

# CTL CONNECTS



## Issue 4 - Winter 2024

Issue FOUR! We can't believe it.

Number four is important in many ways. A quick glance online shows all kinds of connections.

We may have nerved out a bit skimming Hans J. Gross's article, [The magical number four: A biological, historical and mythological enigma](#) and we've learned that some folks find number four unlucky.

We hope that this isn't the case for our readers as, for this issue, we've decided to **prioritize teaching things related to fours!**

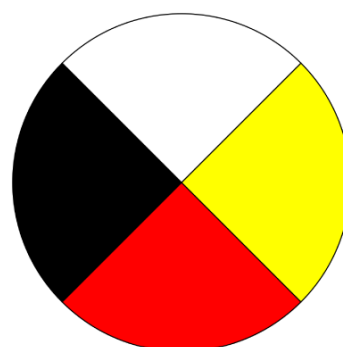
Please read on to learn the many ways the number four shows up in our lives, and in our practices at the college.

Enjoy!

## Adopting an Equity, Social Justice and Indigenization Lens

**For many First Nations across Turtle Island, the number 4 is sacred number.**

Many things happen in fours: four seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter), four directions (east, south, west, and north), four elements (earth, fire, water, air), four stages of life (infant, youth, adulthood, and elder), and four aspects of self (mental, emotional, physical, spiritual).



Today, the Medicine Wheel is used as a teaching tool that contains many different teachings. To learn more about the Medicine Wheel, [watch this video](#) of Karen Dowan, Indigenous Counselor at Georgian College.

If you are looking for some great professional learning, the [4 Seasons of Reconciliation](#) is a 3-hour, self-paced, online course designed for Georgian College employees.



It includes award-winning films and interactive ways of learning. Topics include pre-contact, colonization, Residential Schools, Truth and Reconciliation, and so much more.

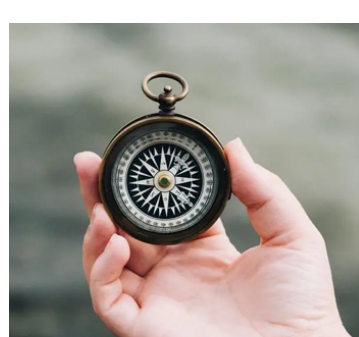
Upon completion, you will receive a certificate provided by the First Nations University of Canada.

To register for the 4 Seasons of Reconciliation [click here](#).

## Teaching Hacks

It wouldn't be fitting if we didn't share some teaching hacks that relate to four as well.

Consider using the four [Compass Points from Facing History and Ourselves](#) to **get to know your students** and learn about their needs and worries, excitements and suggestions at the start of the semester. [Access the Compass Points pdf](#).



Check out [Greater Good in Education's Four Corners Activity](#) to see how you might help students **indicate and discuss their position** related to controversial topics.

## Competency Framework Updates

**Intrepid souls have joined in our Brave Teaching Journeys CoP this semester and have shared the way they "role" as faculty at Georgian.**



Learn more about the Competency Framework and how to celebrate, badge and continue to grow your practice at the college during the [Focus on Teaching Conference](#). Peers will share via a panel session their experiences and the badging system will launch during the conference.

Stay tuned and watch CTL blasts and Staff News for info about our FoTC session and peer "piloteers" who have been trying out our badging system and share your teaching journey in competency style!

We'll be running our **Brave Teaching Journeys CoP** again next semester – join us and be among the first to apply for badges and work toward the new Innovative Faculty Teaching Certificate.

And, of course, for this issue, we are thrilled to share the **four reasons** we believe the competency framework serves faculty:

1. It recognizes the many roles we weave into our practice;
2. It is by faculty for faculty and provides us a way to have real conversations about what we do;
3. It reminds us that we are on a growth journey from emerging through transforming practice.
4. It is celebratory. It reminds us that we should celebrate all the amazingness that we bring to students each day.

