

THE DEREK BOK CENTER FOR
TEACHING AND LEARNING
ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24



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DEAR FRIENDS,

in a time of rapid change in higher education, the Bok Center has adapted to develop new ways of enhancing teaching and learning in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Over the past year, we have supported instructors in responding to urgent contemporary issues, including generative artificial intelligence (AI), civil discourse, and the changing needs of students.

Generative AI has been a major focus of the past year, as we sought to help faculty and graduate students understand the technology and consider ways to leverage AI to enhance learning, as well as ways to modify existing assignments to amplify learning without AI. During the fall and winter, we visited 25 departments to lead workshops on generative AI, introducing instructors to Harvard's internally developed generative AI platform (the HUIT Sandbox) and exploring new ways of using AI for teaching and learning. We also worked with faculty to develop new assignments that incorporated generative AI, and that prompted students to reflect on the implications of this new technology.

In these polarized times, it is more important than ever that students develop skills for civil discourse. We supported the College's Intellectual Vitality initiative by helping instructors build the foundation for class discussions in which students listen to each other, experiment with different viewpoints, and approach learning with an openness to new ideas. We offered workshops for faculty and graduate students on facilitating difficult conversations, and helped instructors design assignments in which students developed communication and discussion skills.

Our ongoing programming has continued to support faculty and graduate students from across the FAS. Close to 600 graduate students worked with the Bok Center over the past year, with 56 graduate students completing a teaching certificate, indicating a deep engagement with teaching and learning. Our Learning Lab supported over one hundred courses, enabling undergraduates to undertake a range of creative assignments, forming meaningful connections with their scholarly work. We also worked with the Office of Faculty Affairs to launch a new peer observation program for second year assistant professors, helping senior faculty to provide constructive feedback to their junior colleagues.

As the year wrapped up, we were delighted to welcome Professor Karen Thornber as the Richard L. Menschel Faculty Director of the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning on July 1, 2024. Professor Thornber is a professor of Comparative Literature and East Asian Languages and Civilizations, and has a wealth of leadership, teaching, and mentoring experience. We look forward to the new directions that the Bok Center will take in the coming years under her leadership.

Warmly,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara J. Brenner".

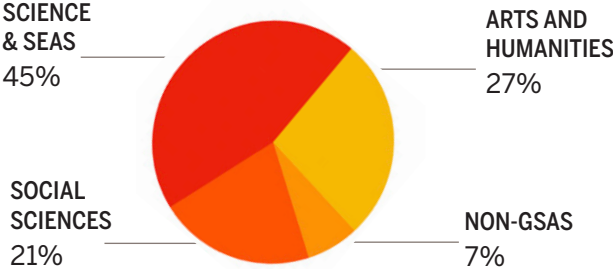
TAMARA BRENNER
Executive Director

OUR INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY

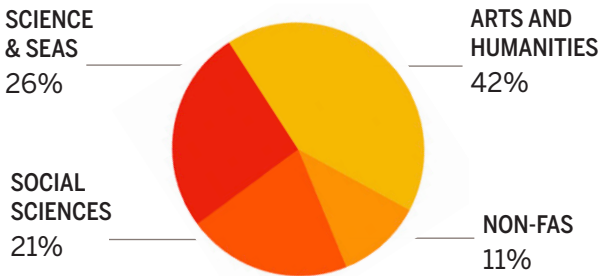
The Bok Center works with faculty from across the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and PhD students from across the Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.



595 unique **graduate students** participated in Bok Center programming



271 unique **faculty*** worked with the Bok Center



96% of **PhD programs** represented

88 **postdocs and teaching assistants** worked with the Bok Center

Numbers reflect activities between July 2023 and June 2024
 * Includes all ranks of ladder and non-ladder faculty

CIVIL DISCOURSE

Throughout our programming, we helped instructors develop the skills to nurture robust discussion, where students engaged with complex topics, learned from different perspectives, and became confident voicing their ideas.

- » Our **Fundamentals** training and accompanying online resources helped new TFs create the foundation for meaningful class discussions by building trust with their students, establishing a clear agenda for their work together, and developing group agreements.
- » Through our workshops and Bok Seminar on **Teaching Discussion as a Skill**, we provided TFs with the skills to encourage students to engage and learn from discussion, and to develop as effective speakers and listeners.
- » We offered workshops on **Navigating Difficult Moments in the Classroom** for both graduate student and faculty audiences, exploring ways to create an environment where students feel empowered to listen to each other and engage in purposeful dialogue with topics that have personal or political dimensions.
- » We helped instructors **design assignments** that scaffolded students into connecting their personal experiences and values with larger, often controversial conversations around policy and culture.
- » We led customized **workshops for teaching teams** on facilitating challenging conversations in the classroom and giving effective feedback on written work.
- » In the **Learning Lab**, we collaborated with faculty to design and implement class activities in which students practiced developing an argument, and persuading and listening to their peers.



“The exercises and problem-solving we did in the supportive seminar environment helped me test out responses to tense classroom scenarios—scenarios which I have confronted this semester, as I teach a sophomore tutorial on the politics of warfare. I feel confident that I’ve been able to deftly navigate these situations and have students feel recognized, informed, and empowered.”

KATHERINE IRAJPAHAH, PhD Candidate in Government, student in Bok Seminar, *Inclusive, Antiracist, or Decolonial: Exploring Power and Privilege in the Classroom*

IMPROVING THE CULTURE OF TEACHING

We partner with colleagues and offices across campus to improve the culture of teaching and learning at Harvard.

In collaboration with the Office of Faculty Affairs and Divisional Deans, we launched a new **peer observation program** to engage assistant professors and their tenured colleagues in conversations about teaching in the context of second year reviews. We developed a hybrid online and in-person training for tenured faculty to prepare them to observe and provide feedback to their colleagues, reaching 17 observers in this inaugural year.

