

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

AFFIRM IDENTITY | BUILD COMMUNITY | CULTIVATE LEADERSHIP

Register for the Fall 2024 Faculty Development Series



Office of the Provost and Dean of the Faculty

AUGUST 2024 Check out the [January 2024 Faculty Development Newsletter](#).

To kick off the 2024–25 academic year, I am happy to release the August edition of the biannual Faculty Development Newsletter, which is dedicated to sharing faculty development resources, programs, and priorities grounded in Beverly D. Tatum’s ABC approach to creating engaged and inclusive academic communities: affirming identity, building community, and cultivating leadership.

I hope you are reading these words after a restorative and productive summer. As the provost’s office is getting ready for the start of the academic year, I think about the new faculty we welcome to our community and the great energy they bring; our colleagues whose careers are taking off, opening up, or culminating; and the faculty emeriti/ae who are starting a new chapter in their lives. I feel privileged to serve them all. My goal is to be supportive while building community and forging meaningful connections so that all faculty feel included and are able to thrive at Smith.

A new year brings fresh possibilities and beginnings but also new and different needs. My hope is that you will find in this newsletter the resources and opportunities that *you* need. This year also brings us a new provost and dean of the faculty, Daphne Lamothe, professor of Africana studies. My colleagues in the provost’s office and I are excited to welcome Daphne and look forward to our work together to support you all.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss what you have in mind, you can sign up for [my office hours](#), held on Fridays.

I wish you a good start to the fall semester!



Jfêlène Visentin

Associate Dean of the Faculty and
Dean for Academic Development

Faculty Policies Administrator Hayley Spizz is my partner in our faculty development work. Please feel free to reach out to Hayley (hspizz@smith.edu) or me (hvisenti@smith.edu) with any questions. We are also open to your suggestions!

2023–24

601 Session Attendees

65 Faculty Development Sessions

The provost's office strives to enable faculty to thrive at every career stage through faculty development offerings that provide mentoring and support, foster equity and inclusion, and build community.

1. Providing Mentoring and Support

Support for New Faculty

Over the summer, a wonderful group of approximately 40 faculty—composed of tenured and tenure-track faculty, full-time and part-time lecturers, laboratory instructors, visiting professors, and postdoctoral fellows—took part in the [New Faculty Orientation](#) led by over 25 presenters from across campus. In addition, to help onboard and support new faculty, the provost's office administers [three mentoring programs](#) and has created and continues to develop a [Mentoring Resources](#) guide. In an effort to provide greater support to mentors, my office partnered again with the Office for Equity and Inclusion to offer a “Mentoring Across Identities” workshop on August 29.

Professional Development

The provost's office recently launched the [Fall 2024 Faculty Development Series](#) and will host several [review meetings and workshops](#)—emails will be sent with more information and to invite cohorts. For additional resources, I invite faculty to explore the [Faculty Development Map](#) that charts by rank and general topic the variety of ways Smith offers faculty ongoing professional development. Other faculty development opportunities can be found across campus: The Jacobson Center offers [support for teaching with writing](#); the Sherrerd Center offers [support for equitable and inclusive pedagogies](#); and the Learning, Research, and Technology team offers [support for digital pedagogy](#) (see also [Media Production Services & Support](#) and click [here](#) to schedule a consultation with a librarian or ITS staff). Given the times we are living in, I would like to draw your attention to two events that may be of interest: The Sherrerd Center will host a Teaching Arts Luncheon about “[Teaching in Difficult Times](#)” on October 25, and later in the year, the Office for Equity and Inclusion will lead a session titled “Tools for Having Challenging Conversations Across Differences” on January 16 as part of its Everyday Tools for Equity and Inclusion

monthly workshop series (information forthcoming via eDigest).

Grants and Fellowships

To identify funding opportunities that match their profiles, faculty can access three main databases: [Pivot Proquest](#), [GrantForward](#), and [Grants.gov](#) (for federal grants). Smith's [Office of Grants & Sponsored Research](#) (grants@smith.edu) can help faculty get started with these databases and locate grant samples from faculty at liberal arts colleges, and the office's website lists opportunities and resources for faculty interested in seeking external fellowships. On November 6, the faculty development session “First Steps Toward Seeking Grants and Fellowships” will provide an overview of the stages involved in grant seeking, with a focus on getting started. As a reminder, the [Smith College Moneybook](#) includes internal grants and fellowships for research and curricular development.

NCFDD Resources

I encourage faculty to explore [NCFDD](#) resources, especially the Core Curriculum focused on strategic planning, productivity, work-life balance, and healthy working relationships. Faculty can also subscribe to the NCFDD [Monday Motivator](#)—a weekly email that presents the Core Curriculum in bite-size portions with actionable steps and a dose of positivity—or join the [Writing Challenges](#) in the discussion forum. Smith College is an institutional member of NCFDD, which allows everyone in our community to access their professional development resources for free. To learn how to make the most of your NCFDD membership, I recommend viewing this [webinar](#).

2. Fostering Equity and Inclusion

Support for Non-Tenure-Track (NTT) Faculty

Over the past four years, the provost's office has developed initiatives and resources to help NTT faculty navigate the college and be successful during their time at Smith. We now have a well-established

NCFDD

Smith College is an institutional member, which allows all members of our community to [access NCFDD professional development resources](#) for free.

