



The CFD Monthly

Workshops, Events, Resources, and More

March 2025

The Learning Assistant Program Comes Full Circle

The **Learning Assistant (LA) Program** hires undergraduate students to serve as teaching aids in courses that they have successfully completed. These students work as part of a teaching team with faculty instructors; they attend every class meeting to promote active learning strategies, foster deep discussions, and serve as an approachable intermediary for faculty members. They can also be asked to hold tutoring and office hours outside of class sessions.

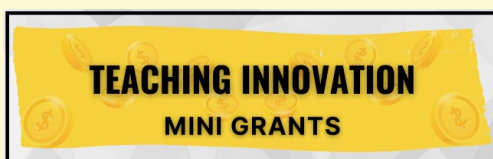


Jayce Robinson (pictured right), a current Graduate Teaching Assistant and Instructor of Record for MAT 101S, began working as an undergraduate learning assistant for that same course in 2022. When asked about his experiences in the LA Program, and now as a teacher who utilizes LAs in the classroom, Jayce said the LA Program “creates a team of people who are devoted to student success in the classroom”. He noted that the LA Program provides a smoother transition to college coursework for freshmen, especially since MAT 101S is a course commonly taken by students in their first semester at USM. “[As a freshman],” he said, “[the LA Program] made me feel really supported. It was like an escalator, rather than taking a step, in getting comfortable in college”. As a new Graduate Teaching Assistant, Jayce credits his job as an undergraduate learning assistant for instilling in him study skills for all subjects (not just math), giving him practical experiences in breaking down concepts and starting from a place of empathy with his students, and helping him to overcome imposter syndrome.

If you are interested in learning more about the LA Program or if you are interested in using LAs in your course(s), please contact Dr. Ashley Allen at a.d.allen@usm.edu or 601.266.5966.

[Visit the Learning Assistant Program website](#)

Now Accepting Applications!



Each fall and spring, the Center for Faculty Development awards four \$300 mini-grants to USM teaching faculty to support innovative classroom strategies. The funds can be used for guest speakers, course materials, lesson planning tools, and so much more! Faculty are encouraged to explore cutting-edge ideas and think outside of the box. The application will describe how specific teaching strategies or experiences will motivate and ignite student engagement to improve learning outcomes in the classroom. Apply and watch your ideas come to life!

**Applications are due
April 15, 2025**

[Apply Here!](#)

Wonder what's working in your classes or not? Interested in building your scholarship activity? Consider the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Faculty Fellows program. This three-semester program helps faculty build a foundation of research skills related to SoTL methodologies, create interdisciplinary connections and collaborations, and enhance your scholarship. We are currently recruiting for two topic areas, **Reading Across the Curriculum** and **Thoughtful Incorporation/ Prohibition of AI in the Curriculum**, with hopes that our cohort will complete projects together as research teams.

**Applications are due
April 15, 2025**

[Apply Here!](#)

Upcoming Events



Academic Integrity Q & A with James Thomas
March 14th, 2025
9 - 10 a.m | Teams
[Register](#)

Graduate Mentorship Lunch and Learn Workshop
March 18, 2025
12 - 2 pm | Peck House
[Register](#)

Introduction to Consensus
March 21, 2025
10:00 - 10:45 a.m. | Teams
[Register](#)

A How-to Guide to Integrate Coursera into Your Curriculum



Faculty are invited to apply for the **Southern Miss Gulf Scholars Program** curriculum development workshops, May 12, 13, and 14. During these workshops, faculty create a 4–6-week place-based experiential learning module for new or existing courses. Participants in the three workshops who implement their course modifications

March 28th, 2025
9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. IC 319 | Zoom
[Register](#)

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training
April 4, 2025
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | IC 319
[Register](#)

AI outside USM: Industry Applications of Artificial Intelligence
April 11th, 2025
9 - 10:30 a.m. IC 101 | Teams
[Register](#)



Continued Success at Southern Miss and Beyond: A casual end-of-year conversation with Provost Nail and Associate Provost Lester
April 3, 2025
3:00 - 4:15 p.m. | IC 319 and Teams
[Register](#)

receive a \$3000 stipend. **Applications are due April 1.** Seven applicants will be selected based on the relevance of the course to the GSP mission: to inspire and prepare undergraduate students to create a more equitable, just, and resilient Gulf of Mexico region.

[Apply Here!](#)



Applications for our **ACUE Faculty Development Institute** will be opening soon! We will be taking applications for the one-semester microcredential, *Designing Learner-centered Course* for summer 2025 and for the full, three-semester Effective Teaching Practices series starting in Fall 2025. More details to come. Check our [website](#) for updates.