In 2022–23 the FAS trained its sights on the culture of **grading** at Harvard College, assembling a committee staffed by members of the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) and the Bok Center that recommended that the College take eight steps to ensure that students would receive more robust feedback on their learning. In 2023–24 we collaborated with OUE to implement those recommendations, holding focus groups with faculty to learn more about their current practices and concerns about grading, publishing new resources on grading rubrics and seated exams, and developing a plan to support departments in more clearly defining their grading expectations.

On April 18, 2024, the Bok Center hosted Professor Tracy Johnson, Professor of Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology at UCLA, for the annual **Herschbach Teacher/Scientist Lecture**. Drawing on approaches that have been implemented at UCLA, Professor Johnson discussed data-driven strategies for fostering a culture of inclusion in the STEM classroom.



GENERATIVE AI

To many observers, both within the university and beyond it, 2023–24 seemed destined to be the year of Generative Artificial Intelligence. The academic year began amidst a flurry of bold prognostications about how AI would disrupt almost every facet of higher education, and especially teaching and learning, as everyone from administrators to alumni debated what would happen if instructors failed either to capitalize on, or defend against, the new technology. Would chatbots soon replace human instructors? Was the traditional essay assignment now a thing of the past?

In partnership with Harvard University Information Technology (HUIT), the Harvard Initiative on Learning and Teaching (HILT), the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE), and the FAS Science Division, the Bok Center has made significant progress in preparing the way for a much wider and deeper engagement with AI and its potential to revolutionize how and what our students learn in the coming years. Over the course of the past year, our staff have:

- » developed a high level of proficiency with a number of AI platforms, both including third-party apps like GPT-4 and Claude, and Harvard’s Generative AI Sandbox;
- » participated in College-, FAS-, and University-wide conferences and workshops designed to circulate novel approaches and best practices when using AI among instructors and staff;
- » created a suite of authentic pedagogical use cases that we demonstrated in person and shared online;
- » published a Canvas module that includes orientation materials for instructors and advice on possible course policies on generative AI; and
- » offered dozens of workshops to audiences of faculty and TFs in an effort to catalyze thinking about scalable implementations of AI in courses.

SCALING UP AI ACROSS THE FAS

In the fall and winter, the Bok Center sent teams to more than 25 departments and programs across the FAS to offer a 60-minute workshop on generative AI and its applications for teaching and learning. Tailored to the disciplinary contexts of both faculty and Teaching Fellows/Teaching Assistants, the workshops featured interactive demonstrations showcasing how instructors could take advantage of generative AI to improve their teaching methods and how students could be guided to utilize AI for enhanced learning experiences. We’ve shown Statistics faculty how students might use AI to learn a programming language, East Asian Studies faculty how to use AI to check translations to and from non-Western languages, biologists how to use AI to analyze the figures in scientific papers, and classicists how to use AI as a Latin tutor, among many other applications.

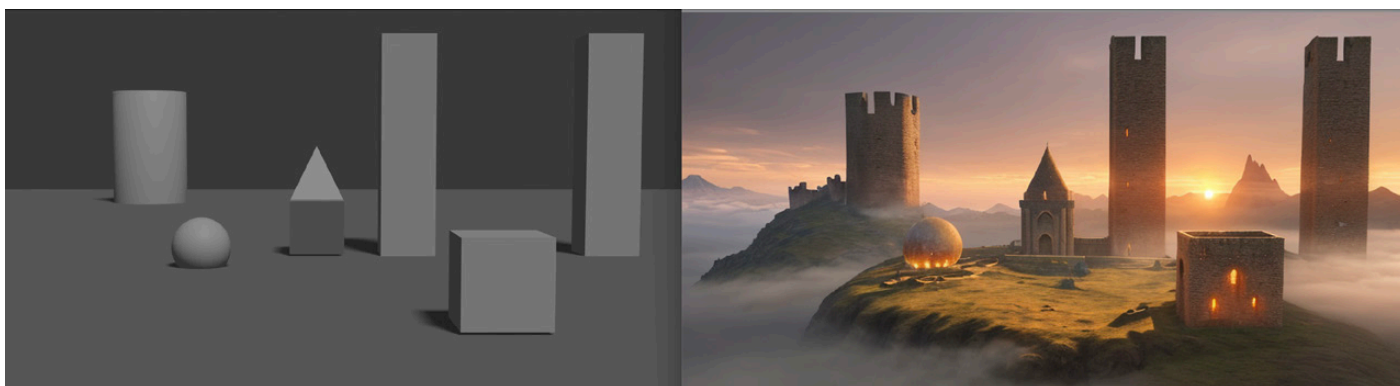
REIMAGINING LEARNING WITH AI

This year, the Bok Center’s Learning Lab focused on the transformative potential of generative AI in multimodal assignments and learning experiences. As our team of staff and fellows experimented with AI, we also hired a new group of undergraduate Generative AI Course Assistants (GAICAs), who helped create the code that was used in our AI projects.

At our Learning Lab studio, we explore new technologies and host workshops for students in the context of their courses, to help students develop new skills—often involving multimodal communication—that will allow them to complete new types of assignments. Using AI in our workshops helped students achieve greater creativity and technical sophistication. Below are some highlights from workshops where AI-augmented experiences deepened students’ understanding of the course content.

DANCING WITH DATA

Students in Daria Khitrova’s **SLAVIC 121/TDM 121K: Ballet, Past and Present** explored how ballet knowledge is transmitted through time. We offered a workshop that enabled the kind of annotation of the body and its movements that are important to dancers and scholars of dance. To achieve this, students came to the Learning Lab to create annotations using a range of materials. Initially, students worked with paper, annotating printed frame-by-frame stills of ballets. They then transformed their own physical ballet poses, which they performed in front of our green screen, into digital art with Stable Diffusion, an open-source image generator. This activity showed students how AI can be used to decipher and visually transmit ballet movements over time.



