



Issue 6 - Fall 2024

Fall is a time for harvesting, reflecting. It is filled with warm colours, and (love it or hate it) pumpkin spice. It is a time to gather close, listen and learn.

In this issue of CTL Connects, we invite you to get comfortable, grab your favourite warm beverage and a blanket, and learn about how we, in CTL, are settling into fall 2024.

Enjoy!

Adopting an Equity, Social Justice, Indigenization and Changemaking Lens



Reflective Practice, Indigenous Ways of Knowing, and Seasonal Change

Indigenous ways of knowing offer profound insights into how educators can align their practices with the natural world. Fall is traditionally a time of gathering and preparation in many cultures. It's a time to take stock of what has been learned, share stories, and prepare for the winter—a season of rest and reflection that fosters renewal and new growth in the spring.

Similarly, [Traditional Chinese Medicine](#) (TCM) recognizes the importance of seasonal transitions, which can provide valuable lessons for educators. In TCM, fall is associated with the Metal element, which governs organization, structure, and introspection. It is a time for letting go of the old, just as trees shed their leaves, and preparing for the colder, quieter months of winter.

By embracing these principles, educators can use the fall semester to gather wisdom from students, peers, and from their own experiences. This practice mirrors nature's cyclical patterns, where reflection and preparation lead to transformation.



Gift yourself time to reflect...What signs of growth have I observed in my students and myself? How have I responded to unexpected or challenging situations, and what could I do differently in the future? What meaningful changes could I implement to foster an even more responsive and enriching learning environment?

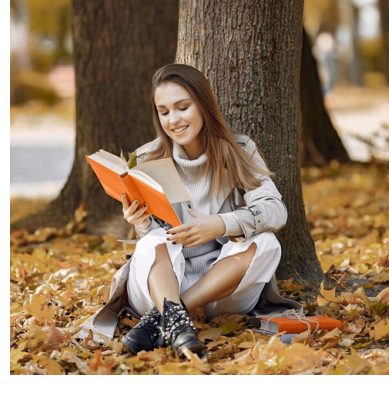
In the same spirit that Indigenous communities and TCM practitioners honor the wisdom of the seasons, educators can view the fall as an opportunity to assess and evolve their teaching strategies, integrating what they've learned to deepen the learning experience for others.

To expand your learning about Indigenous peoples, there are several resources available to Georgian folks in the [Indigenization resources](#) for Georgian Employees. You can also find curated resources available through the [Georgian Library](#). In the online Library, you can find a page dedicated to [Traditional Chinese Medicine](#) as well.

Brand New!

Teaching and Learning Research Guide

Fall is a great time to settle into a comfy chair, with a blanket and a warm beverage, and read. Stretching into the fall theme, we ask you to consider our amazing library and all the “leaves” of books, articles, and other resources you may read online.



While you might have heard about the library's amazing, curated [Research Guides](#) related to the professions you came from, guess what, the Library, in collaboration with CTL, has created a research guide for faculty.

Our new [Teaching and Learning Research Guide](#) will help you as you settle down into some fall reading about your teaching profession.

Have a suggestion about a resource to add, let us know at facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca

Competency Framework Updates

The Competency Framework badges are here and dancing like leaves!

Take this opportunity to get yours. View [Georgian Faculty Competency Framework](#) to start to apply and celebrate your growth and competence.



Email facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca for more information!

Upcoming CTL Events



Focus on Changemaking Event

20 November 2024 – Virtual

In today's rapidly evolving world, the role of educators and those supporting students on their educational journey extends beyond traditional teaching methods and support mechanisms. We are at the forefront of shaping not just knowledge but the future of our communities and the world. That's why we are inviting you to attend our upcoming **Focus on Changemaking (FoCH)** event - an opportunity to explore the evolving dynamics of education and how we can make an impactful difference.



And what better time than fall – a time of change!

Why should you attend?

