



Introducing the Personalized Learning & Adaptive Teaching Opportunities Program

The College of Liberal Arts is pleased to announce the launch of the Personalized Learning & Adaptive Teaching Opportunities Program (PLATO Program). Generously funded by the Association of Public Land-grant Universities and the University of Mississippi, the PLATO Program seeks to implement personalized learning in high enrollment general education classes through the use of adaptive courseware and flipped and blended classes.



Adaptive Learning involves the use of adaptive courseware, which combines diagnostic testing and adaptive lessons to provide a personalized learning experience for each student. This technology, designed

with the principles of cognitive science, is used at hundreds of schools across the nation, and is credited with improving student learning outcomes through chunked and spaced lesson delivery, delayed, repeated retrieval of concepts, and interactive learning.

However, adaptive learning is about much more than technology. Because students learn basic concepts online, instructors can use class for deeper learning and targeted practice of concepts with which students are struggling. In addition, the data collected by the courseware on student progress allows instructors to identify students who are struggling well before the first high-stakes exam.

PLATO provides financial support for faculty teams who participate in the program as well as staff support through a grant program manager. Dr. Stephen Monroe oversees the Plato Program, and the day-to-day operations are managed by PLATO Program Manager, Patricia O'Sullivan. Visit the PLATO website plato@olemiss.edu. Questions about the program can be directed to adaptivelearning@olemiss.edu.

Read more about the APLU adaptive courseware grant and the UM PLATO Program at WCET's online journal, [Frontiers](#).



Piloting to success

Six UM faculty to implement adaptive courseware in Spring 2017



Tamar Goulet, Professor of Biology



Carla Carr, Instructor in Biology



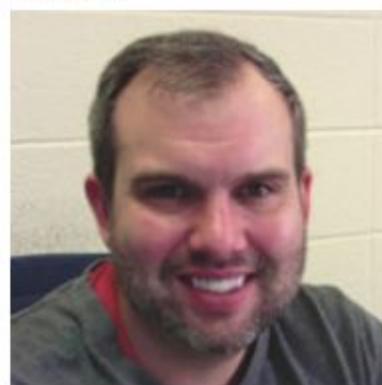
Michael Azlin, Instructor in Mathematics and College Algebra Coordinator



Cody Harville, Instructor in Mathematics



Lanzhen Song, Lecturer in Mathematics



Jon-Michael Wimberly, Instructor in Mathematics

This Spring 2017 semester, six UM faculty members will pilot the use of adaptive learning in their classes. Dr. Tamar Goulet and Dr. Carla Carr, who teach Inquiry to Human Life, Biology 102 will use the LearnSmart feature of the course ebook to provide students with adaptive lessons and to track student progress in the software. Dr. Michael Azlin will pilot ALEKS, a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system in two of his College Algebra classes, Dr. Jon-Michael Wimberly will implement adaptive courseware in his three Trigonometry courses, and Dr. Lanzhen Song and Dr. Cody Harville will use the adaptive features of the course ebook in their Statistics classes.

In addition to pilots of adaptive learning in Mathematics and Biology, teams from Chemistry and Writing & Rhetoric are developing courses to pilot in the fall: Chemistry 101 (Chemical Concepts) and Writing 101 (First Year Writing I).

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Tips & Tools



Adaptive learning best practices

1. Schedule a consistent due date for module completion such as every Friday by midnight.
2. Grade module completion as an incentive for students to come to class prepared.
3. Set the module completion % and the module mastery % at 75% or higher. Module mastery refers to the courseware's assessment of a student's knowledge of the module content. Module mastery may vary by discipline. For example, a math class may be set at 75% while an ethics class may be set at 100%. Module completion refers to how much of the module each student engages with.
4. Include review questions from earlier modules in later modules. Requiring students to retrieve previous knowledge is one of the best ways to ensure they retain it.
5. Include low-stakes assessments that students can take more than once, and provide feedback on them so students can see where they went wrong and make corrections.
6. Deliver course content basics in the courseware, reserving face-to-face class time for deeper level content or active practice.
7. Allow for face-to-face class time flexibility based on data of student performance in the courseware. In other words, be willing to adapt a lecture or activity so that your teaching is targeted to the concepts students are struggling with.
8. Set instructor view to receive alerts on students who are struggling so that you can intervene before the student falls too far behind to catch up.
9. Before each module, walk through the content in student view to catch errors or bits that may be confusing to students.
10. Solicit student feedback on their engagement with the courseware and be willing to make changes to the course that are reasonable.

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

English Composition Courseware Collaboration in Washington, D.C.



*Andrew Davis, DWR Instructor and Instructional Design and Training Specialist, Patti O'Sullivan, PLATO Program Manager, Guy Kroeger, DWR Core Lecturer.
Not pictured, Robert Cummings,
Chair of the Department of Writing & Rhetoric*

January 12-13, members of the Department of Writing and Rhetoric faculty traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with faculty from Georgia State University, Montclair University, and the University of Georgia to review their year-long participation in an APLU grant to develop and pilot adaptive courseware for English Composition. The meeting gave composition faculty a chance to reflect on their accomplishments, lessons learned, and how to move forward with the project. The collaborators will be sharing their experience in a publication later this year.

CETL Faculty Development Series

Join us Wednesday, March 22 for a Faculty Development Luncheon, sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, in which UM PLATO Program faculty will share their experiences of implementing adaptive learning in their classes. Check the [CETL website](#) for registration and location information.



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