Table of Contents

March 1, 2024

Dear Selection Committee Members:

I write this letter in support of Dr. Cynthia Alby's application for the Academic Affairs Excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award.

Dr. Alby spends a considerable amount of time reading and researching the use of AI to stay current in this rapidly changing field. She spends 2-5 hours each week experimenting with AI, and then shares her findings through her teaching, mentoring, and professional presentations. Her expansive research in AI contributed to her 11 articles/interviews, 46 presentations, and 8 presentations to College of Education classes in 2023. With her consistent focus on Boyer's Scholarship of Integration and Application, she aims for impact in all her scholarly endeavors. Her website, "Learning That Matters," provides many free resources to in-service teachers and higher education professors. The website grew out of a co-authored book with the same title that is now a top seller for Myers/Stylus Publishers. The website was accessed, on average, 1800 times per month in 2023. Dr. Alby also published an article in Faculty Focus, and it was the most read article of the year, with 28,266 views.

If I could describe Dr. Cynthia Alby in one word, it would be innovative. The examples below highlight how she has infused her knowledge of AI into her teaching:
- o Only one pre-service teacher enrolled in World Language Pedagogy, so Dr. Alby invited high school and college World Language teachers to be part of a semester long discussion group on the future of teaching World Languages in the era of AI. They met seven times over the semester for two hours each. This experience was enriching for the one student enrolled in the course, and it acted as a professional development opportunity for the in-service teachers and professors.
- o In her Communicative Literacies course, Dr. Alby researched and implemented a final oral exam instead of a written exam. Her challenge over the semester was teaching pre-service teachers: 1) how to use AI in their own teaching; 2) how the use of AI by P-12 students necessitates changing how English is taught in schools; and 3) a method of assessing the knowledge and skills of pre-service teachers by modeling the use of an oral exam format.
- o Additionally, Dr. Alby's MAT students are experimenting with using AI in their 6-12 grade classrooms and will present their findings at GC Research Day.

Driven by her boundless curiosity and love for learning, Dr. Alby demonstrates how she is a student of her own teaching. She studies teaching- and learning-related topics, such as studying natural critical environments, deliberate play for adult learners, and alternative assessment, so that she can experiment with these concepts in her own teaching. While attending the Governor's Teaching Fellows seminars, Dr. Alby regularly attends the workshops of other experts who are brought in to provide professional development so she may extend her own learning.

She aims to make her courses truly significant learning experiences for students. She was asked to teach a Kinesiology diversity course a week after classes began. Rather than follow the syllabus as it had been taught in the past (e.g., weekly survey of current issues), she re-imagined

the course to focus on students developing the skills that will serve them well in their adulthood (e.g., strong information literacy skills; the ability to explore the nuances of issues; opportunities to develop strong research-based study skills and well-being skills, etc.).

As a recognized leader in AI across the college, the university, and the nation, Dr. Alby's work highlights the ideal intersection of teaching, research, and service, as her work in AI impacts and informs all three areas. Passionate about the liberal arts, she is now working with the Director of COPLAC to identify the needs of member institutions and to imagine the ways that AI might meet those needs. It is clear through her scholarship accomplishments and her service endeavors that Dr. Alby's national recognition is growing at an impressive rate!

The true impact of Dr. Alby's work may be immeasurable. Her passion for teaching and learning is palpable as she mentors other faculty members to become better teachers. *Their* growth will impact *their* students' success. Although Dr. Alby's students will benefit from her innovative approaches, she may never have access to data on the success of students in the classrooms of teachers whom she has mentored.

In closing, based on my experience of working with Dr. Ably for the past 14 years, I confidently recommend her for the Academic Affairs Excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this recognition! If you would like further elaboration, please feel free to contact me, 478-445-2126 or nicole.declouette@gcsu.edu

Respectfully submitted,

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Teaching Philosophy Narrative

Philosophy and Goals

I have two primary life goals a) to intensively study the art and science of teaching in order to create the conditions that will result in the most significant quality of learning possible for every student in all the courses I teach and b) to share what I learn through that exploration with as many other instructors as possible so that my impact is as powerful as I can make it. But it is also important to me that learning be as meaningful and joyful as possible. Learning can and should be enchanting. That may sound hyperbolic, but those who know me will definitely attest that my life is lived in pursuit of this goal.

Early on I discovered that I am not the kind of person who wants to study a very specific slice of teaching and learning. The elevation of our profession relies on researchers who select a single variable and attempt to create a situation that isolates that variable to the extent it is possible. I appreciate that kind of research. I rely on that research to do the work that I do, but that is not my passion. Someone has to be willing to explore education, not in slices, but in its full complexity because that is the nature of teaching. Early in my career I realized that both the future middle and

high school teachers who take my courses and the college professors who are my colleagues were eager for more information on how the many pieces that make up quality teaching fit together. They wanted examples of courses and methods that take all the pieces into consideration.