Email [Tracy.Mitchell-Ashley@GeorgianCollege.ca](mailto:Tracy.Mitchell-Ashley@GeorgianCollege.ca) or [Iain.Robertson@GeorgianCollege.ca](mailto:Iain.Robertson@GeorgianCollege.ca) for more information!

## Upcoming CTL Events

### Focus on Teaching Conference 2024

Each year, the [Focus on Teaching Conference](#) helps faculty connect to explore and deepen their teaching practice. Built on the idea of sharing, the conference is created by faculty for faculty.



**Four reasons** to attend the Focus on Teaching Conference:

1. Attend amazing sessions for faculty by faculty
2. Connect and network with our wonderful faculty community
3. Opportunity to choose your own adventure
4. Grow your teaching competence!



The Focus on Teaching conference runs **May 2 & 3, 2024**.

[Register Here](#)



We can't wait to be inspired by the amazing things Georgian faculty do every day! See you in May.

# Connection Opportunities & Generally Neat Stuff Happening at Georgian

## Connect with Georgian Peers - Share the Story of Your Journey to Georgian

The 4th [Dare to Share Digital Storytelling Challenge](#), part of the Big Ideas Campaign, has launched! Contribute your story to our fourth challenge [using the program Flip](#).

Tell us about your [Journey to Georgian](#) and the interesting and unique paths that have brought you here. Where did the journey begin for you? Were you searching in the night and now find yourself here at Georgian? Are you from a small town? Or a city? Were the wheels in your sky turning ... in the direction of Georgian? Where did you jump on the midnight train?



You'll need to log in with Microsoft using your Georgian email.

Be entered in a random draw for sharing your story, and for watching and commenting on the stories shared by our peers!

We can't wait to hear your story. We dare you to share 😊

Questions? Please contact [Tracy Mitchell-Ashley](#).

## CTL Team Updates

### BlackBoard Team

For issue four, the FreshForward (or should we say "Four-ward"? 🤔) Team is excited to announce our latest video and FOUR ways you can celebrate with us.

**1. Learn lots!** Find out what's fresh in Ultra for March by watching the [video available here](#).

**2. Keep Current.** Subscribe to the [YouTube channel](#) and enable notifications so you are among the first to know when we release a new episode.

**3. Be part of the conversation.** While you [watch](#), share your comments and let us know which of the updates you are most excited about.

**4. Spread the love.** Copy this link (<https://youtu.be/qVI5U3md2D8>) and send it to FOUR friends (or people you see if you don't have four friends).



[Visit The Channel](#)

### Faculty Developer Team

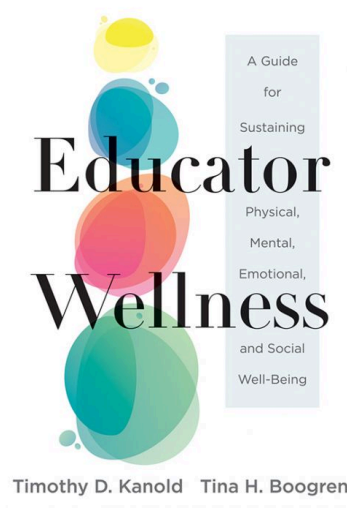
As we embark on the issue 4 of our CTL Connects, your Faculty Developer team is keen to celebrate spring and the number four.

We were inspired to share four seeds related to growing your teaching practice:

**1. Consider and celebrate all your roles as a faculty member.** We show up each day in so many ways and weave many competencies. Learn more about the [Faculty Competency Framework](#) and celebrate all you are and all you do to help students thrive in their college journey and in their communities.

**2. Engage your mind, body, social, and spiritual well-being to really flourish as faculty.** Our role is beautiful ... and challenging. [Check out these free Educator Wellness resources from Solution Tree](#).

Scroll down to access the free Reproducibles, Wellness Videos and Websites. You can order the book for a deeper dive into your well-being. Take the [Faculty Wellness Self-Evaluation](#) (\*please download before you fill it out). Explore [online resources by Georgian's Mental Health and Well-being team](#).



