



2025

# ANNUAL REPORT

Center for Faculty Development

Prepared By :

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With Input on Survey and Statistical Data from

Dr. M'hammed Abdous, Associate Director

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Faculty Development (CFD) was founded in 2017 with a focus on advancing the University's agenda for teaching excellence by offering robust professional development, resources, and support services to faculty at all levels, tenured, tenure-track, lecturers, instructors, adjuncts, and administrative professional faculty. Dr. Annette Finley-Croswright, Professor of History & University Professor was named the Founding Director, and the CFD was housed under the Office (now Division) of Academic Affairs. In October 2025 it was announced that Dr. Finley-Croswright was ending her leadership role at the CFD to take research leave and then return to research and teaching.

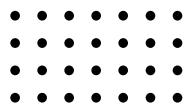
This Executive Summary thus highlights the final months of the Center for Faculty Development. The number of attendees at events remained strong even during a time of staffing shortages. Dr. Finley-Croswright ran most operations in the four-month period from August to November 2025. During that time the CFD reported 584 attendees at events. With fewer 12-month administrative personnel hosting events, the 584 attendees compare favorably with the 1621 participants in 2024-2025 in a period covering 12 months when three staff members were offering faculty development events. The 584 number is particularly significant because Dr. Finley-Croswright uncovered the fact that CFD email was not going to faculty. She reported this to ITS in September 2025 and in October 2025 ITS confirmed that CFD email was going to administrators and classified staff instead of administrators and faculty. The problem was resolved in mid-October. ITS determined that the merger with Eastern Virginia Medical School had negatively impacted the dissemination of some email distribution lists.

The Center for Faculty Development always worked to create a sense of community dedicated to academic excellence. In spring 2025 the Center researched faculty burnout and held numerous information sessions to get faculty input and prepare programming. In fall 2025 the CFD deployed an initiative to address "burnout" entitled "Banishing Burnout: Flourishing as Faculty." The annual mini-conference known as the "Days of Teaching" was held from September 29-October 1 and explored "Expanding Mindsets: Inspiring Listening, Communication, and Critical Thinking in our Classrooms." The CFD launched another round of Course-based Undergraduate Research Grants (CURE) in October 2025 and transferred the administration of these grants to the Office of Undergraduate Research in December 2025. The CFD continued to partner with divisions and offices around campus and especially benefitted from collaboration with the Professional Development division of the Macon and Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences on the medical campus. Dr. Finley-Croswright also served on the Operations Committee of the General Education Reform initiative.

We welcome you to read the final Annual Report of the Center for Faculty Development before the launch of the new Center for Faculty Excellence in 2026. We thank you for years of support and collaboration focused on faculty and student success.

# LEADERSHIP

Fall 2025



## Annette Finley-Croswright, Ph.D.

Dr. Annette Finley-Croswright was the Founding Director of the CFD from 2017-2025. She is Professor of History at Old Dominion University. She earned her B.A. from the University of Richmond and her Ph.D. from Emory University. As CFD director, she worked to empower faculty to excel in their professional lives by offering development opportunities that engaged them at all stages of their career trajectories as teachers, researchers, or both. Her leadership encouraged faculty to improve their knowledge of evidence-based pedagogical practices that enhance student success, and she worked with campus collaborators to support faculty success and wellbeing. As a scholar, Dr. Finley-Croswright's research focuses on religious and political violence, right-wing extremism, and genocide. She has published four books, many articles, and won grants from prestigious external agencies. At ODU she holds the distinguished title, "University Professor." After eight years, she ended her role as CFD Founding Director in December 2025. (Picture below left).

## M'hammed Abdous, Ph.D.

Dr. M'hammed Abdous was the Associate Director for Faculty Innovation and Teaching with Technology at the Center for Faculty Development. He earned his M.A. and Ph.D. from Laval University in Canada. His research focuses on emerging educational technologies with topics that include AI-powered learning platforms, instructional course design and academic podcasting. In 2015, he won the Bourne Outstanding Achievement Award in Online Education. At the CFD, Dr. Abdous provided leadership in faculty development programs linked to teaching with technology and using data to better understand our students. His most recent focus was on helping faculty develop strategies to reduce high DFW rates. Dr. Abdous left the CFD in late October 2025. (Picture below center).

## Jay O'Toole, Ph.D.

Dr. Jay O'Toole is an Associate Professor of Management in the Strome College of Business. In late summer of 2025, he was named the first Provost's Fellow for Faculty Development to enhance resources and programming for faculty. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and holds a Bachelor of Science from Miami University. He studies improvisation, entrepreneurship, and innovation. His research focuses on how teams and organizations can quickly coordinate collective actions by leveraging knowledge-based resources. During the fall semester he worked on creating a faculty success program for new early career faculty. He continues as Provost's Fellow with the new Center for Faculty Excellence. (Picture on right).



# CENTER FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT



AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2025

## Programming

# CFD DAYS OF TEACHING

Sept 29-Oct 1,  
2025

# EXPANDING MINDSETS:

Inspiring Listening, Communication, and  
Critical Thinking in Our Classrooms

## CFD DAYS OF TEACHING

The Center for Faculty Development hosted a 2-day mini-conference with one pre-conference session. The theme of “Expanding Mindsets” focused on adaptable pedagogy and high impact learning that promotes effective teaching behaviors and student success in a rapidly evolving world where the volume of information available on any subject creates constant learning challenges. Conversations included specialists from a variety of academic disciplines exploring communication, mentorship, and the development of growth mindsets.