AUGMENTING GAME MECHANICS

In Vidyan Ravinthiran’s **ENGLISH 189VG: Video Game Storytelling**, students attended a hands-on workshop about game mechanics at the Learning Lab. Media & Design Fellow Chris Benham led a station where students created basic 3D shapes in Blender and then used Stable Diffusion to transform them into fantastical video game worlds that previously would have taken a significant amount of time to create. At another station, students focused on story development. Because they could use ChatGPT and the image generator Midjourney to generate quick content for their video game narratives and characters, students were able to dive into the more intricate aspects of the video game production process and focus on analyzing and experimenting with game mechanics.

UNPACKING AI BIAS

In Leslie Fernandez's **EMR 162: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Race and AI**, students examined biases in AI image generation using models like GPT-4/DALL-E, Gemini Advanced, and Midjourney. When a user enters a prompt into an image generator, many AI corporations—including OpenAI and Google—manipulate the prompts to generate images that are ostensibly more diverse. The Learning Lab wrote code that could reveal for students these revised prompts, which highlighted the corporations' cultural biases and their responses to public critiques of their content generation. Students analyzed images and prompts in conversation with each other, forming critical insights about what these new tools will mean for our society.

CREATING AI FOLKTALES

In Jeffrey Schnapp's **COMPLIT 200: Computing Fantasy**, students explored theories of folktales and modernist authors who used various algorithmic and computational methods for generating literary content. As an example of this, GAICAs developed fairytale generators that students could use to generate their own illustrated tales. Finally, the Learning Lab hosted a series of workshops and work sessions where students could use our tools and art supplies as they completed their collaborative final group projects: three books of illustrated AI folktales.

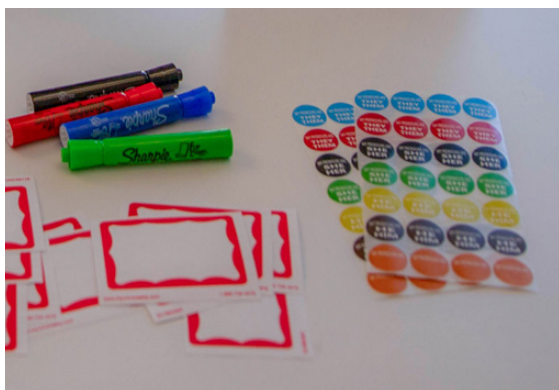


AI BOTS

We experimented with Slackbots (AI bots integrated into Slack) to enhance learning experiences in several courses, including **CE 10: StudioLab on Creativity and Entrepreneurship**. In this course, entrepreneur and former Dean of the Division of Continuing Education Hunt Lambert provided business model feedback to students on their projects. The Learning Lab prototyped a Hunt Lambert bot that was trained on the feedback Lambert gave to each group. Students could later chat with this bot to continue pitching ideas and receive ongoing feedback asynchronously.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Throughout the 2023-24 academic year, Bok staff researched scholarship on best practices in pedagogy that aim to make all students feel welcome, and supported faculty and graduate-student instructors in developing more effective learning environments.



UNDERGRADUATE PEDAGOGY FELLOWS

It can sometimes be difficult for new instructors to fully appreciate how their teaching and course policies might impact students of different social identities. Therefore, we led and mentored a team of eleven **Undergraduate Pedagogy Fellows** (UPFs), who offered Harvard TFs interactive workshops focused on undergraduate perspectives and experiences with regard to inclusion and belonging.

CONNECTING WITH FACULTY AND DEPARTMENTS

Amid a time of increasing social and political polarization, the workshops, consultations, and seminars that have been most popular in our Equity and Inclusion portfolio are ones that address how to navigate difficult conversations in the classroom and how to mindfully listen. At the request of faculty, the Bok Center delivered new workshops about religion as a category of diversity and about supporting students' mental health.

CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

The Bok Center partnered with centers and individuals across the FAS, and beyond, to provide opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to engage with each other around EDIB. Our Assistant Director, Equity and Inclusion:

- » co-designed an 8-week module on **Racism in the Global Context** for faculty in partnership with faculty and staff from Harvard's Graduate School of Education (HGSE), as part of HGSE's Anti-Racist Teaching and Mentoring curriculum.
- » co-facilitated a learning community of instructors with the **Mindich Program in Engaged Scholarship** centered on the theme of building community and the pedagogy of engaged scholarship.
- » advised the Division of Continuing Education's **Inclusive Teaching Institute** as they continued to develop their resources and programming supported by the Culture Lab Innovation Fund.

Bok joined the **Student Experience Working Group** (SEWG), part of the University Accessibility Committee. The SEWG works closely with the university-wide Student Accessibility Advisory Group (SAAG) to develop resources and programming to better support students with disabilities on campus.

SUPPORTING GRADUATE STUDENTS

Bok workshops for graduate students highlight the many different ways of defining and approaching inclusive teaching, and provide participants with the skills necessary to make intentional choices about best practices for their courses.

The **Fall Teaching Conference** and **Winter Teaching Week** place an emphasis on inclusive teaching strategies, with plenary sessions and focused workshops on equitable and inclusive teaching, and identity and power dynamics in the classroom.

We work closely with our **Pedagogy Fellows** to ensure that their departmental **teaching colloquia** include sessions on equity and inclusion as well as a robust engagement with Harvard students' identities. We also visited nine departmental teaching colloquia to provide workshops on inclusive teaching to new TFs.

This year's Bok Seminar offerings included *Crafting a Diversity Statement: Reflecting on your Values to Develop your Practice* and *Inclusive, Antiracist, or Decolonial: Exploring Power and Privilege in the Classroom*.

“What I liked the most about the seminar was its emphasis on making the application of theory to practice concrete and relatable. I had learned a lot before this seminar about inclusive pedagogy in theory but this was the first time I could see how it can be integrated into syllabus, class assignments, and other aspect[s] of a course.”