What are these pieces? I believe that the very least, educators need to be well versed in course design and classroom teaching which requires knowledge and skill in cognition, assessment, research-based and engaging teaching strategies, educational technology, human motivation (Pink, 2016), and the subject they teach. They must be capable of tailoring instruction to differing student needs and interests. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly apparent that students whose brains that are hijacked by anxiety, feelings of not belonging, depression, fear of failure, and other destructive emotions struggle to learn well. Conversely, students who feel supported, engaged, and have a sense of belonging, learn more easily, quickly, and deeply (Willis & Willis, 2020). Furthermore, for learning to persist beyond a few months after a course ends, the quality of that learning requires that students engage in remarkably high levels of application, higher order thinking, and transfer of knowledge and skills to new contexts. An intricate undertaking indeed!

I am not surprised that many instructors at every level feel overwhelmed and would appreciate support from someone who is willing to spend a great deal of time contemplating the big picture and the many pieces that make up that big picture. They are looking for someone who has a heavy teaching load (I teach a 4-4-3 load, and all eleven courses are different), someone who knows what it is like to try to improve courses methodically over time. As I say in my official bio, "I have spent most of my career immersed in what could most accurately be described as avid cross-disciplinary idea mongering. I study education, of course, but also sociology, psychology, neuroscience, and behavioral economics - anything that might yield some useful clues." Teaching is like a puzzle, and I am constantly gathering new pieces, experimenting, and rearranging. But what does such research look like?

Research Questions and Methods
Nothing about my scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) practice looks quite like one would expect including my research questions. In the early years of my career, my basic research questions were, "What would it look like to implement what is considered 'research-based best practice' in as many aspects of teaching as possible? How might an individual go about systematically developing his or her teaching practice over time, utilizing previous scholarship as a base, while conducting classroom-based studies to fill in the gaps and modify for one's specific student population?" Each year I would choose one or two areas of focus. Some examples include: the use of discussion in the classroom, authentic assessment, preparing students to learn, developing intrinsic motivation for learning, and transparency in learning and teaching or "TiLTing" (Winkelmes et al, 2016). As one might imagine, after the first 30 years, I was well versed in many different areas.

At that point my research question began to narrow as I became increasingly interested in teaching, not just as an interesting and worthwhile endeavor, but a joyful and enchanting one. I began studying and presenting on the incorporation of "high impact practices" (HIPs) in the classroom and became part of the six-person team who developed GC Journeys, GCSU's answer to how we might innovate our curriculum and give it more of a liberal arts twist. As part of that work, I became part of the University System of Georgia's "Momentum" project and my intensive study turned to "targeted

interventions," especially interventions to improve student belonging and growth mindset (Harackiewicz et al, 2018). This grew into an interest more generally in positive psychology in education, and in 2019-2020 I enrolled in a certification program on that topic, and my primary research question took a bit of an unusual turn: **How might we re-enchant learning in order to help faculty and students flourish?**

Over the past few years, my sub questions have also taken an interesting turn, focusing on unexpected changes in our world because I was in a position to do so and that was what was needed during the global pandemic and the release of powerful generative AI.
- "What would a comprehensive course design model focused on creating the most significant learning possible for all students look like?" (2019)
- "How can faculty and students flourish in difficult times?" (2020-2021)
- "How might we reclaim our joy in teaching?" (2022)
- "How might we harness the power of artificial intelligence to improve teaching and learning? How might we channel the pressures created by AI to create a long-needed paradigm shift in education?" (2023)

Most researchers conduct "scholarship of discovery." They focus in on something that they can control and study it. However, my passion is what I would call, "scholarship of teaching and learning through scholarship of integration and application" (Boyer, 1990). Someone has to study what happens when those who teach actually implement research, and specifically when they implement research related to myriad aspects simultaneously, as excellent teaching requires. How does one go about that? What does it look like? What would it mean to take what we know about quality education, make informed decisions about what to actually use, and then try to implement that combination of strategies? My goal is to explicitly examine this complexity in order to help myself and others negotiate the intricate terrain of teaching.

Evidence of Impact

Methodology

In order to examine the complexity, I engage in a systematic examination of teaching through the use of a variation on a methodology known as "design experiments." (Yes, I recognize that this is a truly vague name, but it has proven to be an eminently useful methodology.) This methodology has perhaps been most notably employed by the 2013 American Educational Research Association's "Distinguished Research Award" winner, Alan Schoenfeld. He describes design experiments in this way (italics are his):
a. "One has a 'local theory' about learning, which suggests some aspects of design.
b. One crafts a theory-based intervention (the 'local theory says that *this* intervention ought to work in the following ways, to enhance understanding in *these ways*.')
c. On the basis of implementing the intervention and carefully observing its impact, one (i) refines the local theory and (ii) refines the intervention" (Schoenfeld, 2014).