## PRESENTERS

The entire three-day event included 15 presenters and 108 attendees. The presenters included Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani, Mindy Gumpert, Nicole Willock, Agnieszka Whelan, Angela Wilson, Carolyne King, Tony Perez, Jay O’Toole, Cathleen Rhodes, Annette Finley-Croswright, and M’hammed Abdous from ODU’s Main Campus and LaConda Fanning and Renee Morales from the VHS Medical Campus. Special guests include UVA’s Dorothe Bach and mentoring consultant Etta Ward.

## HIGHLIGHTS

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**KEYNOTE WITH  
ODU’S TONY  
PEREZ**

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**KEYNOTE WITH  
UVA’S  
DOROTHE  
BACH**

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**WORKSHOP  
ON EFFECTIVE  
MENTORSHIP**

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**SPECIALIZED  
PANELS AND  
WORKSHOPS**

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**FACE-TO-FACE,  
HYBRID, AND  
ZOOM  
FORMATS**

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Every year the CFD puts on a mini-conference called the “Days of Teaching.” This year’s conference on “Expanding Mindsets” included ten sessions. A pre-conference session on September 29 was led by Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani, Director of International Collaborations, and included a panel of four faculty addressing “COIL and International Education: High Impact Learning Builds Global Mindsets.” Dr. Schiaffini-Vedani explained afterwards that her discussions with Mindy Gumpert, Dr. Nicole Wilcock, Dr. Agnieszka Whelan, and Angela Wilson were so enlightening that they immediately planned further collaboration.

Each day of the conference began with introductions from the CFD’s Annette Finley-Crosswhite and M’hammed Abdous. The Day 2 opening included a summary round up from Day 1. Sessions occurred in multiple formats offering maximum flexibility.

# Days of Teaching

On Day 1 Dr. Carolyn King offered a workshop on motivating students to read. She explored reading disconnections and the ways faculty sometimes assume too much about student reading skills. Dr. Tony Perez followed with the Day 1 Keynote entitled “Cultivating a Course Culture to Support Student Motivation, Engagement, and Success.” Dr. Perez offered a fascinating discussion focused on nurturing student belonging and increasing student autonomy as strategies for empowering them to learn.



Keynote Speaker. Tony Perez, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, Provost's Fellow for Student Academic Success

Dr. Jay O’Toole followed with a session drawn from his management classes and focused on having difficult conversations in the classroom. Visiting speaker Etta Ward, Chief Empowerment Officer with Full Circle Consulting, followed with a workshop offering mentorship insights. Cathleen Rhodes concluded Day 1 with “Championing Queer Student Success.” Rhodes explored statistics and discussed ways to create safe spaces in our classrooms for everyone to succeed.

Day 2 began with Dr. LaConda Fanning and Dr. Renee Morales from VHS leading a face-to-face workshop examining inclusive culture and workforce development. Dr. Dorothe Bach, Associate Director and Professor at the University of Virginia’s Center for Teaching and Learning hosted the day’s final workshop. Entitled “Generative Listening: A Tool For Fostering Creativity, Celebrating Difference, and Deepening Connection,” Dr. Bach offered an interactive conversation engaging participants in listening processes and practices as methods for developing “deep listening” to enhance appreciation for human difference and interconnection. Part of the session was directed at faculty as classroom instructors, but Dr. Bach also addressed faculty wellbeing and the ways “deep listening” can be transformative for everyone.



# BANISHING BURNOUT: FLOURISHING AS FACULTY

CFD Series 2025

In spring 2025, Dr. Annette Finley-Crowhite began meeting with faculty to discuss their concerns about faculty burnout. In May she met with Dr. Richard Handel, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Director of Virginia Health Sciences Student Mental Health Program, and with VHS Faculty Affairs and Professional Development. Dr. Handel offered advice and resources in the planning phase of a new burnout focus. During the fall of 2025, the Center for Faculty Development hosted a seven-event series addressing burnout. Provost's Fellow for Faculty Development Dr. Jay O'Toole helped CFD Director Annette Finley-Crowhite organize and lead many of these sessions. He co-hosted the burnout book read.

Two events were held in September for faculty to talk about burnout, engage in storytelling, and express their frustrations. Two panel discussions followed later in September. The first panel included Drs. Andrew Bennett, Associate Professor, Management, Judith Preston, Clinical Assistant Professor, Counseling and Human Services, and Jason Saltmarsh, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Workforce Development. A second panel followed with Drs. Konstantin Cigularov, Associate Professor, Psychology, Mallory McCord, Assistant Professor, Psychology, and Marciana Szklo-Coxe, Associate Professor, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Environmental Health. The panels created spaces for exploring understanding of burnout and considering mitigations stressing the importance of sleep as a restorative priority and creating community to prevent isolation. Both panels can be visited again on the CFD website main page.

In October Dr. Brynn Sheehan, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and the Director of the Research and Infrastructure Service Enterprise (RISE) in the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences at Old Dominion University, held a workshop entitled "Mindful Communities: Integrating Mental Health Strategies for Sustainable Wellness." To allow faculty a "safe space," this workshop was not recorded.

# Burnout Continued

Dr. Sheehan gave the audience myriad interventions, not the least of which was an exercise tracking how often we grab for our phones. She also emphasized building daily wellness habits such as 1) Considering gratitude and writing about positive aspects each day; 2) Helping others as a means of doing good and increasing positive emotions; 3) Pairing less enjoyable tasks with pleasurable ones; and 4) Connecting with others, moving away from social isolation and establishing community. All our panelists emphasized the importance of human connection as a significant intervention to combat burnout.