PhD candidate, student in Bok Seminar, *Inclusive, Antiracist, or Decolonial: Exploring Power and Privilege in the Classroom*

FACULTY IN COMMUNITY

We believe that learning about—and developing—teaching happens best in collaborative settings. We create spaces in which faculty can learn from each others' experiences teaching and mentoring.

59

new faculty joined us at orientation workshops in August, where we introduced key ideas from the science of learning and helped faculty draw connections between their teaching and the mission of their departments and Harvard College.

23

faculty participated in our biweekly **Science Education Journal Club**, which explored recent literature on science education research and enabled a community of scientists to share ideas about evidence-based and inclusive teaching.

11

faculty participated in our three-part workshop series on **Mentoring with Purpose**. Participants engaged with faculty colleagues in facilitated conversations about how to set boundaries, listen well, provide feedback, and cultivate their mentees' independence.



14

faculty joined our **Exploratory Seminar** on evolving expectations of the senior thesis. Over two days in April 2024, participants reflected on the current state of the **senior thesis** at Harvard, considered how students' and concentrations' ambitions for the thesis may be changing in response to new pressures and new technologies, and explored how we can work together to prepare students, advisors, and graders to engage with new modalities of scholarship.

As a follow-up, we have begun hosting a monthly series of “Thursday Thesis Think Tank” meetings where Directors of Undergraduate Studies and other faculty responsible for senior thesis programming can share ideas and resources.

TAILORED SUPPORT FOR FACULTY

Each year, we consult individually with faculty from across all disciplines in the FAS, as well as with non-FAS faculty who are teaching courses in Harvard College. These consultations provide a space for faculty to articulate their goals, talk through ideas or challenges, and consider their teaching from other perspectives. We frequently work with faculty throughout the life cycle of their courses, helping them create activities and assignments that will engage their students authentically in the material they are teaching, supporting them and their teaching fellows as the semester gets underway, and helping them to interpret the feedback they receive and revise their approaches for future iterations of the course.

Faculty consulted with Bok Center staff on topics ranging from designing a syllabus, to handling controversial topics in the classroom, to interpreting student feedback.

183

unique faculty

233

consultations on course and assignment design

78

consultations on other topics, including professional communication and developing grant proposals

The Bok Center also offered faculty weekly **virtual office hours** throughout the year, partnering with Academic Technology for the FAS to answer instructors' questions about technologies including generative AI, polling applications, and course Canvas sites as well as more fundamental questions about teaching strategies.

"The consultation was extremely helpful. I received direct responses to my concerns and resources to help me move forward after the meeting... Honestly this was above and beyond—I can't think of anything that could have been better."

SHAI DROMI, Associate Senior Lecturer on Sociology, instructor of GENED 1192: Philanthropy, Nonprofits, and the Social Good

"I got help constructing a syllabus, making lesson plans, designing the course and understanding student feedback. Couldn't have been better. 5/5. 10/10."

STEPHANIE BURT, Donald P. and Katherine B. Loker Professor of English, instructor of English 183ts: Taylor Swift and Her World

DEVELOPING GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHERS

At our second annual Bok Graduate Community Celebration on April 26, we honored this year's Teaching Certificate recipients and all of the graduate students who engaged in our programming over the past year. Students from Bok Seminars, the Professional Communication Program for International Teachers and Scholars, and Bok Fellows programs joined us to share their experiences and connect with fellow graduate students. PhD students often start their journey with us in one of our pre-semester conferences, and from there can pursue different avenues, based on their goals and areas of interest.



FALL TEACHING CONFERENCE AND WINTER TEACHING WEEK

183 graduate students attended the Fall Teaching Conference and Winter Teaching Week. These pre-semester conferences allow new and experienced TFs to explore key topics in teaching and learning, and feel prepared and confident before a new semester starts. Our Hit the Ground Running Canvas site provides the framework for the conferences and has self-study modules on the fundamentals of teaching, equitable and inclusive teaching, responding to student writing, teaching as an international scholar, and engaged communication.

BOK SEMINARS

Our Bok Seminars—short courses on different topics in teaching and learning—continued to grow and thrive, building on these core categories: Foundations, Methods & Classroom Practice, Equity & Inclusion, Communication & Language, and Professional Development.

22

Bok Seminars

207

unique participants

200+

hours of teaching time

BOK TEACHING CERTIFICATE

The Bok Teaching Certificate gives PhD students a tangible marker of their commitment to developing as teachers in higher education. Graduate students who pursue the Certificate explore topics in teaching and learning through departmental pedagogy courses and Bok Seminars, reflect on their own teaching practice, and compile a teaching portfolio.

45

graduate students received the Bok Teaching Certificate

11

graduate students received the Bok Certificate in Teaching Language and Culture



TEACHING MATTERS

This year we focused on making the impact of our work with PhD students more visible. We revamped the Teaching Certificate Gallery into Teaching Matters, a section of our website that showcases what PhD students are learning through teaching and how the Bok Center is making an impact on the professional development of graduate students.

We started the **Teacher-Scholar Spotlight** to illuminate PhD students' insights on teaching and learning. Each month we feature the experiences of PhD students who have engaged in Bok Center programming and what they have learned about and from teaching.



What would you say to PhD students about why they should get involved with the Bok Center?

"What I've enjoyed the most is the comfortable environment the Bok Center staff provides so you can get the feedback you need most (positive and/or constructive). It's scary to put yourself out there, or have yourself recorded to review later with a stranger [during a video consultation], but each session I've had with the Bok Center has been so relaxed I've forgotten all the pressure I had put on myself. I was able to get the best tips to improve in areas I never would have known about if I didn't go through with that experience."

AJ SCHICK, PhD Candidate in Chemical Biology



What is something you learned in a Bok Seminar that you'll use in the future?

