



Growing and Adapting in an Evolving World

CELT Professional Day: Tuesday, September 1, 2026

Welcome Back! This year's CELT theme is **Growing and Adapting in an Evolving World**. As faculty we need to constantly adapt as students, pedagogical approaches, and technology changes. Join us as we explore new strategies to support learning and teaching at Middlesex College. All [CELT](#) events are open to all full-time and adjunct faculty at Middlesex College and are in person. We look forward to being together to share ideas and learn from one another. All events are in the College Center.

Please **register** September CELT events by clicking the following link:

- [CELT Fall Professional Week](#) (for 3 days of events in September)

11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Join us for our Keynote speaker, Todd Zakrajsek

The Science of Learning Meets AI: What Helps, What Hinders, and What to Do Next
(CC Caf. A & B, followed by lunch for all participants until 1 PM)

Decades of research in the cognitive and learning sciences have provided clear insights into what supports, and hinders, human learning. This session draws on that research to examine how faculty can guide students toward deeper thinking, greater confidence, and sustained effort. Generative AI offers new opportunities to support this process by providing timely feedback, scaffolding complex tasks, and prompting reflection when used intentionally. In a context like Middlesex, where students are preparing to apply their learning in real-world settings, these approaches can strengthen both learning and performance. This session takes a practical, evidence-informed look at how to support lasting growth.



About our speaker: Todd D. Zakrajsek, PhD, is an Adjunct Associate Research Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he works with faculty to improve teaching, learning, and student success. A former tenured professor of psychology, he has led faculty development initiatives at three universities. Todd has consulted with organizations including the American Council on Education, Microsoft, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He has directed the Lilly Conferences on Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning for over 20 years and serves as editor of [THE SCHOLARY TEACHER](#). He has authored or co-authored 10 books, including [THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING MEETS AI](#) (2026), and regularly presents on evidence-based teaching and how AI is reshaping learning.

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **AI and Education: Shiny Tools, Real Learning—A Hands-On Workshop**
Todd Zakrajsek (CC Caf. A & B)

From calculators to the internet to generative AI, each new technology raises questions about whether it supports or undermines meaningful learning, particularly in classrooms with students who bring a wide range of preparation. Rather than starting with what AI can do, this session begins with a more important question: What do we want students to learn? As the saying goes, “The one who does the work does the learning.” This interactive workshop uses principles from the science of learning and backward design to examine when AI

supports engagement and understanding—and when it distracts or replaces the very thinking we want students to do. Participants will test practical strategies they can use in their next class session.

2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Embodied Learning: Using Movement to Deepen Cross-Disciplinary Understanding Aimee Mitacchione (CC 300)

This interactive workshop introduces faculty to movement-based learning strategies grounded in *Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, with a focus on bodily-kinesthetic intelligence as a powerful but often underutilized pathway for learning. Participants will explore how simple, accessible movement experiences can enhance comprehension, retention, and engagement across disciplines—no dance experience required. By the end of the workshop, participants will understand the principles of multiple intelligences and bodily-kinesthetic learning, experience movement as a tool for processing and expressing academic content, and develop strategies for integrating movement into their own teaching practice.

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Using Project-Based Learning to Build AI Literacy, Creativity, and Student Agency Nick Picioccio (CC 123)

As generative AI becomes embedded across disciplines in higher education, faculty are seeking instructional models that promote ethical use, critical evaluation, and authentic student learning rather than automation. This interactive workshop examines Project-Based Learning (PBL) as an effective framework for integrating generative AI using the Digital Promise AI Literacy Framework (Understand, Evaluate, Use). Participants will engage in hands-on activities using generative AI and AI-empowered tools to design project components that support inquiry, creativity, media production, and reflection while preserving student agency, disciplinary rigor, and academic integrity. In preparation for this hands-on workshop, think about a multi class session project that you may have used the Internet, and would now like to add the use of Generative AI as a catalyst for learning. We are meeting in a computer lab, but if you would like, you are welcome to bring your own laptop.

