

Design Thinking, Innovation, and Applied Learning

Description

This badge recognizes faculty who use design thinking, innovation, experiential learning, collaboration, and future-ready pedagogy to create applied learning experiences connected to real-world challenges. To earn this badge, the earner must complete 3 of the 5 workshops in this pathway at the Competent or Accomplished level. The earner must also complete 2 additional CTL workshops from outside this pathway and submit a cross-connection reflection for each one. Each cross-connection reflection must explain how the outside workshop expands, strengthens, or applies the primary pathway theme of design thinking, innovation, and applied learning in relation to student success, inclusive and effective teaching, and interdisciplinary instructional thinking. Badge completion requires CTL review of all selected workshop evidence and both cross-connection reflections.

Rubric contents

1. Workshop 1: Human-Centered Course and Learning Experience Design
2. Workshop 2: Experiential and High-Impact Teaching Practices
3. Workshop 3: Innovation and Continuous Improvement in Teaching
4. Workshop 4: Collaborative Problem-Solving and Interdisciplinary Learning
5. Workshop 5: Creativity, Adaptability, and Future-Ready Learning
6. Additional Workshop of Choice 1 Cross-Pathway Integration Requirement
7. Additional Workshop of Choice 2 Cross-Pathway Integration Requirement

Workshop 1: Human-Centered Course and Learning Experience Design

Definition

Applies design thinking principles to improve student learning experiences and outcomes.

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Goal 3, student-centered teaching, responsive instruction, instructional innovation. Strategic Plan: Goal 3, educational effectiveness and high-impact teaching. NACE: Critical Thinking, Communication, Equity + Inclusion, Technology.	Deliverable: Redesigned learning experience or assignment based on student needs, feedback, empathy mapping, or learner experience mapping. Example assessment/activity: Faculty use student feedback to revise an assignment, module, or learning sequence.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Identifies a student experience challenge but provides limited evidence of redesign or learner input.	Uses student feedback, empathy mapping, or learner experience data to revise one learning experience or assignment.	Implements the redesign, gathers student response or learning evidence, refines the experience, and shares the design process.

Workshop 2: Experiential and High-Impact Teaching Practices

Definition

Designs authentic, applied, and collaborative learning opportunities connected to real-world challenges.

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Goal 3, experiential learning, civic and global engagement, hands-on and problem-based learning. Strategic Plan: Goal 3, high-impact teaching; Goal 4, experiential learning and employability. NACE: Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Communication, Career + Self-Development, Leadership.	Deliverable: Applied assignment package connected to course outcomes. Example assessment/activity: Project-based assignment, case study, community-connected project, collaborative project, discipline-based research activity, or real-world problem-solving task.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Identifies an applied learning opportunity but does not clearly connect it to course outcomes, student evidence, or authentic practice.	Develops or revises one experiential, collaborative, or applied learning activity connected to course outcomes.	Implements the activity, gathers evidence of student learning or engagement, revises it, and prepares it as a shareable high-impact practice.

Workshop 3: Innovation and Continuous Improvement in Teaching

Definition

Uses iterative, evidence-informed approaches to refine instruction and improve student success.

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Goal 3, data-informed faculty development, instructional innovation, continuous improvement. Strategic Plan: Goal 3, educational and organizational effectiveness. NACE: Critical Thinking, Leadership, Professionalism, Technology.	Deliverable: Teaching innovation pilot plan or mini implementation report. Example assessment/activity: Faculty pilot a new instructional strategy, gather feedback, analyze engagement data, and revise the strategy.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Identifies a teaching improvement area but has not yet piloted a change or gathered feedback.	Pilots one instructional change and reflects on student feedback, engagement, or performance data.	Documents the improvement cycle, revises the strategy based on evidence, and shares the innovation with colleagues or CTL.

Workshop 4: Collaborative Problem-Solving and Interdisciplinary Learning

Definition

Facilitates teamwork, inquiry, and cross-disciplinary thinking.

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Goal 3, interdisciplinary collaborations and direct student support or program advancement. Strategic Plan: Goal 3, high-impact teaching and effective learning environments. NACE: Teamwork, Critical Thinking, Communication, Equity + Inclusion.	Deliverable: Collaborative problem-solving activity. Example assessment/activity: Team-based problem scenario, interdisciplinary case study, collaborative inquiry project, learning community activity, or cross-course project.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Describes collaboration or interdisciplinary learning but provides limited structure for student teamwork or problem-solving.	Implements one collaborative problem-solving activity that requires teamwork, inquiry, or interdisciplinary thinking.	Assesses teamwork and problem-solving evidence, revises the activity, and identifies how it could be scaled or adapted across disciplines.

Workshop 5: Creativity, Adaptability, and Future-Ready Learning

Definition

Helps students develop innovation mindsets and transferable skills for evolving careers and communities.

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Goal 3, future-proofing credentials, adaptability, critical technological evaluation; Goal 4, workforce readiness. Strategic Plan: Goal 4, economic impact and future-focused workforce skills. NACE: Critical Thinking, Career + Self-Development, Technology, Leadership.	Deliverable: Future-ready assignment or activity. Example assessment/activity: Innovation challenge, future scenario activity, adaptive planning task, creative problem-solving assignment, or real-world transfer activity.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Identifies future-ready skills but provides limited evidence of assignment-level integration or assessment.	Designs one assignment or activity that promotes creativity, adaptability, innovation, or real-world problem-solving.	Evaluates student demonstration of future-ready skills, revises the activity, and connects it to NACE competencies or program outcomes.

Additional Workshop of Choice 1 Cross-Pathway Integration Requirement

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Aligned to design thinking pathway theme plus selected outside workshop. Strategic Plan: Goal 3 or Goal 4 depending on selected workshop. NACE: Selected based on outside workshop focus.	Deliverable: Cross-connection reflection. Required reflection focus: Explain how the outside workshop strengthens design thinking, applied learning, innovation, collaboration, or future-ready teaching.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Summarizes the outside workshop but makes only a broad connection to design thinking or applied learning.	Clearly explains how the outside workshop supports the design thinking pathway and identifies one applied instructional use.	Integrates the outside workshop learning into a redesigned assignment, prototype, applied activity, or innovation plan.

Additional Workshop of Choice 2 Cross-Pathway Integration Requirement

Alignment and evidence

Alignment to AMP, Strategic Plan, and NACE	Deliverable, example assessment, and activities
AMP: Aligned to design thinking pathway theme plus selected outside workshop. Strategic Plan: Goal 3 or Goal 4 depending on selected workshop. NACE: Selected based on outside workshop focus.	Deliverable: Cross-connection reflection. Required reflection focus: Explain how the outside workshop contributes to student-centered innovation, experiential learning, interdisciplinary thinking, or workforce-ready skills.

Performance levels

Developing	Competent	Accomplished
Reflection identifies a connection but lacks specificity, instructional relevance, or student success application.	Reflection clearly connects the outside workshop to applied learning, innovation, student success, and inclusive teaching.	Reflection shows interdisciplinary integration and identifies how the outside learning will improve or scale an applied learning product.