2023–24 Smith Engagement With NCFDD

241 Subaccount members
(10% increase from last year)

76% women • 14% men • 3% nonbinary
53% white faculty • 34% faculty of color

41 Smith members
registered
for the 14-Day
Writing Challenge

[Non-Tenure-Track Mentoring Team](#), a curated list of [helpful resources](#), and regular meetings. We will host a fall meeting for NTT faculty in nonrenewable positions on September 25 as well as a meeting for senior lecturers and senior laboratory instructors on October 29. In the spring, we will host another meeting for NTT faculty in nonrenewable positions as well as one for lecturers and laboratory instructors in renewable positions. NTT mentors are hosting a [Sherrerd Teaching Circle](#) again this fall and will organize their traditional end-of-the-semester social gathering (TBA). In my role, I meet with Faculty Council to discuss issues pertaining to NTT faculty. Last spring, two members of the council joined one of our regular meetings with the NTT mentors, who continue to play a key role in building community and advocating for NTT faculty as a whole at Smith.

Faculty Workload Equity

The Faculty Workload Equity initiative is one of the priorities of my office. To increase transparency, clarity, and accountability around faculty workload, it is important to implement

evidence-based strategies with the goal of making the distribution of work within departments and programs more equitable while recognizing identity taxation and acknowledging differences in context. Our work is based on a report published by the American Council on Education titled [Equity-Minded Faculty Workloads: What We Can and Should Do Now](#) (2021). To advance this initiative, we provide access to workload equity resources for chairs, and each semester we host a Faculty Workload Equity Community of Support meeting for chairs—this fall’s meeting will be held on October 30.

Racial Justice

The provost’s office has been engaged in [Racial Justice Action Planning](#) since January 2023 and our action plan was submitted in June 2024. During the 2024–25 academic year, our office will be moving forward with implementing goals related to hiring, retention, and curriculum. Our office is also pleased to partner with institutions across the five colleges this fall to host a Women Faculty of Color Retreat on September 27,

The Faculty Lounge Is Open!

Located on the first floor of Young Library (in Bass Hall 105/106), the Faculty Lounge has a fully functioning coffee bar with coffee, tea (including Smith tea!), and hot chocolate. The provost’s office is happy to welcome you into this space for informal gathering and conversation. The lounge can be used for writing groups, impromptu meetings, or as a place to grab coffee before a class. This space is also used for events like our wine and cheese reception. We have begun collecting books written by faculty members, which are on display in the lounge for your perusal and to share with colleagues. The Faculty Lounge is open to all faculty any time of day (after 6 p.m. you need your OneCard to access the main and side doors of the building). Keep an eye out for event announcements!

facilitated by Dr. Kelly Mack, vice president for undergraduate STEM education and executive director of Project Kaleidoscope at the American Association of Colleges and Universities. The goal is to foster community; build safe, brave spaces; increase workplace satisfaction; and ultimately improve campus culture.

3. Building Communities

Smith College

There are many ways to build community at Smith and across the five colleges: Faculty may attend weekly [Liberal Arts Luncheons](#) or a [faculty development](#) session, join a [Teaching Circle](#) or a [Teaching Arts Luncheon](#) hosted by the Sherrerd Center, or take part in an interdisciplinary project led by the [Kahn Liberal Arts Institute](#). Faculty are also welcome to join an [affinity group under the auspices of the Office for Equity and Inclusion](#).

Five Colleges

The Five College Consortium supports 35 active [Five College Faculty Seminars](#) aimed at facilitating

cross-campus scholarly conversations and building collaboration. This year, the Five College grant-funded program [Building Academic Leaders in the Humanities](#) is entering its third year, with four Smith faculty in the introductory track and four in the advanced track. Last year, 10 Smith faculty benefited from this program, which is a pipeline of humanities and humanistic social science faculty into leadership roles.

Writing in Community

Writing groups foster relationships of accountability and provide both support and motivation. To join a writing group, faculty can [register](#) for monthly Write-on-Site sessions or check out Smith's [Writing Groups](#), which can be utilized to share and identify opportunities. The Five College Women's Studies Research Center also hosts a [Feminist Writing Community](#) that offers a variety of ways to practice writing with others. On this topic, I recommend the article "[Helping Faculty Members Cultivate Joy in Writing](#)" by Deborah J. Cohan and Barbara J. Risman, recently published in *Inside Higher Ed*.

Faculty Wellness Fellow

I've been on the faculty at Smith for the past 20 years and my field is how society "gets under our skin" to shape health. In 2022, the provost's office invited me to serve as a Faculty Wellness Fellow. After two years of pilot programming, 84 faculty have signed up and 57 faculty have attended one or more of 10 events held across the 2022–24 academic years. During fall of 2024, we will pause the program for a semester while I am on sabbatical leave.

In spring of 2025, we will resume programming with the theme of "time" in faculty life. I would love to hear your musings, questions, hopes, and requests for programming and resources around this theme. What do you wonder about faculty life and time in your current career and life stages? What institutional and cultural changes would meaningfully support you

cultivating a more empowered stance toward time? You are warmly invited to write to me at bjackson@smith.edu with your half-formed ideas on the topic. Though you will get my "away for sabbatical" message, I look forward to considering your various perspectives and how they can shape a valuable next phase of faculty wellness support at Smith.



Benita Jackson, PhD MPH
Professor of Psychology