These formal panel discussions and dedicated workshops were enhanced with other conversations that occurred during the CFD Days of Teaching and the Academic Affairs Vitality Days events. Open-Writes offered faculty time to block off their calendars for group writing, hopefully easing the stress of carving out time to research and write. As mentioned elsewhere in this annual report, Professor of Psychology, Dr. Kristin Heron helped the CFD facilitate these open write events and led several sessions.

The CFD burnout series ended the fall semester with a book read of Rebecca Pope-Ruark's *Unraveling Faculty Burnout: Pathways to Reckoning and Renewal*. The best part of the event was that Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Dr. Amy Johnson arranged for Dr. Pope-Ruark to attend our final book read session. In this discussion Pope-Ruark emphasized the importance of campus leaders owning the issue of burnout, organizing more conversations about it, and identifying where it is and is not occurring on our college campuses. In the end, universities need to cultivate wellbeing as a strategic priority, build a language around it, and find ways to mitigate it.

As the CFD series ended, faculty were given bibliographic resources focused on burnout and a worksheet for planning winter break goals and prioritizing wellbeing. Faculty were also encouraged multiple times to participate in the wellbeing series Dr. Shanda Jenkins is offering this 2025-2026 academic year through the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention. The more we discuss burnout the more we work to de-stigmatize it. The more we focus on wellbeing, the more we increase the chances for faculty happiness and success.



**Left: Dr. Brynn Sheehan, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and the Director of the Research and Infrastructure Service Enterprise (RISE) at VHS.**

# JAY O'TOOLE, PROVOST'S FELLOW

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## New Faculty Success Program



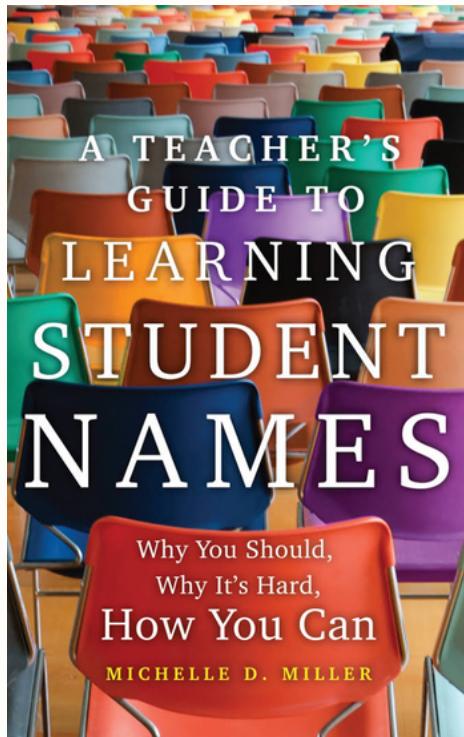
In August 2025 Provost and Executive Vice President for Faculty Affairs Brian Payne announced the appointment of Dr. Jay O'Toole as Provost's Fellow for Faculty Development. Dr. O'Toole is an Associate Professor of Management with the Strome College of Business. He already had a long history of working with the CFD to enhance its programming. During the fall semester he facilitated two kickoff sessions as part of the series "Banishing Burnout: Flourishing as Faculty" and co-led the burnout book read. He also delivered a virtual workshop titled "Decision Frames and Having Difficult Conversations: Lessons from Teaching Management" during the CFD's Days of Teaching Mini-Conference. Dr. O'Toole has also been instrumental in leading conversations about devising a strategic path forward for faculty development.

To better understand the perspectives of early career faculty, Dr. O'Toole spent the fall meeting with faculty from across ODU's campuses, colleges, schools, and departments. He spoke with nearly two dozen tenure-track teaching and research faculty, lecturers, clinical professors, and adjunct professors. These meetings lasted between 30 and 90 minutes and were aimed at achieving two goals: first, to improve understanding of how to support new faculty broadly; and second, to help design and implement a New Faculty Success Program, which will leverage resources available to all ODU faculty through the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD). The New Faculty Success Program will rollout in spring 2026.

# OPENING THE SEMESTER

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The Center for Faculty Development was always involved in offering orientation and resources to new faculty. In August 2025 Dr. Finley-Croswright led a pedagogy workshop at New Faculty Orientation and then organized and led a breakout session offering advice to tenure-track faculty. The session included Drs. Holly Gaff, Jay O'Toole, Roderick Graham, Kristin Heron, and Yvette Pearson. As we got closer to the start of classes, Dr. Finley-Croswright also led a syllabus design workshop, which she offered bi-annually to help faculty, especially new faculty, prepare engaging syllabi.



In fall 2025 Dr. Finley-Croswright launched a new early semester workshop entitled **“Promoting Belonging: Memory Tips for Learning Student names.”** Neuroscientists indicate that learning proper names is more challenging than remembering other kinds of information. Even so, learning student names is one of the most important strategies faculty can employ to help students want to learn and feel that they belong. Learning student names is an essential pedagogical practice.

To foreground name learning, the workshop offered a discussion about the neuroscience of name retrieval and explored the damaging impact on students that occurs when we either don't learn their names or we mispronounce them. The workshop addressed multiple practical tips all faculty can use to learn student names. These included taking advantage of Day 1 to prioritize name learning with faculty leaving that first session having “spoken” all student names several times. We explored other strategies drawn from Michelle Miller’s book featured on the left.

# Collaboration

## Vitality Days

The ODU main and medical campuses combined via the Division of Academic Affairs to offer a wonderful program focused on helping faculty to thrive entitled "Vitality Days." It included a series of events over two days in October. Guests included Dr. J. Bryan Sexton from the Duke Center for the Advancement of Well-Being Science and Dr. Michael Sheehy, Director of Research at the University of Virginia's Contemplative Sciences Center.