In a time where the role of education is shifting and the role of educators and staff is changing, we'll explore what changemaking is (demystified!), why it

matters and how you can do it! FoCH will help you:

- Identify how you are already supporting changemaking and identify ways to expand your toolkit.
- Discover practical ways to incorporate changemaking into your curriculum. Gain practical solutions for real world challenges.
- Equip students with skills they need for the workforce and community, including empathy, teamwork, leadership and critical thinking to practice changemaking.
- Align your practices with institutional goals around innovation, changemaking, and social responsibility.
- Connect with like-minded educators to share ideas, passions and strategies for creating meaningful change and find some spark in your work!

Register for FOCH

Have a story you want to share with peers, reach out to facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca



What are you reading?

We love reading all year long! [CTL Reads for Fall 2024](#) is available! Check out what we are reading and what we recommend that you read. [See the latest edition here on the CTL website.](#)

Have a suggestion for our next CTL Reads, let us know at facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca

CTL Team Updates

Faculty Developer Team



Harvesting Success: Reflective Practices for Educators

As the vibrant colors of fall surround us and the days grow shorter, we are reminded that this season is one of reflection, gathering, and transformation. Much like farmers harvest their crops, educators can use the fall semester as a time to pause, reflect, and prepare for growth. This season provides a natural rhythm to slow down, collect feedback, and assess teaching practices. Just as the fall signals the transition to winter, it also invites educators to take stock of their achievements and consider adjustments for the remainder of the academic year.

The importance of professional development in education cannot be understated. Research consistently shows that continuous learning and reflective practice improve student outcomes and teacher satisfaction (Desimone, L. (2011), Ferreira, M. (2022). According to Mishra, et. al.,(2022), and Ventista et. al, (2023) ongoing professional development that engages educators in analyzing their teaching strategies and assessing student feedback is crucial for effective learning environments. CTL offers many opportunities for professional development to engage in these reflective practices, allowing educators to harvest insights and implement changes that can lead to meaningful improvements in their courses.

Go to Faculty PD page on Georgian College website

Gathering Feedback and Adjusting Course Design

One practical strategy for "harvesting" insights during the fall semester is to collect student feedback. Gathering feedback doesn't need to be a formal process; it can be as simple as asking students what is working well and where they feel they need more support. These insights are invaluable for refining teaching approaches and ensuring students remain engaged and supported throughout the academic year.

Reflective practice also involves evaluating the success of teaching strategies. Are the learning objectives clear? Are students responding to the material as expected? Taking time to reflect on these questions allows educators to make meaningful changes that can enhance student engagement and success.

Looking Forward: Preparing for Growth

As we move through the fall and into the winter months, it's important for educators to prepare for future growth.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will be launching a **Faculty Needs Assessment** in November 2024 so keep your eye on your emails. This initiative will help gather insights into the professional development needs of faculty members and provide valuable data to enhance teaching and learning support across the college. We invite all faculty to participate and share their experiences so we can continue to grow and learn together.

For more resources on reflective practice, gathering student feedback, and refining teaching strategies, visit our CTL website.

References:

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- Ferreira, M. (2022). Teachers' well-being, social and emotional competences, and reflective teaching. In f2212984-bacb-45dd-a0a7-aa7ebedad00f. Taylor & Francis. https://info.georgiancollege.ca/e/987822/10-4324-9781003093053-9/bv7/1252938630/h/Kzd8Telawx0i200SeUPvuORmLuM2Xb_Mkr1UX753puc
- Mishra, L., Gupta, T., & Shree, A. (2022). Faculty induction program for newly recruited teachers of higher education: a case study. Teacher Development, 26(1), 135–149. https://info.georgiancollege.ca/e/987822/10-1080-13664530-2022-2027812/bv7m/1252938630/h/Kzd8Telawx0i200SeUPvuORmLuM2Xb_Mkr1UX753puc
- Ventista, Ourania & Brown, Chris. (2023). Teachers' professional learning and its impact on students' learning outcomes: Findings from a systematic review. 8. 100565. 10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100565.