My version of design experiments follows this particular pattern:
1. **A new round of study is generally sparked by either a problem I am facing in my teaching or important new research.** For example, when anxiety and depression began to rise in the student population, including amongst my own students, I began studying the implementation of positive psychology in education.

2. **Once I have taken an interest in a topic for whatever reason, I delve into the published research.** I generally begin with studies in education and then branch out into related fields as well.
3. **Then comes the scholarship of application.** Only rarely does the published literature point me in a direction that is simple and clear. The vast majority of the time I use the research I have collected to design a unique implementation plan. This involves gathering ideas and data from a variety of the most credible studies to design a set of strategies and then tailoring those strategies to meet the specific needs of *my* student population.
4. **Next the scholarship of teaching and learning comes into play.** During this stage I collect data on the extent to which the new strategies are promoting learning, experiment extensively with variations on the theme, and then develop additional strategies to fill in the gaps. For example, when I was studying discussion, I discovered both broad theory and specific suggestions for improving class discussions. I experimented with implementing those methods but then also created other strategies of my own design. After months of implementation, the data I collected showed a significant increase in equity of student engagement in discussions with fewer students dominating and all or nearly all of the students contributing. But while the quality of student interaction had increased, the quality of the content of the discussions still wasn't where I wanted it to be. I couldn't find much research on this, and I suspected that the problem was that students were jumping into discussions "cold," without sufficient processing of possible ideas immediately beforehand. So, I ended up designing a collection of "pre-discussion" strategies so that by the time students entered into the conversation, their brains had been primed, and they already had some ideas to get them started.
5. **Then I move to initial dissemination of the results and further experimentation.** At this point my "N" is rather small, so I work on sharing what I have learned with others and encourage them to share the results of using the strategies with me. Often my colleagues here at Georgia College are happy to help, and they often have similar student populations. But it is my good fortune to work with the Governor's Teaching Fellows Program, which is an academic year program I lead at the University of Georgia's Institute of Higher Education. The professors in this program come from a wide range of disciplines, levels, and types of institutions, and we meet monthly on the UGA campus throughout the academic year or as a two-week May intensive. The majority of strategies I develop can also be used at the high school level with a little modification, so the teachers I work with in my courses also test the strategies with their students. This initial dissemination allows me to refine my ideas and then experiment with those refined ideas with my own students.
6. **At that point I can begin to codify my ideas and disseminate them more broadly.** After 2-3 years of study, I generally feel ready to share my results more broadly. I frequently present my work to the faculty at Georgia College, to the Governor's Teaching Fellows (GTF), at invited workshops, at conferences, and of course, to the future middle and high school teachers I teach. My goal is to constantly refine and update the strategies I have developed. This is one of the reasons I prefer dissemination face-to-face as opposed to publication, because face-to-face presentations allow for an influx of new ideas that will continue to improve my work, and I can also directly support individuals who need further help thinking through how to modify ideas for their own particular situations. I have repeated this process over and over, starting a new study every year or two while continuing to refine earlier work.

While my methodology may not look like what is commonly expected for SoTL work, I think I will be able to make the case that this particular methodology is a strong fit for both the type of "big picture" work I enjoy and for achieving maximum impact. Studies conducted with more traditional methods are the foundation of my work, but because of the IRB process and the repetition of such

studies over time to reach the number of participants needed to have a significant result, these studies are rarely able to have broad impact or address the complexities of teaching in a college classroom. Boyer's SoTL and Scholarship of Discovery models are widely used, but it has been through incorporating his two lesser-known models, Scholarship of Application and Scholarship of Integration with the "Design Experiments" method and SoTL that I've begun to have broad, national impact.

Select Areas of Study

Course Design: Learning That Matters

What would a comprehensive, research-based course design model focused on creating the most significant learning possible for all students look like?

Zehnder, C., Alby, C., Kleine, K., and Metzker, J. (2021). *Learning that matters: A field guide to course design for transformative education.* Stylus/Myers Education Press.

Alby, C. Zehnder, C, and Kleine, K. (July, 2021) *Belonging and mindset: The powerful impact targeted interventions can have on student learning*. Summer Institute. The Evergreen State College.