"Practicing the core aspects of teaching - explaining the key concepts and delivering the informative presentation - has been incredibly helpful for me. I didn't attend college in the US, and the concept of a 'section' was unfamiliar in my home country, so initially, I was very nervous about having to teach one. However, the Bok Seminar *Classroom Communication Skills for International Teachers and Scholars* prepared me well for what to expect both from students and in my role as a section leader. Being exposed to knowledge about common experiences of section leaders, and realizing that these challenges are not unique to me, has greatly boosted my confidence."

MINJIN CHAE, PhD Candidate in Sociology



How did you get involved with the Bok Center?

"In my fourth year as a PhD student, I was encouraged by my department to apply for the year-long Pedagogy Fellows Program with the Bok Center. The program was galvanizing: I attended weekly sessions at the Bok Center, and I used what I learned to mentor my peers who were teaching at Harvard for the first time. I learned a lot about pedagogy...by teaching it!"

LEE CANNON-BROWN, PhD Candidate in Music

PEDAGOGY FELLOWS

This year marks the 19th cohort of the Bok Center's Pedagogy Fellows Program, a collaboration between the Bok Center, academic departments, and the Office of Undergraduate Education.



Each year, we teach more than 25 Pedagogy Fellows to be teaching consultants, to identify needs and develop resources on teaching and professional development for their peers, and, in many cases, to lead their departments' pedagogy courses. The program aims to support all Harvard PhD students in their roles as undergraduate teachers, and to provide a cohort of excellent graduate student teachers with the opportunity to join a community of practice at the Bok Center.

The cohort meets as an interdisciplinary seminar on Friday mornings over the course of the academic year. In these meetings, they learn about key topics in teaching and learning, which they can both integrate into their own teaching practice and share with TFs in their home departments. The PFs have the opportunity to connect with fellow graduate students from across disciplines and learn about the widely varying contexts of teaching and research in departments across the FAS. The impact of the PF community on individual PFs can be profound.

At the end of the year, each PF completed a capstone project. Our capstone gallery serves as both an archive for the program and a platform to share the range of work happening across departments. View the [Pedagogy Fellows Capstone Gallery](#).

Read more highlights from this year's cohort in our [Pedagogy Fellows news story](#).

TAILORED SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

We consult with PhD students individually on any topic of interest, whether they want to learn more about our programming, reflect on their teaching and professional development goals, receive feedback on their teaching and communication skills, or develop teaching materials for the job market.

220

unique graduate students

326

consultations



We also offer class observations and video consultations, as well as tailored workshops for departments and other groups.

96

Teaching Fellows requested a class observation or video consultation to gain new insights into their teaching practice and discuss questions and ideas with a Pedagogy Fellow or Bok Staff member. These conversations give TFs the opportunity to put themselves in the shoes of their students, to reflect on their classroom decisions, and to see the impact of those decisions on student learning.

48

workshops. We facilitated tailored workshops for departments, student groups, pedagogy courses, and teaching teams on topics like communicating your research, developing your teaching materials for the job market, grading and feedback, and navigating difficulty in the classroom.

INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS

We offer opportunities for International PhD students and scholars to develop their English speaking, teaching, and cross-cultural communication skills for success as teachers and communicators. We continued to expand our resources to support PhD students who need to develop their oral English proficiency as well as advanced speakers who would like to hone their intercultural and professional communication skills.

88 International PhD students and scholars underwent **oral English proficiency interviews**, as part of the Harvard Griffin GSAS English Language Proficiency policy.

9 undergraduate **Culture and Communication Consultants (CCCs)** offered insights about Harvard undergraduate culture and supported international graduate students as they developed their communication skills. The CCCs served as language partners, led discussion groups, participated in Bok Seminars, and organized special events, such as a Harvard House tour.

37 graduate students completed intensive Bok Seminars that focused on **communication and language**. Our seminars offer extensive individual consultations and tailored support.

34 graduate students participated in our **Discussion Group for International PhD students**, which provides opportunities for international PhD students to connect with each other and with undergraduate CCCs to practice oral communication skills and discuss topics related to language, culture, teaching, and current events.

The Bok Center partners with Harvard Griffin GSAS to design and teach the academic component of Harvard Griffin GSAS Welcomes: International Summer Institute (ISI). This program has evolved since the pandemic from a more intensive English language program to a focused two-week program designed to help new international PhD students start their time at Harvard with a strong foundation.

Learn more in our news story about the **International Summer Institute**.

"I enrolled in the International Summer Institute (ISI) with 4 different goals: I wanted to be more confident in my English communications before starting classes; I wanted to make new friends; I wanted to adapt to the U.S. culture and Boston/Cambridge area; and I wanted to live the experience of being in a diverse group. Today, I realize that those goals were achieved successfully and even I achieved more than I expected."

GABRIEL IVAN CARDENAS CHIRIVI, PhD Candidate in Quantum Science and Engineering, 2023 ISI Participant

THE LEARNING LAB

The Learning Lab is an intergenerational team composed of staff and undergraduate and graduate fellows supporting creative approaches to teaching and learning. In collaboration with faculty, the Learning Lab team explores, designs, and builds innovative materials, assignments, and activities for Harvard courses.

THE LEARNING LAB:

SUPPORTED

104

courses and projects across 39 departments and programs, enrolling 4,122 undergraduate students.

HOSTED

195

workshops and events in the Learning Lab Studio to help students develop new skills, complete course projects, and present their work.



