensus, the current director or co-directors make the final determination.

New Staff Selection Criteria

The director(s) typically invite new staff members to join the Workshop. Although no single criterion is essential, the following criteria are typically considered:

- Innovative and effective instructional practices
- Facility with the microteaching process, including providing effective feedback, soliciting effective feedback, and receptiveness to feedback
- Facility and openness to providing and receiving feedback to and from other staff about performance in the Workshop
- Curiosity and interest in other instructional approaches and the approaches adopted by peers in microteaching group
- Interest in and openness to professional growth and development
- Likelihood of effectively and willingly pitching in with all staff roles: leading plenary sessions, socializing with fellows, and other logistical and relational tasks
- Disciplinary or professional expertise relative to existing staff

- Institutional representation relative to existing staff
- Gender, race, ethnicity, ability, or other identity characteristics relative to existing staff
- Absence of real or perceived conflicts of interest, such as determining promotion or tenure status of individuals at their institution
- Likelihood, given rank and position at home institution, of maintaining involvement with the Workshop

Facilitator Responsibilities & Tenure

Facilitators are responsible for all aspects of the Workshop and are expected to be fully available during the week of the Workshop, for training, and periodic engagement with each year's participants prior to the start of the workshop. Some plenary session planning may take place prior to arrival in June. Facilitator responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Co-facilitating a group of five to six participants for all microteaching sessions during the workshop
- Attending all and co-facilitating at least one plenary session during the Workshop
- Attending and participating in staff meetings during the Workshop
- Informally socializing and engaging with Workshop fellows
- Assisting with logistical and practical needs of the Workshop, including hospitality tasks, helping with check-in, printing handouts, monitoring technology, and other hands-on activities
- Participating in pre-workshop trainings or other professional development activities
- Contacting fellows and answering questions in advance of the workshop
- As available, participating in staff retreats held at other times than the June workshop.

Staff tenure varies, with no official limit to how long a staff member may continue. Review of staff performance is informal. In practice, staff members who have not resonated with the activities typically resign their staff position. If necessary, directors are responsible for removing or requesting resignations from staff members.

No official leave of absence policy exists. So long as staff members maintain contact with the director(s), staff members may take a hiatus, for whatever reasons, and are able to return to the regular rotation depending on needs. Directors will contact staff members throughout the year to check on availability. Ideally, a reserve staff member is identified and able to attend on short notice should a scheduled staff member become unavailable

Director Responsibilities & Tenure

At least two directors are required. The specific titles and manner of dividing duties between directors has varied and depends on the individuals involved. Broadly speaking, one director serves as the outward-facing contact with deans and fellows, while the other serves as the campus liaison. Directors may delegate tasks or consult with staff members as needed.

Co-Director 1: Outward Facing

The primary responsibilities of the outward-facing co-director include but are not limited to:

- Working with the ACS staff to maintain and update the Workshop portion of the website and registration forms
- Working with ACS staff to set fees, review compensation procedures, and set dates as determined with workshop staff
- Contacting deans on each ACS campus to solicit nominees on a timely basis

- Maintaining contact with nominated fellows by confirming nomination, requesting additional information, and communicating expectations and requirements for participation in the Workshop
- Communicating with staff about Workshop dates, contacting fellows, pre-workshop preparations, or other actions in advance of and during the Workshop
- Delegating responsibilities among the staff as needed (e.g., creating microteaching groups, reviewing plenary scripts)
- Facilitating or delegating facilitation of staff training and meetings held prior to and during the workshop
- Supporting the upkeep of historical resources currently housed on Dropbox (e.g., alumni lists, dean contact lists, handouts from prior sessions)
- Collecting evaluation data and producing an annual report to the ACS office
- Collaborating with co-director in addressing challenges related to site logistics

Co-Director 2: Campus Liaison

The primary responsibilities of the campus-facing co-director include but are not limited to:

- Working with campus representatives to ensure housing appropriate to the Workshop, including sufficient rooms, bed linens, towels, and other needs
- Working with campus representatives and local restaurants to ensure dining availability, meals, and snacks
- Working with campus internet technology or related offices to ensure appropriate technology needs are met for the Workshop, including cameras for playback, connections for classroom computers, access to the internet, and so on
- Identifying excursions and options for fellows' free time; making arrangements for vans, tour guides, tickets, etc. as needed
- Communicating with fellows about campus logistics including arrival, parking, housing details, local excursions, etc. and assisting with arrangements as needed.
- Maintaining and purchasing supplies needed for the Workshop
- Working with campus facilitates or events to ensure access to social and teaching spaces, such as plenary sites, classrooms, and social spaces for fellows and staff to convene
- Assisting fellows in producing handouts or accessing other materials on the campus
- Communicating to fellows about how to get safely to campus for the workshop and access desired resources or materials
- Collaborating with co-director in addressing challenges related to site logistics

Consideration of directorship is reviewed each year, with the expectation that directors rotate every three to four years in relation to new site selection. As part of the transition, new directors "shadow" the former director in their last year.