**3. Connect with peers and feel a part of something larger.** Science shows that when we collaborate and connect with peers, we can offset the troubling damages of burnout and feelings of frustration and loneliness. Use connection as a tool to grow your practice and reap the benefits in spades. Read [Collaboration: A Way to Promote Faculty Development and Reduce Burnout](#)

**4. Prioritize your teaching practice and hear with others are saying about teaching and learning.** We've found a few articles about great faculty practices and, guess what, they just happen to talk about fours!

- [Jen Dyck-Sprout writes about The 4 Best Teaching Hacks That Work With Adults](#)
- [Matt Starolis discusses Four Things Great Teachers Do \(Evidence Based\)](#).
- [Deb Meyer shares 4 Reasons to Love Teaching](#).

Last, okay, this is fifth thing, please pat yourself on the back because ... you are amazing in all the seasons of the year!

### Instructional Designer Team

#### 4 Keys to Creating a Culture of Belonging at the start of the semester

Building meaningful relationships with students fosters a sense of belonging, ultimately enhancing engagement and motivation. In this 4th edition of the CTL Connects Newsletter we would like to explore 4 ways you can start the process of getting to know your students and letting them get to know you.



##### 1. [Pre Course Contact](#) (Email)

A week before your course begins is a "high opportunity zone" for contact (Pacansky-Brock & Torres, 2020). Sharing by email promotes equity and ensures access for all. The email may contain information about the faculty, about the course, and about what students can expect, or even about the plan for the first week of working together (or all of the above). In some cases, one email can be enough to set students up for success, as well as help to reduce any stress, worries, or anxiety around the course.

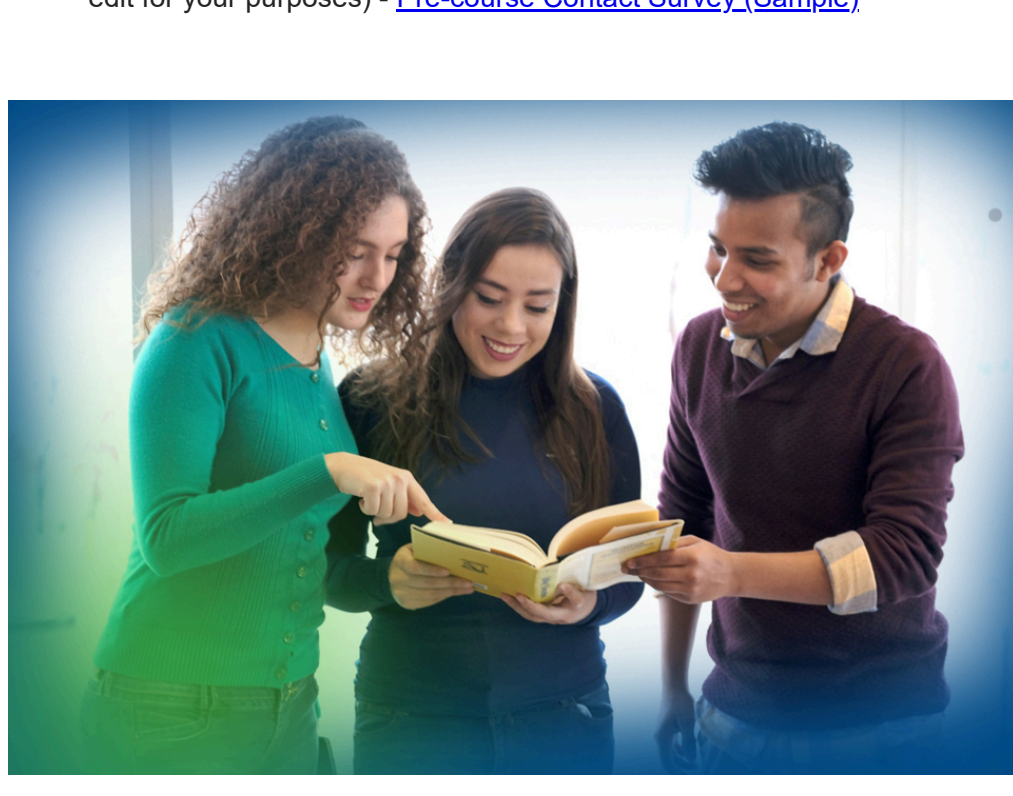
- Some [Pre Course Contact \(Email\) samples](#) are available here. You are welcome to use/adapt these for your purposes if they feel like a good fit for you and your students.