OUR INTERGENERATIONAL DESIGN TEAM

26

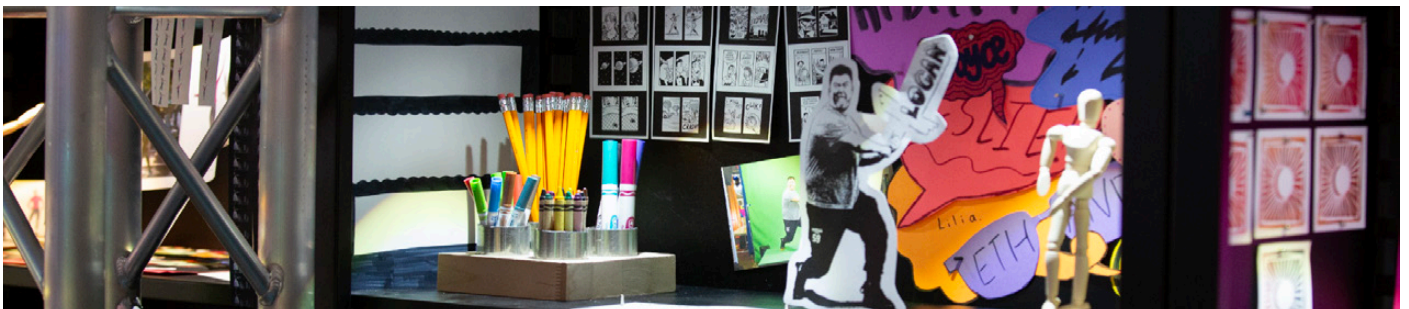
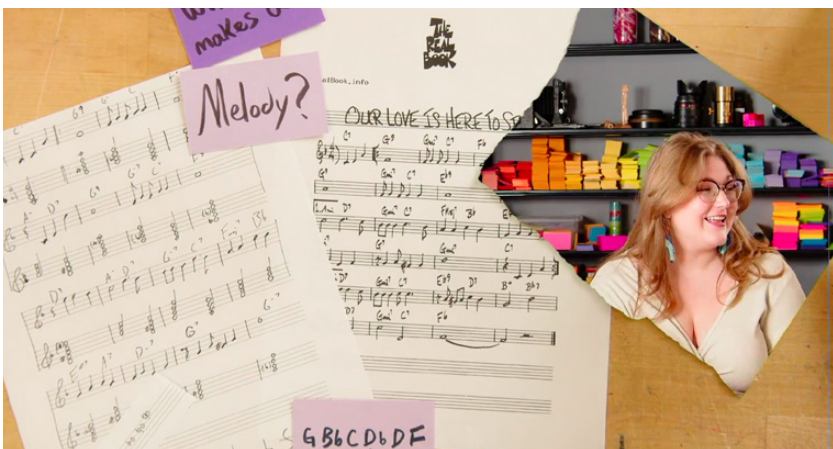
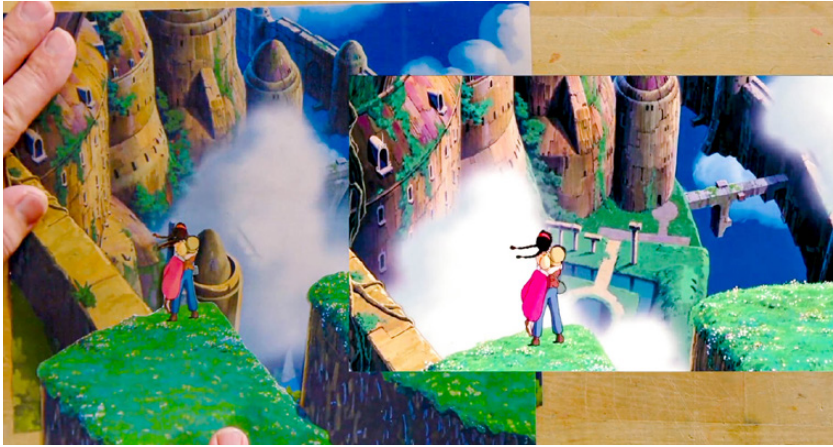
Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellows (LLUFs) tested assignments, created prototypes for course resources, assisted with workshops and live events, and acted as peer tutors in office hours.

5

Generative Artificial Intelligence Course Assistants (GAICAs) developed faculty and student-facing AI tools, created AI models, wrote and coded course resources, and assisted students utilizing AI tools in workshops.

19

graduate student **Media and Design Fellows** (MDFs) developed and deployed their skills in technology, art and performance; designed assignments and activities; led workshops; and supported the implementation of innovative digital methods and tools in undergraduate courses.

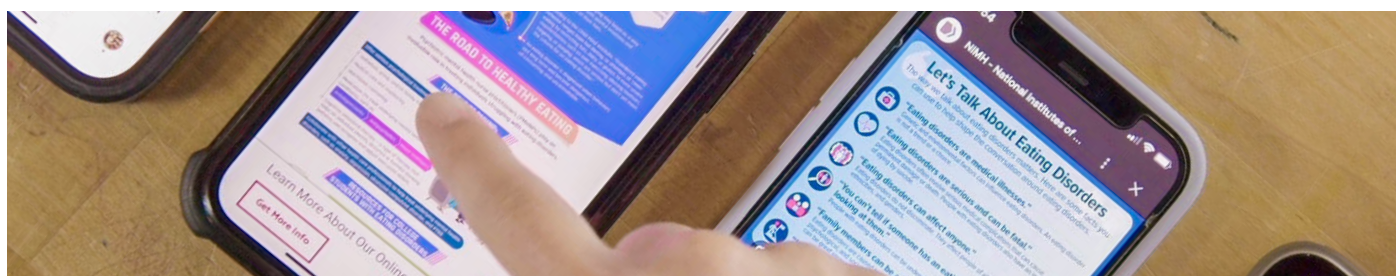


SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

The Learning Lab team supports science communicators in an array of scholarly projects. We provide workshops and asynchronous resources for undergraduate students working on course assignments, and we offer tailored support and training in professional presentation tools for graduate students. Our support prepares students to effectively communicate their ideas in various formats, whether they are producing a midterm assignment, developing a capstone project, presenting at a conference, or engaging the public through research presentations. We equip scholars with the skills to communicate their scientific research to different audiences so that their research will have broader impact, contributing to a more informed and engaged society.