Staff Training

Two to three days prior to the Workshop, staff members participate in a training session to refamiliarize staff members with the microteaching process, prepare for the plenary sessions, and train any new staff members. Although the agenda is set by the co-directors, staff members take primary responsibility for facilitating the training sessions. In addition, staff members help the co-directors in problem solving site issues, including classroom suitability, technology challenges, housing, etc. As time permits, preworkshop training may involve additional forms of professional development or strategic planning. Additional guests may be invited to lead portions of training or to participate in or observe

microteaching. Examples of guests who have participated in training include CTL directors, interested parties from non-ACS institutions, etc. Staff members are notified in advance of any guests involved with training.

Staff members may also conduct periodic strategic retreats, which afford staff members opportunities to engage in strategic planning or to gain other professional development experiences. Three such retreats have been held to date, each supported through the ACS grant process: one in 2011 at Davidson, one in 2017 at Sewanee, and one in 2022 at Centre.

Participant/Fellows Recruitment

The Workshop serves good teachers who want to engage in continuous improvement. Participants should value self-reflection and have a desire to improve their teaching craft. The Workshop is not designed for faculty members needing remediation. Although most participants tend to be at early career stages, deans are encouraged to nominate experienced faculty members in search of new perspectives on instruction.

Fellows Recruitment

Each institution is guaranteed two slots up to a specified nomination due date. Technically, it would be impossible to fulfill this promise beause there are thirty slots available. Some institutions, however, nominate one, some do not participate, some will not meet the deadline, and/or some will wish to send multiple faculty members. In practice, a full roster of 30 emerges from the nomination process. A waitlist is maintained as needed. Follow up and reminders to deans are needed prior to and immediately following the deadline. The ideal roster includes at least one participant from each of the 16 campuses and never more than five from any one campus, so long as no staff members represent that campus (ideally no more than three).

Each campus handles nominations differently: the point of contact can be the dean or provost, CTL director, or other administrator involved in faculty development. Directors maintain a spreadsheet with updated contact information. All nominations are submitted via a form on the ACS webpage. A copy of all nominations is forwarded electronically to the co-directors.

Institutional Support for Fellows

Institutions are responsible for the following costs. See Fees section for more information:

- ACS Workshop participation fee (invoice from the ACS, paid directly to the ACS from each institution). Most meals are included.
- All travel costs
- Any additional meal costs (one dinner and incidentals)

Microteaching Groups

Fellows participate in microteaching groups with four to five other fellows and two staff facilitators. These groups are constructed to optimize diversity of perspective and experience and to avoid institutional overlaps and avoid or minimize disciplinary or content-knowledge overlaps. These groups are set prior to the Workshop and reviewed during training.

Fees & Expenses

Setting the Fee & Invoicing Campuses

The ACS is responsible for accounts related to Workshop fees and expenses, billing participating campuses, and paying invoices from the host campus. Co-directors are responsible for maintaining a record of expenses, submitting receipts, and keeping expenses as low as possible. Co-directors and staff members are responsible for submitting receipts to the ACS for reimbursement for travel and meals.

Participant fees are set by the ACS in collaboration with Workshop co-directors and are based on an amount needed to cover the basic expenses as described above. The 2021-2022 amount is \$1975 per participant.

The ACS invoices each campus for the participant fee as announced. Many institutions prefer this invoice to arrive before July 1 so they can cover the fee from the fiscal year in which the nomination was made.

Staff Compensation & Reimbursement

As of June 2021, Workshop staff are compensated at the rate of \$1,500 for virtual and \$2,350 for in person. Co-directors receive \$1,800 for virtual and \$3,600 for in person. Stipends are reviewed annually with the ACS office.

All staff members are reimbursed for travel and other expenses incurred as a result of the Workshop (e.g., meals during training). Costs should be kept to a minimum by reserving inexpensive flights as early as possible, sharing rides, and selecting inexpensive meals. Forms and reimbursement instructions will be provided by the ACS.

Co-directors are reimbursed for materials, snacks, and beverages purchased for hospitality (as described in the social space, above).

The ACS President and finance officer communicate with Workshop staff regarding how to submit reimbursements and receive compensation.

Workshop Expenses

Expenses vary from site to site but the following costs can be expected:

- Catering / meal plan
- Housing (may include linens, cleaning fees, keys, check-in and check-out services)
- Additional grocery and supply purchases
- Media and IT service fees
- Facilities management fees (e.g., for room set up)
- Additional fees as required (e.g., on-call conference fee)
- Travel expenses of staff (institutions cover the participants' travel, as described above).