Sharing our Perspectives: Student Conversations on AI



Logan Boudreaux (Criminal Justice), Reagan Veon (Marketing), Alexa Tringali (Psychology), Subhikshya Lama (Computer Science and Sociology), Dakota Owens (Graphic Design) & Dr. Zach Taylor, moderator (Education)

Five students across multiple disciplines came together for a candid panel conversation about their interactions with AI in and out of the classroom. Moderated by Dr. Zach Taylor, Assistant Professor in the School of Education, the session kicked off with anecdotes about the first time the panelists recognized they were engaging with artificial intelligence. Many described their initial surprise when realizing they were interacting with AI-powered systems, whether through chatbots, recommendation algorithms, or automated writing tools. The conversation segued into concerns with the use of AI for personal learning and development, as well as ethical concerns with the use of AI for specific course assignments and within disciplines as a whole.

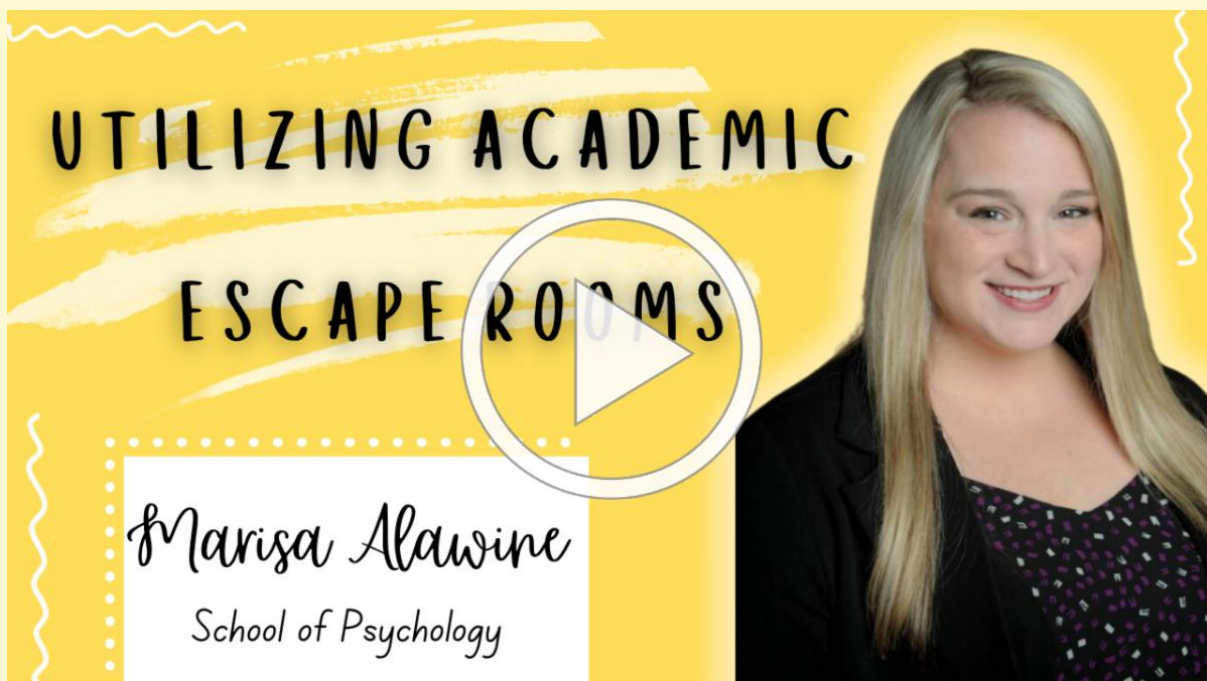
The key takeaway from the panelists' perspectives was that academic engagement with AI needs to be better understood by faculty and students alike. Students recognize that AI is becoming an integral part of how they interact with information on a daily basis, and that AI is being incorporated at some level into their disciplines and projected career fields.

Looking toward the future, panelists expressed a desire for more open and honest conversations with professors about establishing reasonable boundaries for AI use. They emphasized the importance of developing guidelines that acknowledge AI's presence while maintaining educational integrity. Students hope these discussions will help prepare them for an increasingly AI-integrated workplace while ensuring they develop the fundamental skills their disciplines require.

Catch another summary of this event in a [USM news release](#).

Tiny Teaching Tip

In this month's tip, Marisa Alawine from the School of Psychology describes how she used an escape room game to get students engaged in her Psychology Orientation class.





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