PIERs Inventory

Purpose of and context for survey:

UO offers a broad definition of teaching excellence as professional, inclusive, engaged, and research-informed. This inventory is a tool for individual reflection and to help departments adapt UO's general definition of teaching excellence to their own disciplinary contexts.

This survey characterizes each of the four pillars (professional, inclusive, engaged, and research-informed) and lists example practices for each pillar. Survey respondents can note if any of the listed practices are "current" or "aspirational" by checking an adjacent box.

For individuals: please check the practices you regularly use in your teaching or those you aspire to adopt. You'll also find space to elaborate, including by highlighting additional practices you feel are important. You can opt to have your survey responses emailed to you.

If you need accommodations to complete this survey, please contact tep@uoregon.edu.

For unit-heads: the department's collective practices and aspirations can be used as the foundation for new peer review templates and criteria-based teaching evaluation tools that draw on some of what matters most to disciplinary colleagues.

Professional Teaching

Professional Teaching includes:

- Readily available, coherently organized, and high-quality course materials; syllabi that establish student workload, learning objectives, grading, and class policy expectations.
- Respectful and timely communication with students. Respectful teaching does not mean that the professor cannot give appropriate critical feedback.
- Students' activities in and out of class designed and organized to maximize student learning.

Check those practices you regularly engage in or aspire to adopt.

	Current	Aspirational
Organize Canvas using modules or pages, with the beginning of each module or page outlining the learning objectives, activities to complete, and content to engage.		
Adopt free or low-cost open educational resources.		
Include on the syllabus or other materials contact details, information about how to address you, and friendly guidance on why and how to use office hours or otherwise access your support.		
Respond to students' requests for information and feedback reliably and promptly (this does not mean instantaneously).		
Include a syllabus statement that encourages students with disabilities to share any access-related needs early, as well as to contact the Accessible Education Center as a source of support. Ensure all course policies and information about student support are up to date.		

Outline learning objectives and agenda at beginning of class, aloud and in writing.		
Offer written and verbal guidance on how to engage with the course—how individual activities and assignments are linked to learning objectives, strategies for reading course texts, guidance on especially high workload weeks, etc.		
Present instructions and guidelines transparently, explaining aloud and in writing the purpose of the assignment or activity, the tasks needed to complete it, and the criteria for success.		
Employ methods (activities, examples, audio-visual aids) broken down into steps to "scaffold" student learning.		
Invite student questions and participation through multiple modes (ex: in class, on Canvas discussion board, etc.), and respond to questions in ways that support learning.		

In addition to the practices indicated above, what is at least one teaching practice you think would be most helpful or transformative for your discipline?

Inclusive Teaching

Inclusive Teaching includes:

- Instruction designed to ensure every student can participate fully and that their presence and participation is valued.
- The content of the course reflects the diversity of the field's practitioners, the contested and evolving status of knowledge, the value of academic questions beyond the academy and of lived experience as evidence, and/or other efforts to help students see themselves in the work of the course.

Check those practices you regularly engage in or aspire to adopt.

Content

	Current	Aspirational
Choose course content that reflects diversity in the field or discipline, including diverse social identities of the scholars/practitioners/creators and different perspectives on or approaches to issues/methods.		
Connect class content to students' prior knowledge or experience; or current events, real-world phenomena, or other disciplines; or to prior class lessons, assignments, or readings.		
Use photos, examples, and other representations that reflect diverse social identities and experiences.		
Format materials (Canvas, slides, documents, etc.) accessibly using headings, readable fonts, and alt-text. Readings are text-based files, not image-based files.		
Provide captions and/or transcripts for videos and audio clips.		
Provide multiple ways to access materials, such as audio, visual, or text-based media.		

Teaching Methods

	Current	Aspirational
Communicate clear expectations for the course and all course components, including assignments, discussions, activities, group work, etc.		
Engage students through multiple modes of learning, such as lecture, discussion, group work, case studies, guest presenters, video, etc.		
Structure course activities (in-class, out-of-class, and online) with clear tasks for completion, guidelines for participation, and criteria for success.		
Provide students with multiple options to demonstrate their learning, such as choice of assignment prompts and formats (audio, video, text).		