Instructional Designer Team



Time to Harvest the Good and Prepare for Growth

As we reach the midpoint of the college semester, we find ourselves in a phase similar to harvest time. Just as farmers assess their crops and prepare for the coming winter, this is an ideal time for faculty to pause and reflect on the first 7-8 weeks of teaching. What has thrived in your classroom? What areas need more nurturing to yield better results next semester?

Harvest the Good

Much like gathering the ripest fruits and vegetables, now is the time to recognize what went well. Reflect on your successes, both big and small. Did a new activity resonate with students? Has a shift in your teaching approach led to more engagement? Celebrate these wins and think about how you can carry them into future semesters. This harvesting process helps you build on strengths and encourages continuous improvement.

Something to think about:

This is an opportunity not only to replicate success in future terms, but also to take a moment to soak in some of the (many!) times things went well this term. Have a joke that landed well? Designed an assignment that students seemed to really enjoy? Try a new activity that had students chatting with one another excitedly? These are all wins that require celebration. Teaching is an emotionally labourous profession. We pour a lot of ourselves and our energy into what we do within the classroom and outside of it (grading, prep, emails, and more!), so it's important that we take time to sit with the wins and the parts of teaching that help us to feel fulfilled in our work.

Pruning and Preparing for Next Season

While harvesting, we also prune and clear out what didn't work. Maybe a certain tool or approach didn't take root as you had hoped. That's okay. Take note of the challenges and consider how you can adapt or try new methods. Just as gardeners prepare soil for winter, this is the time to sow the seeds of change. Make small adjustments now or plan for bigger revisions during the off-season.

Something to try:

Receiving a lot of questions on the instructions for an assignment?

Consider using the questions asked to add clarifying information to the instructions for next term or using [ScreenPal](#) to create a video overview of the assignment for students to refer to. Maybe you want to take it in a whole new direction, connect with CTL for support with brainstorming or design.

Plant Seeds of Improvement

Mid-semester reflection isn't just about looking back—it's also about preparing the soil for new ideas. What can be added or changed to enhance student success moving forward? Perhaps there's an instructional strategy you've been curious about or a technological tool that could streamline your process. Now is the time to experiment and plant the seeds of growth for your next semester.

Someone to connect with:

Check out the [CTL calendar](#) and connect with CTL peers to investigate a new tool or process - [The Centre for Teaching and Learning Website](#).

Embrace the Cycles

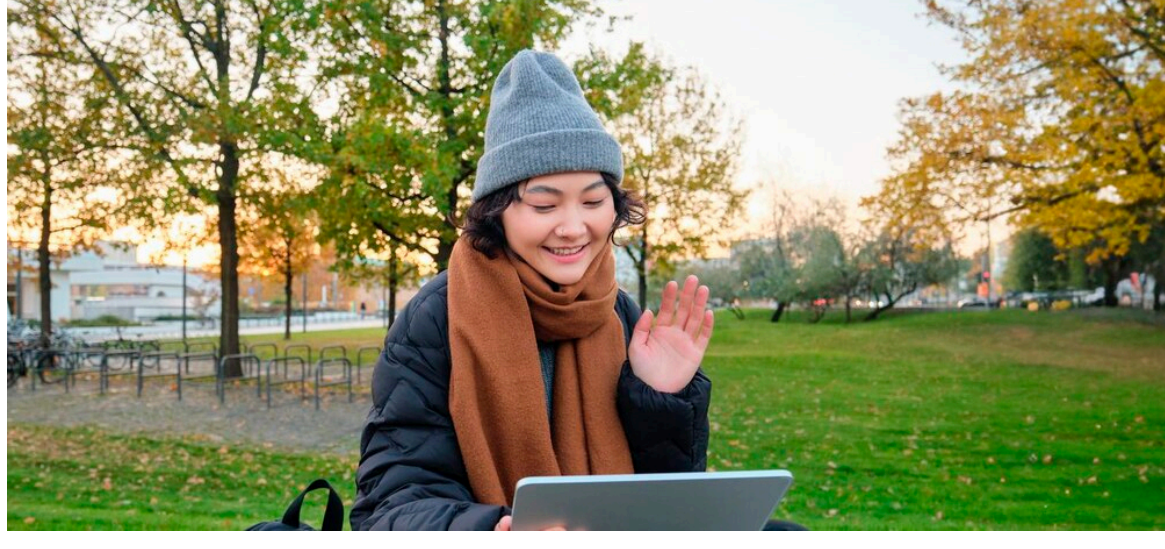
Teaching, like gardening, is a cyclical process. Each semester offers new growth and the chance to improve. Taking the time to reflect, harvest your successes, and prepare for change sets the stage for a richer teaching experience, benefiting both you and your students in the long run.