## Career Readiness

On October 22 the CFD co-sponsored an event with the Center for Career and Leadership Development entitled "Empowering Students for Career Success: Teaching Practices That Work" led by the CCLD's Executive Director, Dr. Jenn Grimm. A panel discussed key strategies to prepare students for the workforce. It included Shelly Beaver from Recreational Therapy, Dr. Orlando Ayala from Engineering Technology, Michelle Carpenter from Marketing, and Dr. Lynn Ridinger from Sport Management.

## Mastering Media

The CFD partnered with University Communications on October 28 for a media training webinar. Led by Assistant Vice President for Public Relations Amber Kennedy, the focus included: Best practices for engaging with media; Strategies for sharing faculty research and expertise; FOIA guidelines and University policies; and Interview techniques.



Student Career Readiness Panel Discussion

# WRITING

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## Flourishing as Faculty: Open Writes

The CFD developed a focus on faculty writing that began in September with a session including Dr. Helen Crompton discussing “Writing Academic Articles,” Dr. Holly Gaff exploring “Writing with Co-Authors,” and Dr. Annette Finley-Croswright addressing “Book Publishing.” The writing focus included various “Open Writes” throughout the semester. Hosted by Dr. Finley-Croswright and Dr. Kristin Heron, faculty had opportunities to block off time on their calendars and get together in online ZOOM rooms to research or write.

## Improving Student Writing

The CFD partnered with the Writing Center to offer information to faculty about student writing and resources for students. Three sessions were led by either Lecturer in English & Director of the Writing Center Meg Boeshart or Assistant Professor in English & Director, Writing-across-the-Curriculum & Writing-in-the-Disciplines Carolyne King. The series included: 1) An Information Session on the Writing Center; 2) A Focus on Motivating Students to Read; and 3) A Workshop on Source Use for Student Writing.



The talented tutors of the Writing Center include from left to right, Dana Broadus, Kaylee Hoffman, Chinecherem Arum, and Clara Synowiec. Meg Boeshart is in the back row. Dr. Carolyne King is on the far right.



# KEY INITIATIVES

## FacSheet

FacSheet was a monthly review the CFD published every August through April. FacSheet was more than a newsletter and not quite a journal. We offered short news items, longer articles written from a pedagogical perspective, book reviews of recent publications, reflections on academic trends and faculty research, and specialized reports.

## Survey

The Center for Faculty Development conducted a faculty survey in spring 2025 to identify faculty needs and preferences. The survey ran from April 28- June 3, 2025. Of the 205 submissions, 124 valid responses were recorded representing a 9% response rate. We used the survey to plan 2025 programming. A comparison of the 2024 and 2025 surveys is included in this report.

## Evidence-based Teaching

The CFD's Dr. M'hammed Abdous developed a series of fall interactive workshops entitled "Evidence-based Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies" designed to improve classroom instruction with knowledge drawn from research that promotes student engagement and enhances instructor practice. These workshops continued offerings from the previous year focused on demographic data tied to our ODU students. The workshops included: 1) Making Learning Stick: Using Research and Reflection; 2) Help Students Use Feedback; and 3) Keeping Students Focused.



## OTHER INITIATIVES

### Portfolio Review & Annual Review

Dr. Finley-Crowhite worked with Dr. Kristian Petersen in Arts and Letters to offer tenure-track faculty information about preparing their annual reviews.

### CURE Grants

The CFD promoted infusing research methodologies into course assignments and designing courses using the CURE model—or Course-based Undergraduate Research. CUREs engage students in research or creative experiences to produce new knowledge. In October the CFD initiated the call for a new round of CURE funding. In December Dr. Finley-Crowhite helped promote the transfer of CURES to the Office of Undergraduate Research.

### General Education Reform

Dr. Finley-Crowhite sat on the Operations Committee for General Education Reform and along with the larger group helped to develop and promote three potential models along with the common framework. She sat on a communications subcommittee and participated in the Town Halls and Model Showcase. With FacSheet, the CFD promoted information about General Education Reform.

### White Papers

The CFD's Dr. M'hammed Abdous produced a number of bibliographies and white papers in fall 2025. The bibliographies addressed burnout and career education. Dr. Abdous also produced a 20-page white paper entitled "From Industry to Academia: Evidence Based Teaching for Professionals Entering Academia." He also developed for the Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences a 30-page white paper entitled "The Case for Mentorship in Academic Medicine: Strategies for Faculty Retention and Professional Growth."

# SCENES FROM EVENTS



Left: Annette Finley-Croswright with Remica Bingham-Risher, the new Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence and Engagement who will head the new Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE). Below left, a recent Virginia Educational Development Collaborative (VDEC) meeting at William and Mary. Below top right, a Career Readiness panel event from October and bottom, Etta Ward, Chief Empowerment Officer with Full Circle Consulting leading a Days of Teaching virtual workshop on mentoring.



# THE FINAL CFD EVENT

On November 19, 2025 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Library Commons, the CFD held its final event, a discussion of the newly released PBS documentary film “The American Revolution” hosted by the CFD, the College of Arts and Letters, and the Department of History. This was a fitting way for Dr. Finley-Croswright to launch her return to the Department of History while uniting the campus in a national conversation about the liberties and freedoms associated with the American Revolution.

A clip reel provided by the Ken Burns’ organization was screened from 4:00-5:00 p.m. before the actual event began. A “virtual” Campus Conversation followed with filmmakers Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and their distinguished guests held live at New York University. Afterwards, the History Department’s Dr. Tim Orr and Dr. Marvin Chiles, specialists in American History, spoke and answered questions posed by Dr. Finley-Croswright. The event was extremely well attended by faculty, students, staff, and some from the greater Hampton Roads community and included some impromptu concluding comments from Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Brian Payne.



## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION CAMPUS CONVERSATION

A VIRTUAL DISCUSSION WITH FILMMAKERS KEN BURNS AND SARAH BOTSTEIN

During premiere week of THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, PBS invites college faculty and students to an hour-long virtual discussion with Ken Burns & Sarah Botstein hosted by New York University. Afterwards ODU History Professors Timothy Orr and Marvin Chiles will continue the discussion. Pizza provided!

Sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters, the Department of History, & the Center for Faculty Development

### PANELISTS

- Ken Burns, Filmmaker
- Sarah Botstein, Filmmaker
- Maggie Blackhawk, Professor of Law, New York University
- Christopher Brown, Professor of History, Columbia University
- Patrick J. Egan, Professor of Politics & Public Policy, New York University, Moderator.

### REGISTER HERE



### EVENT DETAILS

11.19.2025  
5:00 - 7:00 PM  
PERRY LIBRARY  
ROOMS 1310-1311



Scenes from the event



# CENTER FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT



## Participation & Assessment

EVENTS FROM AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2025  
COMPARISON OF SURVEYS FROM 2024 & 2025

# Participation/Attendance



## Faculty Development Programming August-November 2025

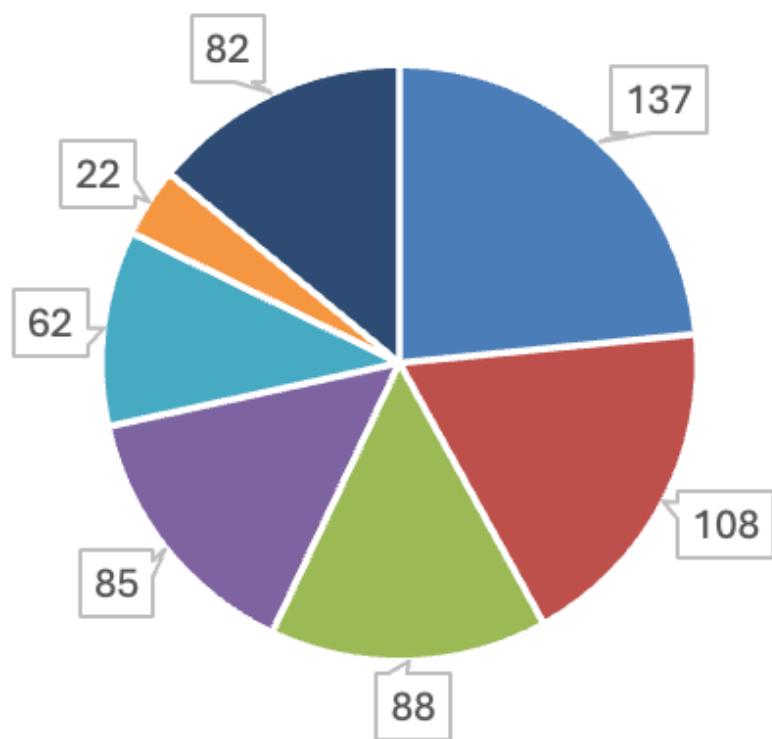
From August to November, the Center for Faculty Development and its campus partners hosted 33 events that served 584 participants. The Teaching & Learning workshops had the highest overall attendance, followed closely by the Days of Teaching series, which involved the greatest number of collaborating units. Although there were fewer Media and Communications sessions, they generated strong engagement. The Burnout/Wellness and Writing/Open Write programs provided consistent support for smaller groups. Orientation programming and a targeted career readiness session reached specific audiences and involved broad, cross-campus partnerships.

| Category               | Events    | Total Attendance | Partner Units |
|------------------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| Teaching & Learning    | 6         | 137              | 3             |
| Days of Teaching (DoT) | 8         | 108              | 8             |
| Media / Communications | 2         | 88               | 2             |
| Burnout / Wellness     | 7         | 85               | 6             |
| Writing / Open Write   | 7         | 62               | 3             |
| Career Readiness       | 1         | 22               | 2             |
| Orientation            | 2         | 82               | 6             |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>33</b> | <b>584</b>       | <b>30</b>     |

# Participation



## Total Attendance



- Teaching & Learning
- Days of Teaching (DoT)
- Media / Communications
- Burnout / Wellness
- Writing / Open Write
- Career Readiness
- Orientation

# Assessment



## Center for Faculty Development Quantitative Score Evaluations (Fall 2025)

| Category                               | Range   | Average | # of Respondents |
|--|---------|---------|------------------|
| Teaching & Learning Workshops          | 3.6-5.0 | 4.5     | 28               |
| Days of Teaching Mini-Conference       | 3.8-5.0 | 4.6     | 27               |
| Burnout Panels, Book Read, & Workshops | 4.2-5.0 | 4.6     | 18               |
| Open-Writes                            | 3.8-5.0 | 4.7     | 4                |

## Center for Faculty Development Qualitative Comments (Fall 2025)

We had 584 participants in the 33 events held from August to November 2025; however, we only distribute surveys to participants of events in which the CFD is the main host and organizer which gave us a nearly 20% response rate to our events (77 responses for 392 attendees). The comments were overwhelmingly positive with only two somewhat negative reflections, both from a teaching and learning workshop: 1) “Most of the information I was already aware of;” and 2) “The material wasn’t what I was expecting.” Most faculty appreciated, however, the evidence-based instruction and the work the CFD did to create community. One attendee wrote, “The opportunity to hear colleagues share ideas is very helpful.”