Alby, C., Kleine, K. and Zehnder, C. (Apr. 28, 2022). Episode 34: *Sparking joy through co-construction circles, empathy mapping, and the teaching perspectives inventory*. Faculty Focus [Podcast]. Retrieved from https://www.facultyfocus.com/faculty-focus-live-podcast/

I started teaching in 1989, and it was about 30 years later that I started work with three of my colleagues on a book that aimed to pull together all we had learned from years of SoTL study on a wide range of aspects of course design into a practical "field guide." In fact, the full title is, *Learning that matters: A field guide to course design for transformative education.* Our goal was to produce the book we wished we had had when we started teaching. Like most other professors, we had little preparation in the teaching of higher education when we started our college teaching careers and stumbled along for years trying to make things work. Over time through intensive study and experimentation, we worked together to develop a model others could implement. There are surprisingly few books on course and no widely read works written by women or with a focus on ensuring that the needs of a vast variety of students will be met. The book also combines Stanford's "design thinking" model, which centers the student in the design process rather than the content, with the tried and true "backward design" model.

The book leads the reader through building on a foundation of key ideas to intrinsic motivation and designing for a specific population to our signature idea for designing courses around meaty and fascinating "dilemmas, issues, and questions." The reader learns how to write worthy goals, design authentic and transparent assessments, populate units with research-based, engaging strategies, and support students through targeted interventions. It truly became the book we wished we had had, and apparently others think so too because it has become a top seller at one of the top publishers of education texts. The impact it is having is beyond our wildest dreams. Since its release in 2021, it has already become a favorite for new faculty orientations and faculty learning communities, we've been featured on several of the most listened-to education podcasts, and as you can see from my CV, I'm frequently invited to present on subjects related to

the book. *Learning that matters* also won a Critics' Choice Book Award from the American Educational Studies Association in 2021.

For me, impact is capturing the eyes and ears of as many educators as possible and providing clear, practical ideas that aren't just a footnote in an instructor's vision but an actionable roadmap. This book was a major leap for me in ensuring my SoTL research has significant impact through large scale dissemination. But the process of writing the book and refining every practice with the help of my brilliant co-authors also helped me further clarify my own understanding of course design, so my own students have also felt the impact of this culmination of years of study. Furthermore, as we were writing the book, I offered several sections of a semester-long course for faculty at GCSU, and nearly a third of all our faculty joined me, so I was able to see the impact of the book's ideas playing out before me as these valiant professors put the concepts into practice week after week and reported back.

How does one know that something like this broad, complex template for course design is "working"? I now use this text in the GTF program, the very program that helped build the ideas, and the participants create and share courses based on the template and take portions of the book back to their campuses, spreading the ideas that worked for them through workshop presentations. Book sales are increasing because individuals find it works and recommend it to others. CTL Directors continue to choose it in greater and greater numbers because they see that it's working. People ask to take selfies with me at conferences, and that's how you really know you've "made it," right?

Study of High Impact Practices (HIPs)
How can high impact practices be expanded and scaled to benefit more students?
Alby, C., Sewell, J. and Smith, C. (Invited panelists, February, 2019). *A qualitative study of inclusive excellence in High Impact Practices at Georgia College.* NASH Taking Student Success to Scale Conference. Nashville, TN.
Kuh, G. Jacobson, C. and Alby, C. (Invited session, October, 2019). *Expanding definitions of evidence for equity.* NILOA Annual Conference. Indianapolis, IN.
Spirou, C., Cofer, J., Alby, C., and Mahabaduge, H. (March, 2021). *Building and scaling an institutional HIPs Initiative.* Invited presentation. AAC&U National Webinar Series.
McConnell, K., Alby, C, Ben-Avie, M, and Rose, T. (April, 2019). *Using VALUE data to influence touchpoints.* AAC&U National Webinar.

From 2018-2020 my SoTL took on a new form for me because I was serving as the inaugural interim Director for GC Journeys, a program aimed at incorporating high impact practices in the classroom at an unprecedented level. Where most college students experience an average of 1.5 such practices, we were shooting to boost that number to 5 or more for our students. On their website, AAC&U notes that the point of HIPs is that they are research-proven to provide, "significant educational benefits for students who participate in them—including and especially those from demographic groups historically underserved by higher education." To accomplish this feat required years of intensive study of what it meant to do these well and how to prepare faculty to incorporate them. That work resulted in the creation of a pair of workshops I conducted to help faculty better understand these practices and also how the use of AAC&U's

Value Rubrics could inform our work. The impact was considerable, as more than three quarters of the faculty attended these workshops.

As faculty moved into the implementation phase, I was able to work extensively with dozens of individuals both one-on-one and through our Summer Institute, collecting data on every stage of the process so that I could be the repository for that practical knowledge base and continuously fold what we were developing together back into the project. I gradually grew in understanding and brought that growing understanding back into each future interaction with our faculty.

But I was also able extend the impact of this work to a broader state and national audience. Because our model caught the attention of AAC&U, I was invited to present with George Kuh, the originator of the HIP concept and author of *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter.* Furthermore, as a result of this taking this work "to scale," the program won awards such as the Regents Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Teaching and Curricular Innovation in 2021 and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Excellence in Innovation Award in 2023, and I was Named to the Student Opportunity Center's "Network of National Experts on Experiential Learning and High-Impact Practices."