Students

	Current	Aspirational
Learn and use students' gender pronouns and preferred names.		
Use a survey to learn students' course-related interests and concerns, goals for learning, background knowledge or experience, and other pertinent information to get to know them and help them make personal connections with the course.		

Self

	Current	Aspirational
Examine how one's own experiences, perspectives, and assumptions have been shaped by uneven distributions of power in various contexts.		
Invest time in self-reflection about how one's biases might inflect everyday talk, assumptions, and teaching decisions in order to enhance one's ability to offer authentic support for students from marginalized communities.		

In addition to the practices indicated above, what is at least one teaching practice you think would be most helpful or transformative for your discipline?

Engaged Teaching

Engaged Teaching Includes:

- Demonstrated reflective teaching practice, including through the regular revision of courses in content and pedagogy.

Check those practices you regularly engage in or aspire to adopt.

Individual Engagement

	Current	Aspirational
Connect concrete teaching choices to a well-defined philosophy, set of goals, or departmental or university-wide academic priorities (closing equity gaps, connecting to community, or highlighting career readiness skills);		
Demonstrate changes made based on a reflective and analytical approach to continuously improve teaching practice. For example, changes based on feedback from peer observation, student experience surveys, instructor reflections		
Demonstrate changes made based on attending UO or external workshops, conferences, or institutes about teaching and learning; reading books or articles about teaching and learning; participating in teaching journal or book clubs.		

Teaching Leadership

	Current	Aspirational
Serve as an active member of the Provost's Teaching Academy, a CAIT (Community Accelerating the Impact of Teaching) fellow, on UO committees related to teaching and learning (core education, teaching evaluation, etc), or engage in a curriculum assessment and revision process.		
Support colleagues as they develop and improve their teaching, including through mentorship or sharing materials.		
Present teaching innovations and insights at workshops and conferences; publish scholarship related to teaching and learning.		

In addition to the practices indicated above, what is at least one teaching practice you think would be most helpful or transformative for your discipline?

Research Informed Teaching

Research Informed Teaching Includes:

- Instruction models a process or culture of inquiry characteristic of disciplinary or professional expertise.
- Evaluation of student performance linked to explicit goals for student learning established by faculty member, unit, and, for core education, university; these goals and criteria for meeting them are made clear to students.
- Timely, useful feedback on activities and assignments, including indicating students' progress in course.
- Instruction engages, challenges, and supports students.

Check those practices you regularly engage in or aspire to adopt.

Evidence-based teaching practices

	Current	Aspirational
Align course content (knowledge, skills, or abilities) and activities with relevant learning objectives, such as those for assignments, class sessions or modules, the overall course, or applicable department or university core education objectives.		
Engage students in constructing their own knowledge through active learning.		
Design course activities to facilitate practice of efficient learning strategies, such as retrieval, spaced practice, interleaving, elaborative interrogation, and self-explanation.		
Invite students into the subject matter, for instance through storytelling, compelling case studies, role playing, or explicit commentary about the skills, values, or formation of the field/discipline.		
Ask a variety of types of questions (factual, application, critical, etc.) and allot time for students to respond to/discuss questions in class or in postings such as discussion boards.		
Implement low-stakes assessments that promote learning and offer a variety of ways for students to demonstrate their understanding. Examples include polling questions, short quizzes, one-minute papers, muddiest point statements, questions embedded in lecture content, metacognitive reflections, etc.		
Provide timely, actionable, and goal-oriented feedback on activities and assignments.		

Disciplinary methods and research

	Current	Aspirational
Develop course content by drawing on relevant scholarly works, including current research/developments in the field or discipline.		
Show how disciplinary experts approach problems, either by modeling the process or by explicitly guiding students through it.		
Engage students in discussions about disciplinary research results and practices.		
Engage students in disciplinary research.		

In addition to the practices indicated above, what is at least one teaching practice you think would be most helpful or transformative for your discipline?