### Positive Comments Included:

**Other comments included:** “I will try to plan a short day-one activity for learning names that can be used again in the semester to remember names,” and “I’ll make a greater effort to focus on pronouncing students’ names to engage with them and to make them feel respected.” One attendee noted, “I learned more about creating memory pathways to help me learn names and it is important to do so to create a sense of belonging.”

# More Comments



Several attendees commented on the two keynotes and one guest speaker we had presenting at our Days of Teaching Mini-Conference, Dr. Tony Perez from ODU, Dr. Dorothe Bach from the University of Virginia, and Etta Ward, Chief Empowerment Officer at Full Circle Consulting. An attendee commented, "I'll use the powerful pedagogies, tools, and strategies to expand mindsets in my classes." "One person noted, "I immediately saw the value of placing radical listening into my class," while another stated, "I learned so much about generative listening and how this skill can be applied to both teaching and research." Finally, one concluded, I'll apply all these strategies that I learned in the session for more success and to get more effective mentorship."

Since Dr. Annette Finley-Croswright stepped down on December 5, 2025 as CFD Director after 8 ½ years, there were many statements made in public and in private email about her leadership. Most of these comments were personal and private. Among the less personal comments, here are a few of the more general ones.

- Thanks for the hard work and capable leadership directing the Center for Faculty Development.
- Something fantastic was built in the CFD under Annette's leadership!
- We really appreciate all you have done for ODU.
- Thanks so much for doing the work of organization.
- Thank you for your dedication to higher education for both students and faculty and staff.
- I consider myself blessed to have worked with the CFD.
- Thank you for your work in developing the CFD. You are a real role model.
- You and your work as Director of the CFD have made such a positive impact at ODU.
- Thank you for leading this important effort for all these years.
- Thank you for getting us through the COVID transition to online.
- Thank you for your service!
- The CFD offered such a variety of resources to support faculty. You anticipated so many of our needs and addressed our concerns. Bravo.

Several comments acknowledged the leadership of **Dr. M'hammed Abdous**.

- M'hammed will be so missed. He was such an expert on teaching with technology and presenting evidence-based workshops.
- Dr. Abdous's workshops are always so fact-filled. I appreciate his preparation.

# 2024 and 2025 Surveys Results

## Comparison of 2024 and 2025 CFD Faculty Needs Assessment Reports

| Key Area                                    | 2024 Report  | 2025 Report   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Survey Participation</b>                 | <b>197</b> valid responses from 339 submissions.   | <b>124</b> valid responses from 205 submissions.  |
| <b>Respondent Demographics</b>              | Collected detailed demographic data on <b>gender</b> and <b>race/ethnicity</b>   | <b>Did not report</b> data on gender or race/ethnicity. Focused on college affiliation and faculty status.  |
| <b>Top Topics of Interest</b>               | The highest-interest topics were spread across categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engaging Students:</b> 73 respondents (41.0%)</li> <li><b>Understanding AI:</b> (40.0%)</li> <li><b>Research Grants:</b> (39.0%)</li> </ul> | Interest consolidated around <b>technology</b> . Top topics were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Understanding new technologies:</b> 70 respondents (56.3%)</li> <li><b>Technology and plagiarism:</b> 61 respondents (49.2%)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Barriers &amp; Participation Factors</b> | Key barriers cited were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Competing priorities:</b> ~136 respondents (69.2%)</li> <li><b>Inconvenient scheduling:</b> ~100 respondents (50.5%)</li> </ul>   | While time and scheduling remain top barriers, <b>new, specific concerns emerged</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Competing priorities:</b> 102 respondents (82.3%)</li> <li><b>Inconvenient scheduling:</b> 65 respondents (52.4%)</li> <li><b>Health Safety:</b> Explicit requests for "cleaner air events" and air purifiers.</li> <li><b>Institutional Climate:</b> Direct mentions of a "toxic department/college" and "bullies at ODU" as barriers.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Emerging Qualitative Themes</b>          | Suggestions focused on better scheduling, incentives, and discipline-specific content. AI  | The call for <b>Artificial Intelligence</b> support became much more urgent and specific, with requests for   |

# 2024 and 2025 Surveys Results

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | was mentioned as a topic of interest.  | practical, "nitty gritty" workshops on implementation.   |
| <b>Preferred Event Formats</b>                           | <p>Top preferences were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Live online sessions:</b> 151 respondents (76.3%)</li> <li><b>60-minute workshops:</b> 110 respondents (55.6%)</li> <li><b>Archived online sessions:</b> 95 respondents (48.0%)</li> </ul>  | <p>The order of preference was identical, with similar or higher interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Live online sessions:</b> 99 respondents (79.8%)</li> <li><b>60-minute workshops:</b> 76 respondents (61.3%)</li> <li><b>Archived online sessions:</b> 57 respondents (46.0%)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Top Career Development Topics ("Very Interested")</b> | <p>High interest was shown for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Writing grants:</b> (34.0%)</li> <li><b>Academic freedom:</b> (33.0%)</li> <li><b>Faculty burnout:</b> (32.0%)</li> </ul>  | <p>Focus shifted more toward workplace dynamics and rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Academic freedom:</b> 44 respondents (35.1%)</li> <li><b>Working with challenging people:</b> 43 respondents (34.5%)</li> <li><b>Leadership development:</b> 41 respondents (32.8%)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Emphasis on Research</b>                              | <p>Faculty showed interest in <b>research grants</b> (39.75 %) as well as more attention to <b>academic and trade publishing</b> (31.65%) and <b>networking (26.79%)</b>.</p>  | <p><b>Networking</b> continued to be a major concern (35.1%) as well as <b>grant writing</b> (31.8%). Faculty showed strong interest in <b>research collaboration</b> (29.9%).</p>   |
| <b>Mentoring</b>   | <p>One-on-one mentoring drew modest interest: <b>20.6% (40 of 194)</b> were "very likely" and <b>21.6% (42 of 194)</b> were "likely" to participate. Interest was highest among <b>Business faculty (35.71%)</b> and <b>non-tenured faculty (48.31%)</b> for instructor-led online workshops. Faculty emphasized mentoring as more effective when paired with incentives and departmental relevance.</p> | <p>Specific participation rates were not reported, but mentoring remained a strong theme. <b>Non-tenured faculty (55.65%, 69 of 124)</b> were the most engaged group overall. Faculty suggested developing structured, certificate-based mentoring series and emphasized the importance of formal recognition in annual reviews and promotion processes.</p> |

