

Foundations of Teaching and Learning (FTL) Syllabus
Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Stephen F. Austin State University
Fall 2018

Facilitator information

Dr. Heather K. Olson Beal
McKibben 404B
olsonbehk@sfasu.edu
936-468-1676

CTL contact information

Steen Library, 2nd floor
ctl@sfasu.edu
936-468-1010

General Information

The Foundations of Teaching and Learning (FTL) course is designed to expose faculty members to the basics of what constitutes good pedagogy in face-to-face and online learning environments. The course should also serve as a means through which you can get to know other faculty members across campus and become acclimated to the teaching and learning environment at SFA.

The mission statement of SFASU (2008) states the following:

Stephen F. Austin State University is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

In order to accomplish our mission, SFA faculty and staff have recently developed a strategic plan that is available [here](http://www.sfasu.edu/strategicplan/) (<http://www.sfasu.edu/strategicplan/>). Below are some excerpts of the strategic plan that directly address teaching and learning, the focus of FTL:

- Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) will have a distinct and stellar reputation based on the transformational learning experiences we provide for all our students in an exceptional setting. We will not use the term "transformational" lightly. We will be deeply committed to providing high impact, experiential learning for all SFA students.
- Our students will be engaged and empowered. They will know that we care about them and that we have high expectations for their performance and success.
- We will be an innovative university. We will reach our students where they are and prepare them for life-long learning and career responsiveness in the twenty-first century. We will use cutting-edge teaching techniques and advanced research methods both inside and outside the classroom. Technology will be appropriately and sensibly infused throughout the campus in our classrooms and operations.
- Our campus culture will be open, collaborative, and engaged. We will have an energetic and respectful workplace where civility, inclusivity, and accountability are guiding principles for everyone.

This course will hopefully be one of many resources available to faculty members seeking to enhance student learning.

Expectations

The FTL course will meet twice a month (every other Friday) for a semester for a total of 7 face-to-face (F2F) meetings in 451 McKibben. In between F2F meetings, participants are expected to complete online work, including reading the material contained in the online modules and participating in online discussion boards.

In order to receive credit for completing the course, participants are expected to attend **6 out of the 7** F2F meetings and participate in online discussion boards. If you will be unable to attend a face to face session, please notify the course facilitator via D2L email.

Calendar

An ongoing calendar with associated meeting dates and assignment deadlines is kept up-to-date in D2L. Below is a brief overview of the course calendar.

Module Topic	F2F meeting, noon-1:30 p.m. in McKibben 451
I: Students as Learners	09/07/18
II: Learning Theory	09/21/18
III: Instructional Planning	10/05/18
IV: Assessment	10/19/18
V: Active Learning / Student Engagement	11/02/18
VI: Planning & Facilitating Classroom Discussions	11/09/18
VII: Managing an Active Learning Environment	11/30/18

Foundations of Teaching & Learning FAQs:

1. **Help! I teach during the FTL class meeting time.**

That's okay. We urge department chairs to not schedule new faculty to teach during that hour, but sometimes that information slips through the cracks or the request can't be accommodated for a variety of reasons. If that's the case, you can sign up to take the FTL course in the spring (if available) or next year. Please remind your department chair not to schedule you to teach from 12:00-1:30 on Fridays.

2. **I'm going to be out of town for a conference / wedding / marathon / fill-in-the-blank on the date of one of our face to face meetings.**

That's okay. Have fun / good luck at your event. You're allowed to miss one of the seven face to face sessions. No worries. Please email the FTL facilitator in advance via the D2L email tool so that he/she knows not to expect you (for food and instructional planning purposes).

3. **I've worked at SFA previously and then came back / worked at SFA in a different capacity. Do I need to attend this course?**

First, we're glad you're back at SFA! Second, the contracts state that all new (which you technically are) faculty must complete this 14 hr. pedagogical training within their first semester. If you have questions, please contact your chair with this question and then let *Dr. Janet Tareilo* (Associate Provost for Academic Affairs) at tareiloj@sfasu.edu or 468-1881 know what he/she wants you to do.

4. **I have been in higher ed for a long time and don't feel like I need to take this course.**

First, see #3. Second, we really want this to be a supportive community wherein we all help each other learn and grow professionally. If you've had a lot of K-12 and/or higher ed experience, your experience will be an invaluable asset to the group, so please come ready to share with us!

5. **I already took this class in 201X when I was a visiting assistant professor / lecturer. Now I have a tenure-track position. Do I have to repeat it?**

As of Fall 2015, faculty members who already completed this course (formerly called the New Faculty Development Series, offered 2012-2014) do not need to repeat it. If you are in that position, please let the FTL facilitator know so that we can document your completion appropriately.

6. **I need to leave early / arrive late one day due to a meeting / appointment, etc. Is that okay?**

The typical F2F session will begin with lunch. After approximately 15 minutes, we will move on to the work portion of the session, which will complete by 1:30. The active, hands-on design of the sessions will make it difficult to manage early departures/arrivals after 12:15. Therefore, if you need to arrive after 12:15 or leave before 1:15, please feel free to use your one freebie absence on that session. We would of course still love to have you join us, but it's important to us to have everyone there for the duration of the session.