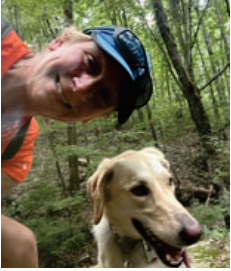


OCTOBER 2025

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Lindenwood University

LEARNING ACADEMY



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: HEATHER PENNINGTON

Heather Pennington serves LU as Assistant Professor of Physical Education in the College of Science, Technology, and Health. Heather has been teaching for 24 years, and she has taught at LU for the past 15 years. The courses that Heather teaches all relate to activity, chronic disease, and disability, covering topics like recreation therapy, adapted physical education, and exercise for special education.

Heather says that her favorite aspect of the courses she teaches is seeing students react to learning new and sometimes challenging content: “I love seeing the students exposed to content that may be brand new for them to challenge their expectations of people of different populations and/or having chronic disease and disability. The content is fun and challenging but also helps them become a more educated and accepting member of society for life.”

When thinking about the kinds of activities that Heather enjoys teaching the most, she noted that she loves activities that guide students to learn to collaborate through group work, particularly because of how these kinds of activities help students develop the real-world skills that they will need in their future careers: “I love cooperative learning groups. It is more than group work... It is learning to communicate, collaborate, take responsibility for their own learning, and work together to analyze and apply information that will help them in their career and life.”

Heather is proudest of seeing students realize their potential to impact lives and change the world while in her class, and this is particularly meaningful when she reconnects with those same students five or ten years later. Seeing her former students making a difference and inviting them back as guest speakers in her current classes is always rewarding for Heather. When asked about advice she would offer on teaching, Heather suggests that faculty focus on their passion for their subject and what will help students succeed in their future careers: “I try to think 5-10 years down the road and what a student would really want to know to make a difference in their life and career.” LU is lucky to benefit from Heather’s enthusiasm, creativity in the classroom, and her tireless advocacy for students! Thank you, Heather!

Upcoming faculty development opportunities:

Performance Eval working sessions: 9 - 11 am on October 24 and 10 am - 12 pm on October 31

RISE & AI Workshop (Inclusion), 1 - 2 pm on October 24

Disability Bias Workshop, 3 -4 pm on October 30

Campus History Scavenger Hunt, 12 pm on October 31

One Small Change: A Strategy for Presenting Major Assignments

When we present major assignments to students, we often ask them if they have any questions about the assignment. Many times, students won't ask questions when the assignment is being presented, but their confusion is evident in their submissions or questions emailed after class. If you have ever struggled with this, here is one small change you might make to help students identify and answer their own questions before they begin working on important projects.

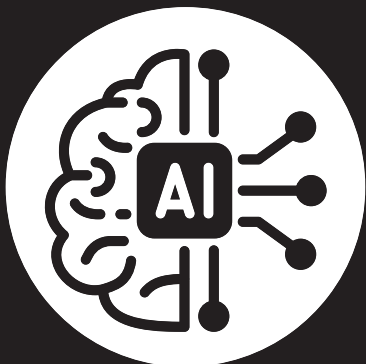
After you have presented an overview of the assignment or project, have students work in groups of two or three to answer two questions:

- What will success on this assignment look like?
- What barriers to success might we encounter?

Once groups have had some time to reflect and discuss, have your students share the criteria for success and potential barriers they have identified with the entire class.

This approach will help you make sure that your entire class has the same understanding of the assignment's requirements, and it also helps students build their skills in interpreting requirements and planning for possible roadblocks to success.

The AI Corner



AI and Your Annual Performance Evaluation

A reminder: Supervisors and faculty may use AI tools to help them prepare their performance evaluation materials. If using AI tools for their performance eval, faculty should include a brief disclosure about how and where AI was used. *See the October 15 announcement in the Learning Academy Canvas shell for the full policy on AI use for the performance eval.*

Two of our colleagues, Dan Plate and James Hutson, put together a guide detailing the many ways AI tools could be used in preparing performance evaluation materials. You can access their guide through [this link](#), and it is also available in the Learning Academy Canvas shell.

Many thanks to Dan and James for this helpful resource!