

Teaching.UCR Newsletter



2023-2024 Academic Year

inside...



Photo courtesy of UCR/Stan Lim

A Note from XCITE's Executive Director, Dr. Richard Edwards:

Dear Faculty,

I hope each one of you had a great and fulfilling summer. As we look forward to the upcoming school year, I am reminded of the ever-present challenges for teaching and learning in a time of constant change. This year, AI and machine learning have dominated conversations across college campuses, especially in regard to their potential impact on higher education. Technological innovations aren't the only part of the teaching and learning ecosystem undergoing an evolution. Increasingly, the mutual embrace of equity efforts and academic excellence are hallmarks of teaching in higher education. Our faculty are committed to closing equity gaps, empowering students, and supporting identity-safe classes. We look forward to all of our continuing collaborations and connections with UCR Faculty, and we hope to see you drop by XCITE in the near future.



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Upcoming Events

- » [Teaching and Learning Week 2023](#) Oct 16th-20th, 2023
[Register Today!](#)
- » [The Art and Science of Healthy Pedagogy](#) Spring 2024
- » [Celebration of Teaching](#) May 29, 2024



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Accessibility & Inclusivity at UCR

This year XCITE will be amplifying our efforts to support the inclusivity of of courses at UCR. As part of this, we are focusing on accessibility as central to the mission of including students of all backgrounds and abilities. We are also pairing with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to develop a faculty-facing certificate for Making Excellence Inclusive. Read further at our website resources on [Accessibility](#) and our [Diversity Equity and Inclusion Initiative](#).

Gender & Lived Name Policy



UCR is now fully compliant with the [Gender Recognition and Lived Name Policy](#). This means that all members of the UCR community are able to ensure that their lived names will be consistently used across all UCR systems.

Per this policy, legal names are now protected entities. For members of the community who are both employees and also make use of the Banner system (i.e. the registration system which feeds information into Canvas), lived names (if they differ from legal ones) will need to be updated in both Banner and [UC Path](#).

To learn more, visit UCR's [Task Force website](#).

Captioning



Yuja, our in-house media recording, editing, and storage solution, is capable of producing Auto-generated captions for your videos. These captions can also be [edited for accuracy](#).

Please note, however, that Yuja's auto-generated captions are not ADA compliant. If you have students who require accommodations, contact the [Student Disability Services Center](#).

DEI Rubric



XCITE's Senior Learning Experience Designer Samantha Eastman, in collaboration with the UC-wide Instructional Design and Faculty Support (IDFS) working group, has created a DEI Rubric to assist you with designing your courses inclusively and equitably. There are 8 dimensions in the rubric, each of which contains suggestions and best practices for enabling your students to feel welcome, accepted, and set up for success in your courses.

[Request access to the rubric](#) and continue refining your approach today!



Congratulations to XCITE's Faculty Development Specialist, Dr. Swati Ramani, for being chosen to participate in the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)'s Accreditation Leadership Academy (ALA)!

The ALA is an exclusive professional development program dedicated to using WSCUC's values of inquiry and innovation to collaboratively identify, shape, and complete a project concerned with equity, evidence, and effectiveness.

XCITE Research is a mixed-methods research collaborative investigating teaching and learning to inform future directions and enhance the student and faculty experience. XCITE partners and collaborates with UCR faculty and students, local, regional, and national organizational partners, and institutions within and beyond the UC system. Contact us today through our [Project Request Form](#) if you have interest in pursuing externally funded research into teaching and learning.

Current Grants

Samantha Eastman (co-PI on three grants):

- Beyond Access: Leveraging Mobile-Friendly Design to Support STEM Student Success
- m-Learning to Support DEI & A
- The Art & Science of Healthy Pedagogy
- Previous Grant publication: [“Reducing Access Barriers: Exploring Student Mobile Device Use Across Higher Education Institutions”](#)

Richard Edwards and Annie Stanfield Ditta (co-PIs):

- Show me the data: Exploring the impact of observation protocol data in changing instructor motivation and practice

Nathaniel Wildes (Senior Personnel on two grants):

- California Education Learning Lab: A New Mathematics Gateway
- California Education Learning Lab: Enhancing Student Success via Active Adaptive Learning and Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry in Introductory Engineering Classes

Faculty Development Online Tools

- [OneHE](#), a platform which releases micro-learning tools for developing teaching with a focus on easily-adoptable activities. [Sign up today!](#)
- [Quality Matters](#) (QM), a nonprofit organization specializing in online and hybrid teaching quality assurance. [Sign up today!](#)
- [Online Learning Consortium](#) (OLC), higher education's collaborative community dedicated to advancing quality digital teaching and learning experiences. [Sign up today!](#)
- [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#) (NCFDD). Access to this resource is granted through UCR's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The NCFDD is an independent professional development, training, and mentoring community focused on increasing productivity and addressing challenges, especially for underrepresented faculty.

Year 1 of full adoption of Canvas complete

The 2022-2023 Academic Year represented UCR's first year of full campus implementation of Canvas. In that year, 11,276 courses have been hosted on Canvas, with 83,453 Assignment submissions and 1,021,195 uploaded files.

Now that we've completed migrating courses over and have trained faculty on the basics of Canvas, XCITE wants to assist you in learning how to 'level up' in your usage of it for your courses.

Some features of Canvas we recommend checking out if you have not yet had the chance:

- [Copying a Course](#)
- [Creating and Using Rubrics](#)
- [Tracking your Learning Outcomes](#)
- [Item](#) and [Question Banking](#) for Quizzes

Look to the [Canvas website](#) for forthcoming information throughout the year!