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. “Did You Read My Comments?” Helping Students Benefit from Feedback Susan Altman (CC 334)

How much time do faculty spend on feedback that students may or may not read? How can we help students to use our feedback to improve learning and keep them focused on the learning outcomes? Are you frustrated that students continue to make the same mistakes over and over? This workshop will examine the research on how to provide students with effective feedback, but more importantly discuss strategies for feedback that students will actually read and use to improve and grow as learners in your classes.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Enjoy a Lunch Break on your Own

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Teaching Smarter: Leveraging AI in the STEM Classroom Adrian Novio (CC 319)

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming higher education, offering new opportunities to enhance teaching, streamline course preparation, and support student learning in STEM disciplines. This workshop will explore practical ways faculty can leverage AI tools in the college classroom, particularly in STEM courses. Topics will include using AI to generate organized lecture notes, create example problems and solutions, simulate datasets for classroom activities, develop review materials, and support student engagement. Participants will leave with concrete strategies, demonstrations, and ready-to-use ideas that can be immediately applied to their own courses.

Choose between one of the following two workshops at 2:15 – 3:15 PM:

(Choice #1) 2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. CEL 101: Getting Started with Community-Engaged Learning Kimberly Silverio Diaz, Coordinator for Community Engaged Learning (CC 334)

Interested in adding Community Engaged Learning to your class? The session will provide an overview of the CEL program at Middlesex College, with a focus on aligning course learning outcomes with meaningful projects that respond to community partner needs. Whether you teach in-person, on Zoom or online, faculty will review CEL recruitment considerations, discuss the CEL designation process, and engage in guided brainstorming to develop potential projects that are both pedagogically sound and mutually beneficial for community partners and students.

(Choice #2) 2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Lock It Down Without Melting Down: What's New in Respondus Michael Sullivan, eLearning (CC 300)

Concerns about Academic Integrity are at an all-time high. Are you interested in “beefing” up the security of your assessments in your online or face-to-face course? **Respondus** can be a powerful tool for online testing when it's set up with care. This session will walk through the latest updates, recommended settings, and best practices to help faculty create a secure, supportive, and less stressful exam experience.

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Building Accessible Courses with Ally in Canvas Linsay Arnold (CC 123)

Join the Department of eLearning in reviewing updates to the Title 2 requirements and the Ally tool in Canvas. Learn how to identify accessibility issues and improve your content. We will cover strategies such as adding alternative text to images, adding captions to videos, and designing readable presentations and documents. We are meeting in a computer room, but you are welcome to bring a laptop.

Thursday, September 3, 2026

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Yoga for a Balanced Body and Mind Arianna Illa (CC 319)

Explore the benefits of yoga to help decrease stress and start the academic year off strong! Yoga is a great way to help energize your body and relax your mind. This will be an introductory level class that will include breathwork, meditation, and a full series of yoga postures. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring your own mat if possible.

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Using AI to Elevate Student Writing Through Revision Katalin Gyurian-Toth and Tiffany Soares Daza (CC 300)

This workshop explores how faculty can use AI as a guided revision tool to help students strengthen academic writing through deeper thinking, clearer language, and more effective rhetorical choices. Participants will learn practical strategies for integrating AI into revision activities that move students beyond surface editing toward critical writing development. Faculty will leave with ready-to-use prompts and adaptable classroom applications that work across all disciplines.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Enjoy a Lunch Break on your Own

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Disability Accommodations: Under and Over Accommodating Elaine Daidone and Jason Holmwood (CC 334)

A case-focused approach to tricky accommodation requests and opportunities for discussion. Please bring student situations you had concerns about in the past. We will review the disability services process, cases we have dealt with, and provide space for discussion.

2:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Turn Passive into Active: Enhancing Canvas Courses with H5P Megan Elliott (CC 123)

Looking to transform your Canvas course with more interactive and automatically graded activities and assessments? Join the Department of eLearning for an H5P showcase to discover how to embed engaging activities as course assignments and now on pages! Whether building a new course or enhancing an existing one, this session will provide practical, technical skills to keep students engaged online. We are meeting in a computer room but you are welcome to bring a laptop.