Workshop Evaluation & Reports

At the conclusion of the Workshop, director(s) send a written evaluation of the workshop to the ACS president and, if desired, to nominating deans. The written evaluation includes participation rates, campus representation, workshop activities and schedule, unique or innovative changes, and results of

formal evaluation surveys or other direct or indirect assessments. The ACS may request additional information as desired.

The co-directors take mutual responsibility for maintaining fellow alumni records, staff records of participation, and any other information regarding budget or expenses.

Appendix:

Dropbox Archive

All shared Workshop files, including plenary scripts, participant rosters, staff rosters, dean contacts lists, draft emails to deans and fellows, agendas, budgets, assessment data, and all other resources related to the workshop, including the most up to date version of this handbook are available on a Dropbox site: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sbeszrq5mfi1poq/AADf557ICCVrzfg0s7Wh4rTMa?dl=0. All current staff members are members of this resource and have editing capabilities.

Timeline

<u>Month</u>	General Task	<u>Tasks</u>
June	Closing the Workshop	Tally feedback
		Report feedback results to staff, deans, ACS, host institution File feedback results in archives
		Facilitate staff stipends and reimbursements
		Prompt payment of host institution invoice
		Add participants to alumni list
July & August	Set dates for next year's Workshop	Confirm dates with host campus; ensure room reservations and availability
		Confirm dates with ACS
		Confirm dates with staff members
September & October	Promote next year's Workshop	Post on ACS website with dates, location, etc. (produce promotional materials as needed)
		Email all deans at the start of the year to make them aware of request coming in February; provide list of all participants and a template email for requesting nominees
		Make sure nomination form is on the ACS website
		Determine staffing for next summer; recruit new staff and/or backups as needed
November & December	Reach out to deans	Double-check list of deans and contact information; confirm from websites and with ACS staff
		Contact deans or campus representative with nomination procedures, workshop dates, etc.

		Send "welcome back to the fall" email to prior year participants to suggest they encourage colleagues to attendas needed
	Host institution elements	Initiate conference services contract with host institution to ACS
January	Finalize host institution elements	Finalize room reservations for classrooms and plenary sessions; include extra classroom for flexibility
	Prompt nominations from deans	Set deadline for nominations
		Individually email deans (and assistants) about nominations and deadline
		When/After all nominations are in, review nominations for representation from each campus (at least one, hopefully two per campus); allow additional participants to ensure 30
		Confirm nominations with deans (two per campus, with one alternative or extra)
		Confirm guest speaker(s) if any
February	Finalize participant list	Follow up with any deans who did not submit nominees
		Confirm number of fellows and potential expenses (stipends, housing, catering, etc.)
	Finalize host institution elements	Determine catering/food orders (dining hall vs catering; pizza party, etc.)
		Finalize/send conference services contract with host institution to ACS
		Contact IT and other tech for cameras, tripods, extension cords, flip charts and easels, clickers
March	Reach out to fellows/participants	Review registration survey: collect bio for packet, dietary restrictions, travel info, accommodations, etc.
		Verify and update welcome documents
		Send "welcome" email to each participant
		Follow up with participants who do not complete registration survey
	Reach out to staff members	Confirm availability
		Prompt staff to make travel plans (flights, etc.)get them to do this to reduce expenses
		Establish facilitator/microteaching teams
		Delegate responsibilities as needed (calling participants,
		notetaking, develop training schedule, etc.) Determine plenary placements for staff membrs
		Review staff bios for packet
April	Finalize host institution elements	Coordinate with host institution about dietary needs, room requests, and other accommodations

		Assign dorm rooms to staff and participants
		Review and finalize catering schedule
		Review and finalize classrooms and plenary spaces
April	Reach out to staff	Organize microteaching groups (delegate as needed)
		Phone calls to participants; remind of process
May	Plan for host institution	Review tech requirements with IT and other tech stakeholders (cameras, recordings, etc.)
		Make excursion sheets (find leaders/guides or make other arrangements, write up descriptions, and create sign-up sheets)
		Review/confirm transportation needs
		Get "photo cards" and thank-you cards so that participants get photos and service people get thanked
		Do all shopping for binders, nametags, SD cards, other supplies needed
	Reach out to Fellows/Participants	Provide detailed instructions on how to get to campus
		Provide additional follow up on what do have
		Create nametags and lanyards
	Reach out to staff	Finalize notebook documents
		Finalize training schedule
		Update binder covers; print all documents; stuff binders
		Finalize plenary assignments
		Create & review microteaching groups; assign to staff members to draft and review
June	Execute Workshop	Arrive early to get additional materials (groceries, supplies, etc.)
		Arrive early to check out tech resources (cameras, tripods,
		extension cords, clickers, easels for flip charts)
		Determine check-in procedure with campus facilities Confirm all tech with IT and others (establish video storage
		and upload process)
		Tech for participants: access to internet, printing needs, etc.
		Check dorm rooms
		Check classrooms
		Take photos and print photos
		Check social spaces for seating, etc.