**Looking to try something new in Canvas?
Consider these emerging tech tools**

Slack

Coursebot, the third party tool which enables Slack to be integrated into Canvas, has now been fully implemented.

Any Canvas course can now have an associated Slack Workspace.

In addition to our [previous trainings](#) about how to use this integration, XCITE host periodic workshops at the beginning of upcoming quarters, or you can get started with this [Knowledge Base article](#).



Feedback Fruits

Feedback Fruits is a [suite of tools](#) designed to boost student engagement and improve learning outcomes. UCR has a time-limited pilot that may lead to fuller implementation.

Read about the experiences of two pilot faculty members in our [testimonials resource](#). Our pilot has been focused on [Interactive Document](#) (social annotation) and [Peer Review](#).

Start using Feedback Fruits as an external tool in Canvas today! Recordings available of trainings for [Interactive Document](#) and [Peer Review](#).



Idea Lab

IDEA Lab is XCITE's newest innovation initiative. IDEA stands for Immersive Design for Educational Advancement. IDEA lab's focus is on building virtual reality and augmented reality assets for advancing teaching and learning.

The goal of IDEA lab is to create unique and original content for UCR faculty, enabling students to manipulate molecular models in 3D space, visit a distant planet using a VR headset, or walk around campus with digital overlays of augmented reality as part of an historical field trip.

IDEA lab is led by XCITE's principal creative designer, Sohail Wasif. During his devoted career at UCR, Mr. Wasif has worked with faculty on information visualization, high-end graphics, and the development of digital storytelling in multiple media. He currently oversees a staff of student employees who program and design original AR and VR experiences using development environments such as Unity and Unreal engine, as well as an assortment of traditional graphics and content creation software including tools from Adobe, Autodesk, and newer, up and coming mobile device-based applications. IDEA lab products are designed to function as inclusive experiences on traditional laptops and computer desktops, using 3D headsets, or even on tablets and cell phones.

IDEA lab is also in the process of developing a makerspace exclusively oriented around teaching and learning, to be able to produce 3D objects and prototypes to be used in conjunction with, or independently from, virtual assets.

IDEA Lab is located at the XCITE Sandbox, Tomas Rivera Library 133. We encourage faculty to make an appointment to visit us to learn more about what we're working on as well as how it might enhance teaching and learning at UCR. Email xcite-help@ucr.edu for more information.

Generative AI

As you are likely aware, the release of ChatGPT in December 2022, followed by several other tools such as Google Bard, represented some new challenges and some exciting opportunities. We are all still learning about the potential of generative AI for transforming the landscape of higher education in the future. At the very least, it seems that these tools will be increasingly relevant to our courses in the future.

We at XCITE encourage faculty to be aware of new developments in regards to these possibilities and to this end, XCITE and ITS will be collaborating to bring you up-to-date solutions and tools to assist you should you want to incorporate them in your teaching and research. This is an area experiencing rapid growth and we want to ensure that you have the tools and information you need to address this new technology as best as you see fit.

For now, check out XCITE's [AI in the Classroom](#) Resource for some curated guidance in various approaches. We will be updating this resource as new information emerges.



XCITE Studios

XCITE Studios provides support and services for the development of high-end media production for instruction and research here at UCR. Our services range from the creation of custom 3D motion graphics, audio and video studio production, drone cinematography and development of interactive learning environments. Our team consists of Instructional Designers, Graphic Designers, Audio Engineers and Media Producers that can help you create engaging educational media for your next project.

XCITE Studios offers the following additional support and services:

- 1 Green Screen Studio
- 2 Learning Glass
- 3 Location Shoots
- 4 Audio Voice Over/
Podcast Booth
- 5 Licensed Drone Operators
- 6 Data Visualization
- 7 Custom Media for Research

To request a consultation with XCITE Studios, please fill out our [XCITE Project Request Form](#)

Support and Contact Information



Contact XCITE for help with the following:

- *Pedagogically assisting and supporting faculty with UCR's educational technology tools*
- *Adding to your toolkit of inclusive teaching practices*
- *Defining and using learning outcomes in your courses*
- *Suggesting improvements for the efficacy of your assessments*
- *Creating high-end media assets for teaching and research*
- *Building teaching portfolios*
- *Informal course reviewing with the Quality Matters (QM) framework*
- *Consulting with an instructional designer on your course*
- *Developing assets with emerging technological resources*

We also frequently host workshops and trainings to assist you in learning new tools, skills, and processes. Some recent ones include [Slack Fall 2023 Training & Use Case](#), [Poll Everywhere Fall 2023 Workshop](#), [Optimizing Student Success with Canvas Learning Outcomes](#), and our [Fall Canvas Bootcamp series](#). Watch the videos for these through our [Recordings](#) Page. Also, keep updated about and sign up for upcoming events through our [Canvas Trainings](#) and our [XCITE Events](#) Pages!

Contact information:

xcite@ucr.edu
(951) 827-2612

Reach our website by scanning this QR code or by going to teaching.ucr.edu



Concierge Hours



For the **first week** of instruction of the quarter, XCITE will be hosting Concierge Hours on Zoom from **11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** These are an [open Zoom meeting](#) through which you can receive one on one teaching support.

Panda Pros



Instructure, Canvas' parent company, is offering free 45 minute consultations for instructors looking to amp up their Canvas usage or to get questions answered. [Schedule your meeting](#) today!