

Empowering Teaching Excellence

Utah State University is very dedicated to providing an environment of learning for its students. Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE 10) is a program available on campus for faculty of all types to gather together and share and receive new ideas about teaching. ETE 10 is focused on elevating and promoting a culture of teaching excellence throughout the university. This program also provides a way to give recognition to the instructors and professors who are dedicated to improving themselves in order to better help their students learn by having a badging and certificate system.

There are two levels of certificates you can earn, the Teaching Scholar Certificate and the Master Teaching Certificate. To receive a certificate you need to earn 10 badges that involve interacting in various events hosted by ETE 10. In the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies, two of our very own faculty have earned at least one of these certificates. Dr. Elena Shvidko has earned the Teaching Scholar Certificate and Dr. Harrison Kleiner has earned both the Teaching Scholar Certificate and the Master Teaching Certificate.

Dr. Shvidko is a new faculty member working in the Intensive English Language Institute. She has taught many ESL courses in both academic and community environments. She has an interest in researching second language writing and has used her research to earn badges. In order to earn the Teaching Scholar Certificate, Dr. Shvidko had to earn six engagement badges, three implement badges, and one contribute badge.

The contribute badge is the most difficult to earn because you are required to present something new at one of the ETE 10 meetings, submit an article to a journal, or present at a general academic conference. Dr. Shvidko was able to earn the contribute badge she needed by

presenting her research on second language writing at a conference that she attended in Thailand. She also has earned additional contribute badges by organizing an ETE 10 conference in which she and other ESL instructors taught about second language learning. Dr. Shvidko also recently published an article in *Empowering Teaching Excellence*, which will also count toward the badge. These contribute badges can be used for the Master Teaching Certificate.

Dr. Kleiner is a philosophy professor and an avid supporter of the ETE 10 program. He is a member of the board for the program and participates in many of the events hosted by ETE 10. Dr. Kleiner is dedicated to teaching excellence and improving his abilities to help the students learn. This is shown by him being the first professor on campus to receive the Teaching Scholar Certificate as well as being the first to receive the Master Teaching Certificate. Dr. Kleiner has attended many different conferences and has been able to implement the new ideas that he discovered in his class setting.

The ETE 10 program really exemplifies the ideals that many of the teachers in the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies have. Teaching excellence is something that the teachers in the department take to heart. They are committed to their students and seek opportunities to improve their teaching abilities to benefit the students. The instructors in this department are among the first to participate in the ETE 10 program and are some of the first to earn the certificates showing they are dedicated to teaching excellence.

By: Matthew Cook