# OTHER COMPARATIVE INSIGHT

The 2023 COACHE survey had a 71% response rate. Compensation, service load, and lack of support for research were all identified as areas of concern. All COACHE surveys have flagged mentorship and more clarity on tenure and promotion as areas in need of improvement. These observations framed aspects of the National Science Foundation ADVANCE Adaptation grant the university was awarded in 2023. Unfortunately that grant was terminated by the Federal Government in 2025. Other comparative insight comes from a short survey the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention conducted in Spring 2025 (20 respondents). That survey highlighted overlap with concerns revealed in the CFD and/or COACHE surveys. These parallel observations include:

- A need for more mentorship (particularly for women of color).
- The desire for more opportunities to enhance networking and make cross-department and cross-college connections for research collaboration and to enhance sense of belonging.
- The challenges of expectations to do R1 research when R1 resources are not available. (This observation is especially true for faculty in Arts and Letters who do not have an R1 teach load).
- Attention to the attacks on higher education in Virginia and beyond.
- Ways to improve teaching, especially for early career faculty.

# CENTER FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT



2017-2025

## Short Retrospective

# WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS TIMELINE



CFD

## Attendees Per Year

| Years                     | Numbers      |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| 2017-2018 (7 months)      | 246          |
| 2018-2019 (12 months)     | 967          |
| 2019-2020 (12 months)     | 1112         |
| 2020-2021 (12 months)     | 3885         |
| 2021-2022 (12 months)     | 2159         |
| 2022-2023 (12 months)     | 1516         |
| 2023-2024 (12 months)     | 1463         |
| 2024-2025 (12 months)     | 1621         |
| 2025 (4 months)           | 584          |
| <b>Total (215 months)</b> | <b>13553</b> |

A review of the CFD participant numbers reveals significant trends. The largest participation occurred during the COVID pandemic when the university moved classes online. **Dr. Tomeka Wilcher**, the CFD Educational Program Developer, is recognized here for her extraordinary work during COVID. There were also times such as in 2022 when staffing shortages limited the number of workshops possible. The final year, 2025, reflects only 4 months of data. During COVID, the CFD was a focal point of faculty development, but post-COVID other divisions began offering faculty development workshops so that faculty had more workshop choices available outside the CFD.

# A Short History of the CFD



The Center for Faculty Development (CFD) was the vision of Dr. Austin Agho, then Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, revealing his deep belief in the importance of faculty development. He appointed Dr. Annette Finley-Croswhite, Professor of History and University Professor the Founding Director of the CFD in August of 2017. He next ran a national search for a new position, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. Dr. Katherine Hawkins took up that role in 2018 with oversight of the CFD, guiding it with expert leadership especially during the COVID pandemic. In later years Dr. Yvette Pearson became the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives representing Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Brian Payne, both dedicated to faculty development.

Over the years several individuals enhanced programming at the CFD. Dr. Joyce Armstrong was Assistant Director of the CFD from 2017-2019, Mr. David Simpson was the Technical Writer from 2019-2022. Dr. Tomeka Wilcher became the Center's first Educational Program Developer from 2020-2022, and Kristal Kinloch-Taylor followed in that role from 2023-2025. Dr. M'hammed Abdous took on the important position of Associate Director of Faculty Innovation and Teaching with Technology from 2023-2025. In fall 2025 the CFD also worked with the first Provost's Fellow for Faculty Development, Dr. Jay O'Toole, who continues in the position to offer vision and direction for future initiatives beyond 2025. Each named individual brought tremendous talent to the Center.

# A Short History of the CFD



The Center for Faculty Development opened its doors on January 31, 2018 with the goal of offering resources to faculty that are evidence-based, drawn from the scholarship on teaching and learning (SoTL), and aimed at student success. The CFD was quick to develop online workshops for faculty during the COVID shutdown. Resources and mentorship were also devised for faculty at all levels and stages of their careers. For example, the CFD developed workshops and events for the scholar-teacher focused on research productivity, and Founding Director Annette Finley-Croswright worked with Academic Affairs to pioneer and lead the first “Leadership Development Series” for tenured faculty wanting to take on leadership roles. A more recent program from 2025, based on over a year of research and developed in collaboration with partners on the medical campus, was entitled “Banishing Burnout: Flourishing as Faculty” and offered faculty multiple sessions exploring burnout and recovery methods in workshops, faculty panels, and a book read.

