

Biology Seminar

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Teaching is a Marathon: Pacing Ourselves and Our Students for Long-Term Learning

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Teaching is a marathon, not a sprint. That's a metaphor I take seriously—not just as a long-distance runner, but as an educator learning to pace myself in a career that demands constant reinvention. In this seminar, I'll explore how both teaching and learning unfold as long-term processes—ones that require reflection, repetition, and resilience.

As a new teacher, I thought I could sprint my way through preparation, pedagogy, and content. But I quickly realized that mastery—of a topic, a class, or a strategy—only comes after multiple cycles of iteration and experience. The same is true for students. Deep learning can't be rushed. It takes time, trust, and space to engage, get stuck, recover, and try again.

I'll share practical active learning strategies that help me build endurance in students while sustaining my own energy and curiosity. These include low-stakes, high-impact daily assessments, adaptable group exercises suited to a range of class sizes, and simple reflective tools that promote metacognition and equity. I'll also talk about my evolving assessment philosophy and how I've adapted to challenges like grading constraints, diverse student needs, and the use of AI.

At the core of my teaching practice is a belief that struggle, failure, and slow progress are not problems to fix—but essential features of learning. By designing our classrooms with this marathon mindset, we can create inclusive, adaptive, and enduring spaces where students and instructors grow together—step by step.