##### 2. [Pre-Course Contact Survey](#) (+Sample)

Inviting your students to share relevant information about themselves is a 'belonging cue' - it invites students to bring themselves as people to your shared learning space, demonstrates that you are interested in them as human beings, and that you understand that their lives outside of your class impact their ability to succeed and engage within class. Sharing this before the course officially begins (one week before the term, for example) can also help reduce some of the fear of the unknown that students experience in the days before the term begins.

Knowing that their instructor cares about them as people, as well as students, can help set the stage for the collaborative work ahead.

- Here is a sample survey (template format, so you're free to use "as is" or edit for your purposes) - [Pre-course Contact Survey \(Sample\)](#)



##### 3. Icebreakers and Warmups

Using the first 5-10 minutes of class (in class, online, GC Flex or hybrid) can go a long way to helping us get to know our students, creating a sense of belonging and sparking a little bit of joy. These do not need to be complicated or time consuming.

- Examples – [Pulse check](#) (how are you feeling today, physically and emotionally on a scale of 1 to 10), please describe how you're feeling today using an ice cream flavour, creating a PowerPoint presentation for students to share a photo of their favourite animal, place to spend time, etc., using MS Forms to collect your students favourite songs (or happiest songs, study songs etc.) and creating a free playlist. Using a tool like [Answer Garden](#) to collect information anonymously either related to the content or about your students (some examples include hobbies, pets, etc.) that all students can see. There are also many ways you can utilize H5P to create icebreakers and warm ups. You can also start your course off before the semester starts with an [online icebreaker](#).

##### 4. Faculty Biography

Faculty biographies serve a crucial role in fostering a more relatable and approachable learning environment within the college setting. This personalized touch aims to humanize both the faculty and the course, working to alleviate student anxiety and nervousness. The content and format of these bios are entirely up to you, share information you are comfortable with—whether it be photos, personal details, or teaching experiences. You can share your biography

in your syllabus or directly in Blackboard.

- Here is an [Optional Faculty Bio Template](#) is here for you to use if you'd like.

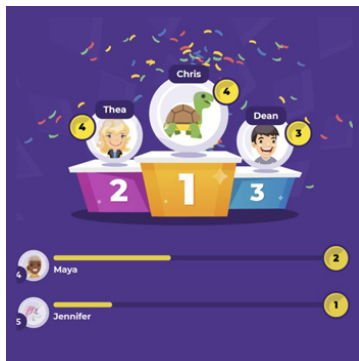
## Instructional Design Technologist Team

### Our four favourite H5P interactives that can enhance student learning experiences

Using H5P interactive content is a fantastic way to support student engagement. Whether you're teaching online, in-class, hybrid, or GC Flex, H5P interactive content can be used as a reference, practice activity, or even a way to approach content with a fresh perspective. With over 50+ different interactive content types, there's something for just about every scenario, and it was hard to pick just 4!

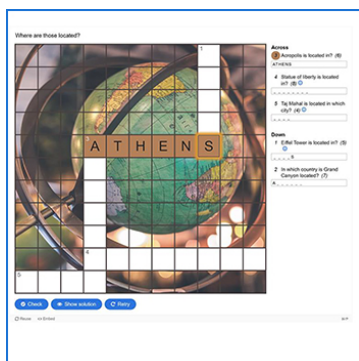
#### 1. The Chase

Kahoot threw us all a curveball when they restricted participation to 10 people when using a higher ed account. H5P's The Chase is a great alternative with no participant limit! There are three different game modes, and a ton of different question types. Get a friendly competition going to engage your students!