Dr. Finley-Croswright was also a co-Team leader (with Wayne Hynes) for the 2023 COACHE survey (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) in which the CFD and a COACHE communication team helped the university achieve a remarkable 72% response rate and after which Dr. Hynes and Dr. Finley-Croswright were invited to present the ODU communication plan they devised to COACHE administrators at Harvard, a plan Dr. Todd Benson the Executive Director of COACHE deemed “outstanding.” Dr. Finley-Croswright also

# A Short History of the CFD



co-authored and served as a co-PI on the National Science Foundation ADVANCE Adaptation Grant, “Re-envisioning Inclusive and Sustainable Excellence (RISE): Advancing Women in STEM at Old Dominion University.” The NSF grant awarded \$1 million to the university to help create more healthy environments for women in STEM, but it was subsequently terminated by the federal government in early 2025. Dr. Finley-Crowhite also developed an initiative to promote Course-based Undergraduate Research grants (CURES) that was funded by Academic Affairs, and the CFD administered the annual competition each year. Dr. Finley-Crowhite created a “Days of Teaching” initiative which was an onsite and online mini conference offered annually from 2021 to 2025. Generally, the Center offered 50-70 workshop events every year and developed partnerships with entities, faculty, and staff throughout the university landscape.

Externally, Dr. Finley-Crowhite worked with a group of teaching and learning leaders in Virginia in 2020, aided initially by SCHEV, to found VDEC or the Virginia Educational Development Collaborative which supports professional growth, fosters cross-institutional collaborations, and aids in the advancement of pedagogical, scholarly, and creative activities for educational developers and those in adjacent roles in Virginia. The group meets monthly on ZOOM and plans bi-annual conference events for educational development leaders.

# A Short History of the CFD



Dr. Abdous and Dr. Finley-Crowhite brought national attention to Old Dominion University with the CFD “Convey Appreciation” campaign, lauded by our own faculty and administrators and promoted by *Insider Higher Ed*. In addition, the CFD distributed FacSheet, a different kind of monthly newsletter. Instead of focusing on events, FacSheet offered well-researched articles and editorials that were serious in nature and highly praised by ODU faculty.

Only a few of the Center for Faculty Development’s many achievements are listed here. The CFD never had much funding and could not offer stipends or course load reductions for faculty participating in and/or developing programming. The staff was small for a large R1 university, and it was thus reliant on the good will and dedication of amazing faculty who wanted to make Old Dominion University a better place for all faculty and students. The CFD prospered because of its multiple ties to faculty, broad vision of faculty development, and collaboration with other offices and divisions on campus. The CFD was remarkably collaborative and thrived through partnerships. Its director and staff remained beholden to and grateful for faculty input and faculty insight.

In December 2025 Dr. Finley-Crowhite stepped down as Founding Director of the Center for Faculty Development. In the final FacSheet, she welcomed Remica Bingham-Risher, the newly appointed Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence and Engagement, who will head the new Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE).



## **CENTER FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT MISSION & VISION**

The CFD Mission and Vision as stated on the CFD website and in publications:

“The CFD at Old Dominion University provides comprehensive professional development opportunities for ODU instructional faculty at all levels and stages of their careers. Initiatives are designed to enhance the University’s academic culture and support innovations in teaching, research, and mentorship. The Center offers a sense of shared community grounded in academic excellence.

The CFD pursues its vision of comprehensive professional development through collaborative partnerships with the ODU community. The CFD strives to enhance academic culture through scholarly initiatives that engage the quality and changing nature of higher education and offers a range of scholarly-based programs.”

**Thank you for years of collaboration and support.**

# CENTER FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT



2025

# Thank You

# Thank You 2025



## **Colleges, Schools, Departments**

Batten College of Engineering and Technology  
College of Arts and Letters  
College of Sciences  
Darden College of Education and Professional Studies  
Department of History  
Macon and Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences (VHS) at ODU  
Perry Honors College  
Strome College of Business

## **Divisions, Offices, and Other Entities**

Division of Academic Affairs  
Center for Advising Administration & Academic Partnerships  
Center for Career and Leadership Development  
Division of Student & Campus Life  
Division of Student Enrollment, Engagement & Services  
Faculty Affairs and Professional Development at Virginia Health Sciences  
Fine Family Academy of Educators at Virginia Health Sciences  
General Education Reform  
HIP (High Impact Practices) Council  
Monarch Humanities Internship Academy  
Office of Academic Innovation & Learning Support  
Office of Academic Success  
Office of Community Engagement & University Events  
Office of Educational Accessibility  
Office of ePortfolio and Digital Initiatives  
Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention  
Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment  
Office of Student Accountability & Academic Integrity  
Office of Talent Management and Culture  
Office of Undergraduate Research  
ODU Chapter of the American Association of University Professors  
Old Dominion University Libraries  
Quality Enhancement Plan Initiatives  
University Communications  
University Libraries  
University Writing Council  
Webb Office of Live Event Streaming

# Thank You 2025

Individuals



We thank the many University leaders and external advisors who supported the CFD throughout August to December 2025.

Provost and Executive Vice President Brian Payne & Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Strategic Initiatives Yvette Pearson.

Chief Integration Officer and Advisor to the President Austin Agho, Director of Undergraduate Research Orlando Ayala, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence and Engagement Remica Bingham-Risher, Executive Director, Research Institute for Digital Innovation in Learning Helen Crompton, Associate Dean Martha Daas, Dean Laura Delbrugge, Dean Tammy Dice, Senior Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development Anca Dobrian, Dean Gail Dodge, Executive Director, Center for Career and Leadership Development Jenn Grimm, Dean Jeffrey Fergus, Dean Timothy Hackman, Faculty Affairs and Professional Development, VHS, Richard Handel, Director of Faculty Recruitment and Retention, Shanda Jenkins, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Amy Johnson, Assistant Vice President for Public Relations Amber Kennedy, Associate Dean Barbara Kraj, Dean Erika Marsillac, Director of International Collaborations Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani, Dean Bonnie Van Lunen, and Chief Empowerment Officer with Full Circle Consulting Etta Ward.

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