Something to read:

Reflecting on our practice sounds like an easy thing, but it can be challenging! When to do it, how to do it, where to collect the results can just be one more thing on your long list of things to do as a teacher. This article has some practical tips to make reflection of your teaching practice manageable and consistent - [6 Tips for Making Reflection a Consistent Habit](#).

Do you have any course design and development questions? Please email the Instructional Designer Team at instructional.designers@georgiancollege.ca

Instructional Design Technologist Team



Harvesting Ideas Through Virtual Brainstorming

Four tools for students and faculty to gather ideas and collaborate digitally.

1. [Microsoft Whiteboard](#) - available to all faculty, staff, and students through the employee portal – is a versatile app that fosters idea generation through shared brainstorming, sketching, and note-taking. Take advantage of dozens of templates or create your own whiteboard set-up from scratch. Collaborate in real-time during a Microsoft Teams meeting or contribute on your own time by accessing through a shared link.

- Learn more at [Microsoft Whiteboard Explained, Great Tool for Microsoft Teams! \(YouTube\)](#).

2. With a free [Padlet](#) account, faculty can have up to three active Padlet boards at a time. With a free account, students can participate in a Padlet in a variety of ways:

- Upload a document, picture, or image
- Video, audio, and screen recorder
- Draw
- GIFs

And the list goes on.

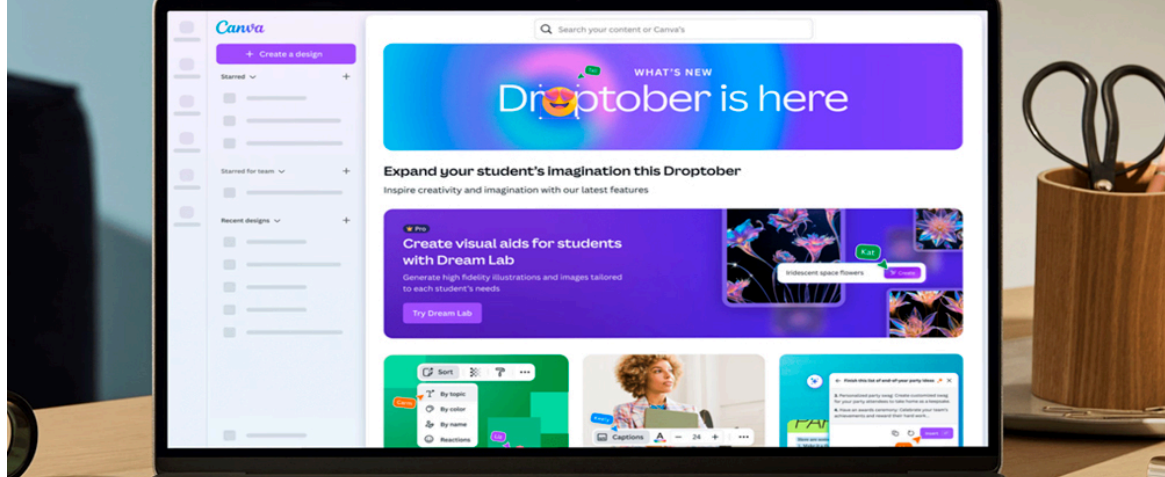
- [Learn more at How to use Padlet – Beginners Tutorial \(YouTube\)](#)

3. [OneNote](#) class notebooks, which integrate right into Blackboard, can facilitate brainstorming and idea generation by offering a collaborative space where students and faculty can share notes, sketches, and ideas. Its organization tools can enhance creativity and group discussion.