Study of Positive Psychology
How can faculty and students flourish in difficult times? How might we reclaim our joy in teaching?
Alby, C. (June-July, 2021). *Flourishing in difficult times.* Series of six weekly workshops for
        Spelman College.
Metzker, J. Kleine, K., Alby, C. and Zehnder, C. (June 27, 2022). *Transforming at the root: A
        grassroots approach to faculty development through visionary fiction.* COPLAC Annual
        Meeting. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams MA.
Alby, C. (2023, May 19). *Reclaiming our joy of learning & teaching* [Keynote address]. Western
        Carolina University, Cullowee, NC.

*"*Positive psychology" is the brain child of former American Psychological Association president, Martin Seligman (2012). The idea is that the field of psychology should not only focus on assisting individuals with severe mental disorders but it should also consider how it might be possible to boost both the well-being of individuals with the more common, "garden variety" forms of anxiety and depression that nearly everyone experiences at some point in their lives and boost the well-being of those who are doing well but wouldn't mind experiencing greater levels of well-being. While most mental disorders should be left to psychological professionals, this modest boosting of well-being through simple, research-based strategies can easily be learned and implemented by most anyone.

Over the years as I watched my own students suffer more and more frequently from a kind of vague malaise, I wondered if incorporating applied positive psychology for education might be the answer. As is my way, I started studying it extensively and experimented with opening most class periods with a one to five minute session in which I would introduce one such research-based strategy. Examples you might be familiar with are specific types of breathing exercises and gratitude journaling, but there are dozens of others. Students immediately responded that

these strategies were helpful and even on the occasions where a particular strategy wasn't a good fit for them personally, they felt a stronger sense of belonging and support because I was making this effort.

To further boost my abilities, I enrolled in a national certification program in applied positive psychology in education, led by a leader in the positive psychology movement, Emiliya Zhivotovskaya, founder of The Flourishing Center in New York and creator of the PERMA-V model of well-being. The program began in January 2020 and met weekly via zoom. It was a fascinating group of 20 individuals from across the nation and even from across the world. A few months later when we found ourselves in the grip of the pandemic, the course went from a lovely educational experience to a godsend, and I went from planning to slowly implement what I was learning over time to leaping into action.

I designed a course on "Flourishing in Difficult Times" *immediately*. I built the plane as I was flying it, and the result was a seven-week course designed to provide individuals with practical strategies for supporting themselves and their students. I ended up offering sections for GC faculty, professors across Georgia, and P-12 teachers. I have now taught that course in various permutations nine times. Many who participated told me that experiencing what quality online pedagogy in Zoom could look like was almost as valuable to them as the content of the course. I have also conducted shorter versions of the course for Columbus State, Salisbury University, Baldwin County Board of Education Leadership, Brenau, and Spelman. I have made all the materials for the course publicly available, and many have used the materials to conduct similar courses at their own universities. One of my masters students found the strategies so valuable that she is planning to pursue the concepts further through a doctoral degree.

All that time I was collecting data in my usually way – professors were reporting back on how the incorporation of the strategies was going, and I would use that input to update my methods and assumptions and bring that back to the group. The methodology I had been using for years turned out to be ideal for this emergency situation because of the speed and level of complexity it permits, and I went on to publish and present on my findings as my CV demonstrates. The incorporation of the flourishing strategies I developed and refined over that time is now a staple of both my own teaching and my work with faculty across Georgia through GTF. And as my students utilize the strategies in their middle and high school classrooms and the GTF faculty incorporate them into their classrooms, and all those individuals report back on their successes and challenges, the cycle of refinement continues.

Study of Artificial Intelligence
How might we harness the power of artificial intelligence to improve teaching and learning? How might we channel the pressures created by AI to create a long-needed paradigm shift in education?
Alby, C. (2023, May 7). *AI Prompts for Teaching*.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Lo4aeiWT4f5xhcsAbWAfQRITghBhcmFN2m-JEX5OkJA/edit?usp=sharing
Stachowiak, B. (Jan. 12, 2023). Episode 448: *How artificial intelligence is impacting higher education*. Teaching in Higher Ed. [Podcast Interview]. Retrieved from

https://teachinginhighered.com/podcast/how-artificial-intelligence-is-impacting-higher-education/

Alby, C. (Jan. 9, 2023). *ChatGPT: A must-see before the semester begins*. Faculty Focus. Retrieved from https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-with-technology-articles/chatgpt-a-must-see-before-the-semester-begins/

My study of artificial intelligence, and specifically the highly capable, generative models that burst onto the scene in late 2022, was another opportunity for the speed and flexibility of my methodology to shine. What do you do when something so potentially disruptive appears so quickly? You know there will be no significant research available on it for a while, but faculty need answers NOW. I am looking forward to the meticulous, traditional SoTL studies that are beginning to appear, but in January 2022, people needed answers fast. My answer was to experiment extensively with the new technology and consider how previous research on cognition, student engagement, and such might speak to how this technology might be profitably used for learning and generate hypotheses for what might work as well as how this technology could be destructive for learning.