Our support for science communication often begins with paper prototyping, a low-stakes, high-impact activity that encourages creativity and fosters a hands-on understanding of key communication principles. As examples, we designed the following foundational workshops:

- » **From Conceptual to Graphical:** In a workshop for **PSY 980T: Eating Disorders**, students learned to visually represent abstract concepts through infographics and graphic design. They created prototypes for posters, social media posts, and other public-facing materials using paper and craft supplies. By the end of the workshop, several students shared their designs and explained the thought process behind their choices.



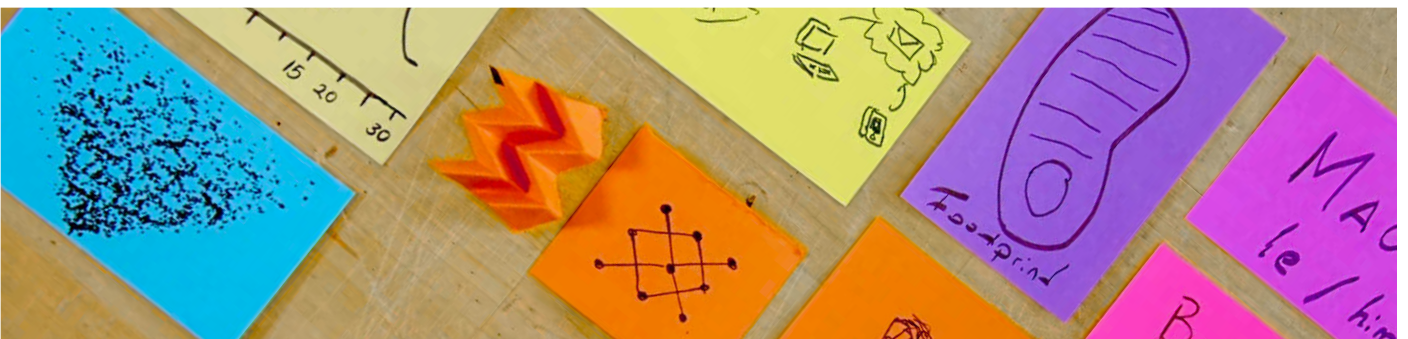
- » **From Scientific Paper to Scientific Poster:** In a workshop for **PSY 1816: Broken Brains: Mechanisms and Markers of Mental Illness**, students unpacked a graphical element from a journal article, and used art materials to remix the text from the article to create infographic prototypes. Then students transitioned to computers to explore how different software (Canva, Illustrator, Keynote) could be used to digitally recreate the paper prototypes.



- » **Spatial Storyboarding:** In **OEB 60: Fundamentals of Marine Biology**, students created videos to explain biological concepts to a general audience. To prepare for this assignment, students attended a series of workshops at the Learning Lab, where they developed visual assets and used art materials to map out the video's structure. This process helped them create a logical, visually engaging sequence for their films.



- » **Day 1 of Harvard Horizons: One Card, One Minute:** During the inaugural session of the 2024 **Harvard Horizons Scholars** program, we asked participants to distill their complex dissertation research into a visual representation on a business card-sized piece of paper in five minutes. This playful yet challenging task helps break down barriers, turning what could be a daunting task into a fun and engaging community-building exercise.

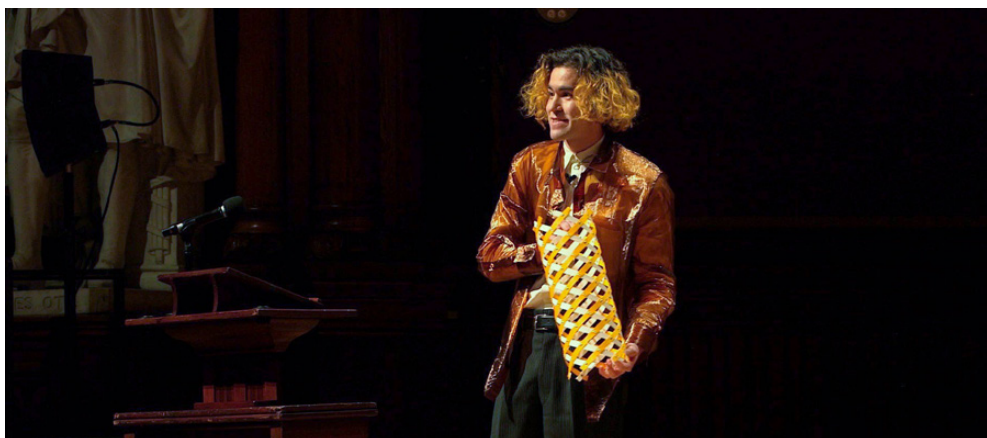


SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

Teaching is an act of scholarly communication, and developing communication skills is an important component of professional development.

HARVARD HORIZONS

We worked intensively throughout the spring to prepare the eight 2024 [Harvard Horizons Scholars](#) to present their research on the Sanders Theatre stage on April 9. We supported the scholars as they grappled with important questions in their research, decided what story to tell, developed compelling visuals, and engaged their voice and body in the crafting and delivery of short talks about their dissertation research. Read the Gazette article about the [scholars' presentations](#), learn more about [how we worked with the scholars on their visuals](#), and [watch their presentations](#).



FACULTY RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

We consulted with the faculty winners of the [Star-Friedman Challenge](#) for Promising Scientific Research as well as the [Aramont Fellows](#) as they prepared presentations of their research for a general audience.

PHD STUDENTS

We helped graduate students develop their communication skills through workshops at the Fall Teaching Conference and Winter Teaching Week, as well as workshops for individual departments and programs. Topics included public speaking strategies, visual communication, and communicating your research. Additionally, we taught three Bok Seminars for international PhD students on communication, which explored public speaking; intercultural communication skills; and clarity and coherence.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Our workshops at the Learning Lab employ mechanics designed to enhance listening skills that are crucial for effective communication and teach students to produce structured and compelling narratives. In our studio environment, students use art supplies to clarify and map out their ideas, and then we lead them to present using microphones, cameras, and stage. In these workshops, students develop skills that are foundational to intellectual vitality: how to generate and refine an argument, how to persuade an audience, and how to listen to one's peers.

