Office of Academic Affairs
Office of Professional & Instructional Development (OPID)
1636 Van Hise Hall,1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706
wisconsin.edu • facebook.com/universitiesofwisconsin • x.com/UniversitiesWI
OPID@lists.wisconsin.edu or 608-262-8778 p

2027-28 WISCONSIN TEACHING FELLOWS & SCHOLARS

Program Description | Call for Applications

"Scholarly teaching is what every one of us should be engaged in every day that we are in a classroom, in our office with students, tutoring, lecturing, conducting discussions, all the roles we play pedagogically… But it is only when we step back and reflect systematically on the teaching we have done, in a form that can be publicly reviewed and built upon by our peers, that we have moved from scholarly teaching to the scholarship of teaching [and learning]."

- Lee Shulman, President Emeritus
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Our teaching flows into multiple spaces and is rarely absent from our everyday lives. It is through the mindful act of *reflecting* that we can transform a knot of messy experiences into a stream of clarity, knowing, and understanding. Yet reflecting and reflection do not come easily when one is juggling the teaching of multiple classes, advising, grading assignments, squeezing in research and scholarly work, and providing service to the department, university, community, and discipline. The demands of teaching necessitate a clearing.

OPID's Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars (WTFS) Program is designed to provide the time, space, and support to systematically reflect with UW peers in a stimulating and open-minded community and, ultimately, to move from scholarly teaching to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). The WTFS program is administered by the Universities of Wisconsin's Office of Professional and Instructional Development (OPID) and co-directed by UW faculty: **Dr. Sarah Riforgiate**, Professor of Communication at UW-Milwaukee, and **Dr. Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges**, Professor of Psychology at UW-Green Bay. Together WTFS participants will embark on a SoTL journey that, for many participants, will extend beyond the year-long community of practice.

This is a call to faculty and instructional academic staff throughout the Universities of Wisconsin to submit applications to their Provost's office for the 2027-28 WTFS Program.

Participants receive a $4,000 summer stipend and travel support from their university. Each participant also receives $500 in Supplies & Expenses from OPID. We seek participants who demonstrate a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, as well as intellectual curiosity, spirit of collegiality, and commitment to the success of all students.

Who can apply to the WTFS Program?

We are seeking participants to join a community of educators to design, develop, and implement Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) that explores innovative and emerging pedagogies, and is grounded in a commitment that all students should succeed and thrive in our classrooms. Participants may be seasoned educators with 10+ years of teaching experience (Scholars) or earlier in their teaching careers (Fellows). Faculty and instructional academic staff are welcome and encouraged to apply.

Common characteristics of successful WTFS participants: intellectual curiosity, openness to new ideas, many ways of thinking, and problem-solving, collegiality and commitment to a learning community, willingness to engage with an interdisciplinary group of diverse peers, and an underlying commitment to student learning and academic success.

Your institution will ask you to complete an application template answering questions about your interest in the program, understanding of SoTL, and questions or curiosities about improving student learning. You will also be asked to provide your teaching philosophy. Participants will engage with fellow WTFS members to conceptualize and implement SoTL throughout the WTFS year-long program. Although you may enter the WTFS Program with a research question in mind, we encourage you to suspend your assumptions until experiencing Faculty College and the WTFS Summer Institute. We have found that engaging in discussions with WTFS participants and guest speakers often deepens understanding of SoTL and generates new questions about teaching and learning.

What is SoTL?

SoTL involves systematic inquiry into student learning in higher education by moving educators from scholarly teaching to publicly shared scholarly exchanges. These exchanges promote engagement and build understanding with the goal of advancing teaching knowledge and practices. The UW system was an early voice in the SoTL conversation, partnering with the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (CASTL) in 2000. Former UW faculty *Tony Ciccone* (UW-Milwaukee), *Lisa Kornetsky* (UW-Parkside), *Bill Cerbin* (UW-La Crosse), and *Nancy Chick* (UW-Barron County) held (or still hold) prominent positions in the international community of SoTL. Their legacy continues today with OPID's WTFS program. WTFS is a year-long learning community of SoTL practitioners who represent the Universities of Wisconsin. Collectively they form a vibrant interdisciplinary community with multi-faceted dynamic discussions and career-enhancing experiences for participants. In 2025 OPID celebrated 25 years of SoTL in the WTFS with a commemorative Website, **Scholarly Reflections**, curated by *David Voelker* (UW-Green Bay), a former WTFS co-director.

We welcome SoTL projects that show a commitment to facilitating success for all students, and that explore the intersection of high-impact teaching practices, culturally responsive teaching, indigenous and embodied ways of knowing, generative artificial intelligence (AI), alternative grading and other current issues and interests in higher education.

What happens in the WTFS Program?

The WTFS Program models and promotes effective teaching and learning through creating a community of learners. Fellows and Scholars are guided through the process of designing a SoTL project with input from participants and the

program co-directors through year-long activities and interactions. The culmination of the WTFS program involves public SoTL presentations at OPID's Annual Spring Conference on Teaching & Learning in Madison. During our group meetings at Faculty College, Summer Institute, and Winter Institute, participants complete relevant readings and activities before the meetings, engage actively in reflective practices, participate in supportive small group work, and steadily make progress on their individual or collaborative SoTL projects. Participants are asked to make a full-time commitment during these meetings. While the process of a SoTL project helps participants explore a question about learning in depth, we also spend time together discussing approaches and other opportunities for enhancing teaching and learning.

Requirements:

- Commitment to full, active participation (completing necessary readings and activities, and traveling) during four in-person events throughout the year:
  - Faculty College – June 1-4, 2027 – The Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake
  - Summer Institute – June 14-18, 2027 – The Pyle Center, Madison, lodging to be determined
  - Winter Institute – January 5-7, 2028 – Fluno Center, Madison
  - Spring Conference on Teaching & Learning – April 13 &14, 2028, Madison
- Participation in an online progress meeting in August, 2027
- Submission of an IRB proposal prior to starting SoTL project data collection, ideally by August, 2027
- Consultation and recording of SoTL project's progress throughout the program year.
- Submission of SoTL project abstract and poster to OPID | UW system.

Application Process

Each UW institution has its own application deadline.

For additional information, contact your Provost's Office or Director of your institution's Center for Teaching & Learning. The SoTL works of past participants are available on the UW system WTFS website. You may also want to speak to other faculty or staff who have been past participants in the WTFS Program over recent years. Keep in mind, however, that the slight shifts in recent years' WTFS programs will differ from what earlier participants experienced. For assistance, contact the WTFS Co-Directors *Sarah Riforgiate,* Professor of Communication, UW-Milwaukee, Wisconsin Teaching Scholar 2020-22 (sriforgi@uwm.edu); *Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges*, Professor of Psychology, UW-Green Bay (wilsong@uwgb.edu); or *Fay Akindes*, Director of Systemwide Professional and Instructional Development, Wisconsin Teaching Fellow 2000-01 (fay.akindes@wisconsin.edu).

Applications are due to OPID via the WTFS 2027-28 Application Form by December 11, 2026, but are due at your institution prior to this. Appointment letters will be sent in January 2027.

***Note:** Components of the WTFS Program are subject to UW System's Office of Professional & Instructional Development (OPID) budget. Dates and venues are subject to change.*