Because of my broad background in course design and teaching, I was able to make relatively accurate predictions. For example, if students (with permission and under the guidance of their instructor) use AI to produce an essay and then critique that essay, will quality learning result? Well, because critique is an important higher order thinking skill and ranks at the top of Bloom's taxonomy, I could predict that while students do need to be able to produce their own essays, this would still be a worthwhile activity. I spent much of December 2022 working on bringing what I know about teaching to bear on generative AI, so I had plenty to share when the host of the most established and followed podcast on teaching in higher education (aptly called "Teaching in Higher Ed") asked me to be on the show. I was ready, and I knew the impact would be substantial because her audience is so large. I also wanted to write an article that would be high impact, so I wrote a piece and sent it to *Faculty Focus* because they are nimble in terms of their turn around time and have perhaps the largest viewing audience in higher ed after *The Chronicle*. That article was their top read of the year (they publish multiple articles weekly), and the current number of page views for that piece is above 28,000.

In January, 2023 I introduced the new AI to all my students in all my courses and we embarked on a journey together to see what it was capable of, how we could use it ethically, and had deep discussions around what would constitute unethical usage in each course; where and how does AI benefit learning, and where and how does it harm it?

By Summer of 2023 I was ready to incorporate AI more purposefully and test my "training wheels" hypothesis which states that, "We have it backwards. We believe that through starting with the basics and gradually helping students build, they will develop an interest, but this often feels like a slog. Students might be more interested if they had AI support at the start so they could do more right away and see quality products they helped generate. Students will gradually stop using the AI supports as they gain in interest and competence, wanting to insert more of themselves and their own ideas." My tentative hypothesis worked out even better than expected. Students first attempts at creating lesson plans (remember, I am preparing future high school teachers) were significantly better than usual because of the assistance of AI, but more

importantly, it didn't feel like a slog and students enjoyed their first attempts thoroughly for the first time. While I allowed students to use AI for help with their lesson plans as much as they wanted as long as they showed me what AI had generated, students, without any urging from me, become less interested in using AI to generate whole plans as they gained confidence. By mid-semester they began using AI primarily to generate ideas they could choose from, such as, "What are ten engaging activities I could use to introduce students to kinematics?"

All of my students in the spring of 2024 became highly proficient in the use of AI in their work as future teachers, enabling them to create a greater quantity and quality of unit plans and teaching materials of all kinds. They were able to produce easily double the output of my previous students while engaging in even higher levels of higher order thinking, especially critique and analysis. What was particularly interesting was that I used the same end of semester assessment as I have for decades. Students are asked to create as much of a unit plan as they can without any assistance from technology in two hours. I was unsure if the results would be as good as they usually are since students had created fewer lesson plans "from scratch" than in the past. But in fact, the class average on that project was 6 points higher than before I began using AI. Two semesters later when those same individuals began student teaching, their lesson plans were so much better than in the past due to their abilities to collaborate with AI that I've needed to recalibrate what excellence looks like for novice teachers.

Over the course of 2023 I was able to experiment with AI in so many different ways that I was able to create a large collection of "copy and paste" prompts that I had used with my students. I made this available to anyone who wants to use it. I've been invited to conduct nearly 50 workshops across the country helping my fellow faculty benefit from my experiments in the classroom in terms of how to introduce students to AI, how to use AI to increase higher order thinking skills, and how to redesign activities in ways that simultaneously improve the activity while making it more "AI-proof."

Support and Promotion of SoTL

Supporting and promoting both formal, published SoTL and more informal classroom experiments based on SoTL principles is a passion of mine. A key goal I have is to help faculty determine what is worth experimenting with in their own classrooms. I share what's occurring in my own classroom through my blog, "The Year of Teaching Dangerously" to give others ideas. I also am the administrator for two active Facebook pages, "GC Teaching" (for GCSU faculty) and "GTF Alumni Think Tank" (for GTF alumni). Both of these allow me to share what I am working on and encourage others to chime in with what they are developing in their classrooms and how that is going. I am also on three GCSU committees, two for AI and one on active learning, and a COPLAC committee for SoTL in AI. I see my role on these committees as encouraging and supporting other members as they consider what changes they want to experiment with in their own courses while providing examples from my own classroom.