- » In a podcasting workshop for **OEB 50: Genetics and Genomics**, MDFs Alexia Simon and Alexa Pérez-Torres guided students in an exercise on connecting to an audience, in which students were challenged to choose and argue for the significance of a given scientific discovery. Students learned skills to engage a group of listeners and to convince them not only through empirical evidence, but through rhetoric augmented by technology.
- » Students in **EXPOS 40: Public Speaking Practicum** engaged in a set of theater-based exercises to practice different forms of public presentations using audiovisual technology. Students imagined that they were addressing groups in both formal and informal settings; through these activities, students gained comfort and new skills in speaking in front of an active audience.
- » Students in both **EXPOS 20: Animals and Politics** and **CE 10: Creativity in Entrepreneurship** iterated pitches that propose solutions to contemporary problems. Students rapidly practiced several modes of speaking that helped them understand and address an audience's responses and feedback.



THANK-A-TEACHER

The Bok Center launched the [Thank-a-Teacher program](#) to elevate students' appreciation for their instructors, as part of our goal of celebrating teaching in the FAS. We asked students: Do you have an instructor who is making a difference in your life? The response was overwhelming. Over two semesters, undergraduate and graduate students from across 48 departments submitted a total of 186 thank you notes to faculty members, TFs, and TAs.

The submissions were kind, thoughtful, and heartwarming, and showed the appreciation students have for their professors, teaching fellows, and course assistants. Here we share a few highlights from students across a range of courses:

"I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the incredible impact you've had on my academic journey at Harvard. Your passion for science and your unwavering support have been truly inspiring. You've not only sparked my interest in chemistry but also nurtured my curiosity and guided me in exploring future professional paths."

"It is in your class that for the first time I was challenged to take opposite perspectives from my own and work with students who approach ideas differently than me. Doing so enabled me to reckon with my own perspectives and views and taught me the value of grappling with the other side, even when it may feel difficult to do so. It helps me to begin formulating questions — questions that have helped me further shape my worldview."

"Thank you for not just teaching us skills, but exposing us to so many new ideas — I feel like I see the world differently after your class, and for that, I can't thank you enough. Your advice is so detailed and specific, and I know I have become a better writer after your class. Definitely the best writing class I've taken in my life."

BEYOND THE GATES

Just as the Bok Center believes in creating communities of practice at Harvard, we believe in the importance of joining in wider conversations and communities of professionals dedicated to teaching and learning beyond our campus.

EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP

Sarah Emory served as Chair-Elect for the International Teaching Assistant Interest Section (ITA-IS), which is a professional subgroup of TESOL International that focuses on the intersection of English language training, intercultural communication, and pedagogy.

Tamara Brenner was elected to be the next president of the National Institute on Scientific Teaching (NIST), a nonprofit organization that provides evidence-based professional development to science faculty at colleges and universities throughout the country.

POD NETWORK CONFERENCE 2023 (NOVEMBER 2023; PITTSBURGH, PA)

National meeting of North America's largest educational development community

- » Adam Beaver and Pamela Pollock facilitated a session on "Frameworks that Facilitate Peer Conversations about Effective Teaching," attracting approximately 50 participants.
- » Marlon Kuzmick, Christine D'Auria, Jordan Koffman, and Dani Duke facilitated an online session on "The Future of Knowledge Work: Responding to Emergent Phenomena," attracting approximately 30 participants.

TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPO (MARCH 2024; TAMPA, FL)

The largest professional development event in the English language teaching field

- » Sarah Emory led the International Teaching Assistant Interest Section Business meeting as well as the sessions: "Assessing Graduate Student Oral Proficiency Using a Competency Approach" and "Resource Rich: Building Undergraduate Partnerships in Graduate Language Programs."
- » Pamela Pollock and Sarah Emory led the Academic Session for the ITA-IS: "Shifting Approaches to ITA Programming: Planning for the Future."

IVY+ CENTERS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (MAY 2024; DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, NH)

Tamara Brenner and Adam Beaver attended the annual meeting of the Ivy+ consortium of Centers for Teaching and Learning, exchanging ideas with colleagues from peer institutions.

HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING CERTIFICATE

The Bok Center's online course, designed to help instructors become more reflective and intentional in designing and delivering their teaching, has remained as popular as ever in its seventh year, enrolling 948 participants from around the world.

OUR TEAM



Adam Beaver
Director of Pedagogy

Tamara Brenner
Executive Director

Rebecca Brown
Assistant Director, Graduate
Student Programming

Casey Cann
Technical Operations and
Learning Lab Studio Manager

Chloe Chapin
Assistant Director, Course
Development

Sophie Ciliberto
Learning Lab Media Coordinator

Christine D'Auria
Assistant Director of the Learning
Lab

Danielle Duke
Learning Lab Project Manager

Sarah Emory
Assistant Director, International
Teachers and Scholars

Shava Glater
Program Coordinator

Grace Gomez
Program Coordinator

Jonah Johnson
Assistant Director, Writing
Pedagogy

Jordan Koffman
Assistant Director of the
Learning Lab

Marlon Kuzmick
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Laura Madden
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Anza Mitchell
Assistant Director, Science
Pedagogy

Pamela Pollock
Director of Professional
Development

Ashlie Sandoval-Lee
Assistant Director, Equity
and Inclusion

Caroline Walsh
Office Coordinator

Madeleine Woods
Learning Lab Program Coordinator

51 Undergraduate Fellows

Culture and Communication Consultants |
Generative Artificial Intelligence Course Assistants
| Learning Lab Undergraduate Fellows | Under-
graduate Pedagogy Fellows

44 Graduate Fellows

Media and Design Fellows | Pedagogy Fellows



HARVARD

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