- Learn more at [Getting Students working in OneNote Class Notebooks - Office 365 tutorial for Teachers \(YouTube\)](#)

4. We're piloting a polling tool, [Wooclap](#), this fall semester. Gather feedback and ideas in real time with easy to set up events, and question templates specifically for brainstorming! Interested in joining the pilot? Contact us at facultyedtech@georgiancollege.ca

Multimedia



Exciting New Tools for Educators from Canva

As the leaves change and the air turns crisp this fall, Canva is rolling out some fantastic new education tools designed to make teaching more vibrant and interactive! In the spirit of fall, they're here to help you create engaging lessons that inspire creativity in your classroom.

What's New?

1. **Dream Lab:** This cutting-edge AI image generator lets teachers create custom visuals in seconds, perfect for making complex topics come alive. Whether you need an image of a plant cell for biology or historical visuals for a timeline, [Dream Lab](#) has you covered. Plus, it supports accessibility with tailored color schemes and graphics for diverse learners.
2. **Interactive Charts:** Say goodbye to boring data! [New interactive chart types](#) - like Sunbursts, Dot Plots, and Radar Charts—turn statistics into engaging stories. With rich customizations and fun animations, these tools help students understand data in a dynamic way.
3. **Teacher Work Kit:** Simplify your lesson planning with this all-in-one resource. Packed with ready-made templates and apps, the [Teacher Work Kit](#) empowers educators to create engaging lessons without needing advanced design skills. It covers a range of teaching modalities, saving you time and enhancing student learning.

As you embrace the cozy vibes of the season explore these new tools and transform your teaching experience!

Fall Life Hacks

How about those leaves this year? While they are absolutely breathtaking to look at, they are... a lot to manage.

Short of hiring neighbour or your co-workers' kids, or forcing your own, here are some suggestions from Better Homes & Gardens for you to tackle the job yourself:

[12 Leaf-Raking Tips to Make Fall Cleanup So Much Easier](#)

1. Do you REALLY need to rake? (Hint: think 50% coverage).
2. Run your lawn mower.
3. Wait for all the leaves to fall.
4. Pick the right raking tools.
5. Stretch first!
6. Make small movements and take breaks.
7. Use wind power to your advantage.
8. Don't rake wet leaves.
9. Use a leaf vacuum.
10. Rake onto a tarp.
11. Stomp on the leaves.
12. Work in sections.



Photo by [Celine Sayuri Tagami](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Fun Activity

Take advantage of all the fallen leaves and bring your crafting skills to complete this fun fall leaf wreath. Perfect for the season.

[Watch video on YouTube](#)

If you don't have a grapevine wreath, a cardboard circle will also work!



View Past Issues of CTL Connects

Curious about what we've covered in previous editions of CTL Connects? Head

over to our website to browse our archive and stay in the loop!

[View CTL Connects archive](#)



Get Involved

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

Please email 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

Faculty Development

For questions for our faculty development team: facultydevelopment@georgiancollege.ca

Learning Technologies

For questions about learning technologies outside of Blackboard:

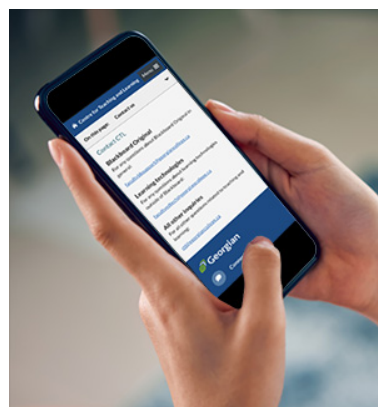
facultyedtech@georgiancollege.ca

All other inquiries

For all other questions related to teaching and learning:

ctl@georgiancollege.ca

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



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