I support SoTL at the state level through my work in the Governors Teaching Fellows program in which each month we examine a different area of research-based practices that show promise. The fellows determine which they want to experiment with in the coming month and then we discuss what worked and what didn't when they return. Both GCSU colleagues and former

Governor's Teaching Fellows commonly reach out to me to process ideas or even to publish or present together, as you'll see in my CV. And of course, I support and encourage the future middle and high school teachers I work with to experiment broadly through making changes to the classroom environment, their relationships with students, and the teaching strategies they choose.

While I admit my methods may be unusual, I hope I've adequately made the case for how being able to respond quickly to global changes and having a broad and lasting impact sometimes requires unorthodox methods and avenues for dissemination of findings. Hopefully this is just the beginning.

References

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Select Presentations and Publications
My SoTL publications for 2018-2023 ended up being 6 pages long, with 42 publications and presentations on AI alone in 2023. I cut out all the podcast interviews and any publications already mentioned in my narrative.

Alby, C. (2024, February 23). *AI for Teaching and Learning.* Youngstown State University, Youngstown, OH.

Alby, C. (2024, February 20). *The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Higher Ed: Shaping the Change.* [Keynote]. Tacoma Community College. Tacoma, WA.

Alby, C. (Dec. 12, 2023). *AI and Education.* [Invited keynote]. Tufts University December Teaching Symposium. Tufts University. Medford, MA.

Alby, C. (Nov. 15, 2023). *AI for good: Supporting learning and well-being in the 21st century.* Common Dialogue Day. [Keynote for students]. Siena Heights University. Adrian, MI.

Alby, C. (Nov. 3, 2023). *Teaching and learning in the age of AI.* [Workshop]. Dalton State University. Dalton, GA.

Alby, C., Kelly, K, and Coopman, C. (Oct. 18, 2023). *AI in Education.* [Presentation]. Symposium on Unlocking the Power of Artificial Intelligence. Portland Community College. Portland, OR.

Alby, C. (2023, Oct. 16). *The impact of artificial intelligence on higher ed: Shaping the change.* [Webinar]. University System of Georgia.

Zehnder, C., Alby, C., & Kleine, K.. (2023, Sept 26). *Intentional, Joyful, and Affirming Course Beginnings* [Presentation]. The Washington Center for Improving Undergraduate Education, Olympia, WA.

Alby, C. (Sept. 20, 2023). *But how do I DO it? How to get what you need from AI.* [Webinar]. University System of Georgia.

Alby, C. (Sept. 18, 2023). *AI and Your Classroom.* [Presentation]. Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL.

Alby, C. (2023, August 23). *When learning must matter: Course design for transformative education* [Keynote]. College of the Desert, Desert Palms, CA.

Alby, C. (2023, August 17). *The impact of AI on higher ed: Shaping the change.* [Workshop]. Tiffin University, Tiffin, OH.

Alby, C. (Aug. 14, 2023). *Joy unplugged: Amplifying classroom success with "The Art of Gathering."* [Invited keynote]. Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO.

Alby, C. (2023, August 11). *Resilient assessment in response to AI* [Day long workshop]. Mercer University, Macon, GA.

Alby, C. (July 26, 2023.) Preparing for AI: How will we get from here to where we want to be? [Workshop]. Northeast Lakeview College, Universal City, TX.

Alby, C. (2023, June 2). *The impact of ChatGPT and artificial intelligence on education* [Keynote address]. AI Symposium. College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.

Alby, C. (2023, May 19). *Reclaiming our joy of learning & teaching* [Keynote address]. Western Carolina University, Cullowee, NC.

Alby, C. (2023, May 12). The impact of ChatGPT and artificial intelligence on education [Keynote address]. Portland State University, Portland, OR.

Alby, C. (2023, May 1). *Choreographing innovation: Shaping the future of higher education* [Keynote address]. Enriching Scholarship Conference. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

Alby, C. (2023, March 29). *AI is booming: Where do we go from here?* [Presentation]. Moreno Valley College, Moreno Valley, CA.

Ide, C., & Alby, C. (2023, March 28). *Can note-taking support active learning? Using "notes that stick" in the college classroom* [Presentation]. USG Teaching and Learning Conference. Athens, GA.

Mittelstadt, M., Alby, C., *McCrae, R., & Domizi, D. (2023, March 28). ChatGPT take over!: ChatGPT, AI and beyond* [Presentation]. USG Teaching and Learning Conference. Athens GA.

Cribbs A., Alby C., & Schwartz J. (2023 March 27). *Flourishing in difficult times* [Presentation]. USG Teaching and Learning Conference. Athens GA.

Alby C. (2023 March 23). *The impact of AI on teaching* [Panel discussion]. Faculty Innovations for Student Success Showcase. Florida International University, Miami, FL.

Alby C. (2023 February 23). *Teaching and learning in the ChatGPT era* [Presentation]. Walla Walla University, Walla Walla, WA.