#### 2. Crosswords

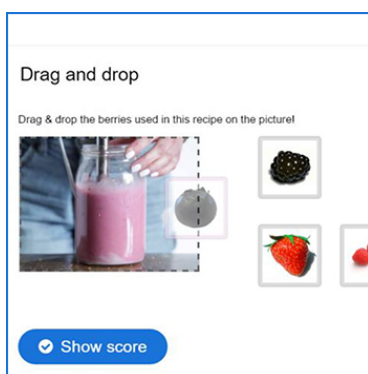
Build and customize a crossword puzzle to engage your students. H5P crosswords are highly customizable allowing you to configure colors, upload a background image, decide how scoring should work and even randomize the words in it so that your students get a new crossword each time. If you use a textbook that provides publisher materials – building an H5P crossword can be incredibly fast!



[Check out this example.](#)

#### 3. Interactive Video

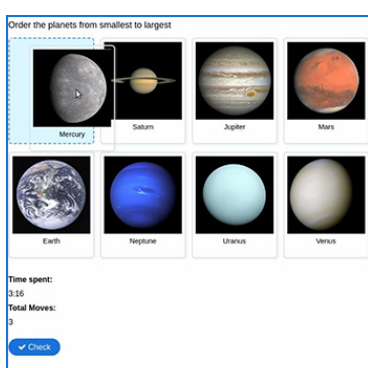
Interactive videos are a great complement to text information, and can be used for so many things – content overviews, summaries, important notices, etc. With H5P interactive videos, you can take your content to the next level with embedded explanations, extra pictures, tables, Fill in the Blank, multiple-choice questions, and more! Quiz questions support adaptivity, meaning that you can jump to another part of the video based on the student's input.



[Check out this example.](#)

#### 4. Image Sequencing

H5P Image Sequencing allows faculty to create a sequence of images in a particular order. When presented to students, the order of the images is randomized, and students will have to reorder them based on the task description. From timelines, event preparation, physiological processes, policies and procedures, and anything else that occurs in a defined sequence of events, this interactive content can be used in almost any course.



## CTL Team

### Is it that time already?

Please review the suggested tasks in the Semester Wrap-Up folder in the CTL Central for Faculty organization and end your semester in a way that worthy of any amazing journey.

Semester Wrap-up

## Get Involved

Interested in sharing ideas for CTL Connects? We'd love to hear your thoughts.

Please email [tracy.mitchell-ashley@georgiancollege.ca](mailto:tracy.mitchell-ashley@georgiancollege.ca)

## Contact Us

Guess what. There are four ways to connect with us:

### Blackboard Ultra

For general questions about Blackboard Ultra:

[facultybbsupport@georgiancollege.ca](mailto:facultybbsupport@georgiancollege.ca)

### Faculty Development

For questions for our faculty development team: [facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca](mailto:facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca)

### Learning Technologies

For questions about learning technologies outside of Blackboard:

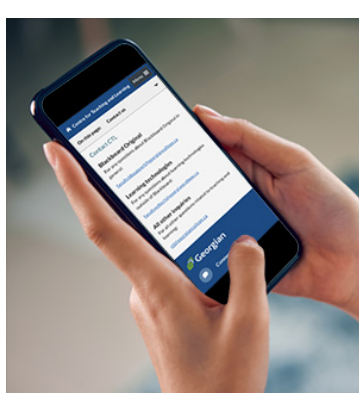
[facultyedtech@georgiancollege.ca](mailto:facultyedtech@georgiancollege.ca)

### All other inquiries

For all other questions related to teaching and learning:

[ctl@georgiancollege.ca](mailto:ctl@georgiancollege.ca)

Or visit us on our [website](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [X \(Twitter\)](#).



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