Alby C. (2023 February 22). *Authentic and transparent assessment* [Workshop]. Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, GA.

Alby C. (2023 February 15). *ChatGPT: A portal to a new vision for higher ed* [Presentation]. Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, AR.

Alby C. et al. (2023 February 7). *ChatGPT café* [Panel presentation]. Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA.

Alby C. (2023 February 7). *Teaching and learning in the age of AI* [Presentation]. New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM.

Alby C. et al. (2023 February 2). *ChatGPT: Teaching in the age of AI* [Panel presentation]. Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, Wise, VA.

Alby C. (2023 January 27). *ChatGPT: Opportunities and threats* [Presentation]. Mercer University, Atlanta, GA.

Zehnder, C. and Alby, C. (2023 January). Intentional, joyful, and affirming course beginnings and endings. [Plenary session] AAC&U PKAL Conference, Amherst, MA.

Alby, C. (Dec. 23, 2022). The nail in the coffin: How AI could be the impetus to reimagine education [web log]. Retrieved from https://learningthatmatters.weebly.com/resources.html.

Metzker, J. Kleine, K., Alby, C. and Zehnder, C. (June 27, 2022). *Transforming at the root: A grassroots approach to faculty development through visionary fiction*. COPLAC Annual Meeting. Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams MA.

Zehnder, C. Metzker, J., and Alby, C. (Nov. 18, 2022). *The art of the workshop: Enchanting beginnings and endings*. POD Network Annual Conference. Seattle, WA.

Alby, C. (Oct. 21, 2022). *Boosting well-being to boost learning*. Invited keynote. Tutor Association Conference.

Alby, C. (June 27, 2022). *Through the portal: Disrupting the paradigm through course design and HIPs*. Invited keynote. Northern Kentucky University.

Metzker, J. Kleine, K. and Alby, C. (June 4, 2022). *Faculty renewal through collaborative course redesign*. The Teaching Professor Conference. Atlanta, GA.

Alby, C. (Mar. 2022). *Practical strategies for flourishing in academia.* Invited keynote. Middle Georgia SoTL Conference. Macon, GA.

Alby, C. and Kleine, K. (Mar. 2022). *Development as revitalization.* Southeast Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium Conference. Auburn, AL.

Alby, C., Zehnder, C., Kleine, K., and Metzker, J. (Feb. 14, 2022). *Reclaiming the joy of teaching*. Faculty Focus.

Alby, C. (Feb. 2022). *Getting our groove back*. Invited keynote. Salisbury College Teaching and Learning Conference. Salisbury, Maryland.

Spirou, C., Cofer, J. and Alby C. (Jan. 2022). *Taking HIPs to scale.* Invited presentation. University of Wisconsin.

Alby, C. (Nov. 2021). *Practical strategies for flourishing in difficult times*. Invited presentation. Brenau University.

Myers, B. Alby, C., Nickalaou, N., and Silver, L. (Aug. 2021). *Teaching and pedagogy.* Academy of Legal Studies in Business Annual Conference.

Zehnder, C. Kleine, K. and Alby, C. (Aug. 2021). *Designing engaging, inclusive, and effective assignments.* Summer Institute. The Evergreen State College.

Cofer, J., Alby, C., and Stratton, M. (Feb. 2021). *Responding to change in the classroom*. Invited presentation. USG Momentum Summit.

Alby, C. and Johnson, M. (January, 2020). *Faculty development for momentum.* Momentum Summit. Athens, GA.

Alby, C. (Invited keynote, August, 2019). *Strategies for maximizing learning and engagement.* Wesleyan College, Teaching and Learning Day. Macon, GA.

Zehnder, C., Alby, C., Burt, A., and Metzker, J. (May, 2019). *Designing for equity: Putting social belonging and mindset interventions into practice*. The Teaching Professor Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Alby, C. (Invited workshop, May, 2019). *Student success and the struggling student: TiLT and targeted interventions.* Spelman College. Atlanta, GA.

McConnell, K., Alby, C, Ben-Avie, M, and Rose, T. (April, 2019). *Using VALUE data to influence touchpoints.* AAC&U National Webinar.

Smith, C. Sewell, J., and Alby, C. (February, 2019). *Journey to the center of the HIPs: Adventures in curricular renewal.* HIPs in the States National Conference. Bowling Green, KY.

Alby, C., Sewell, J. and Smith, C. (Invited panelists, February, 2019). *A qualitative study of inclusive excellence in High Impact Practices at Georgia College.* NASH Taking Student Success to Scale Conference. Nashville, TN.

Metzker, J., Alby, C. Zehnder, C. (February, 2018). *Using dilemmas, issues, and questions to frame transformative course-building*. AAC&U General Education and Assessment Conference. Philadelphia, PA.