

Derek Bruff

Author and expert on teaching, learning, and technology

“Dr. Bruff’s presentation was clear, compelling and perfectly tailored to resonate with our Speaker Series audience. His examples were original, timely and effectively presented (cognitively and visually).”

—Janet Rankin, Ph.D., Director - Teaching + Learning Lab @MIT

Speaking Topics

- Teaching in the Artificial Intelligence Age of ChatGPT
- Intentional Tech: Principles to Guide the Use of Educational Technology in College Teaching
- Students as Producers: Creative Assignments for Deep Learning
- All Skate: Active Learning in the University Classroom
- See What I Mean: Visual Thinking Tools for Deep Learning
- Getting from A to Z: Simple Teaching Strategies for Better Communication
- Process Matters: Facilitation Strategies for Group Engagement

Video Clips

- [Penn State Keynote](#)
- [2020 Future Trends Forum](#)

Travels from Tennessee

Derek Bruff is an educator, author, and higher ed consultant. He directed the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching for more than a decade, where he helped faculty and other instructors develop foundational teaching skills and explore new ideas in teaching. Bruff consults regularly with faculty and administrators across higher education on issues of teaching, learning, and faculty development. The author of *Teaching with Classroom Response Systems: Creating Active Learning Environments* and *Intentional Tech: Principles to Guide the Use of Educational Technology in College Teaching*, Bruff is a sought-after keynote speaker who leads teaching workshops for higher education faculty and staff, drawing on his teaching and his educational development experience. Frequent topics include educational technology, active learning, online and hybrid teaching, and the “students as producers” approach to assignment and course design.

Bruff has a Ph.D. in mathematics from Vanderbilt University. He taught in the Harvard University mathematics department for two years before joining the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching (CFT) in 2005 as an assistant director. He was named director in 2011 and assistant provost and executive director in 2021. Bruff’s major accomplishments while leading the CFT included reaching approximately 30 percent of all full-time Vanderbilt faculty through CFT offerings each year, building a “students as producers” approach to course design into CFT programming as a way to help faculty at a research university rethink their teaching and engage their students in deep learning,

integrating learning management system and other instructional technology support into the CFT to help instructors teach in a variety of modalities (in-person, synchronous and asynchronous online, hybrid), and guiding the strategic development of the CFT as it went from 8 to 14 full-time staff positions. From 2021 to 2022, Bruff was also the interim (and founding) director of the Digital Commons, a Vanderbilt Libraries initiative aimed at helping faculty develop technology skills for research, teaching, and professional productivity.

Bruff's first book, *Teaching with Classroom Response Systems* offers concrete teaching strategies for instructors interested in using "clickers" and other live polling tools in their on-site or online teaching. Bruff's second book, *Intentional Tech*, was published by West Virginia University Press as part of their Teaching and Learning in Higher Education series. *Intentional Tech* provides seven research-based teaching principles for incorporating technology in college and university teaching, along with many stories of faculty teaching with technology to provide ideas and inspiration to readers. Bruff continues to provide practical advice for educators through his weekly Intentional Teaching newsletter and his podcast work, which includes *Leading Lines* (2016 to 2022) and *Intentional Teaching* (2022 to present).

Trained as a mathematician, Bruff has taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate level mathematics courses, including calculus, statistics, linear algebra, and a first-year writing seminar in cryptography. Bruff's classroom teaching experience both informs and is informed by his educational development work. He often draws on his own teaching experience when consulting with faculty and leading workshops, and his teaching allows him to put into practice recommendations from the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Praise for *Intentional Tech*

"Derek Bruff is an engaging—and often charming—guide throughout this concise book. The stories he tells keep things moving at a crisp pace and offer pedagogical inspiration. His principles provide a useful framework and establish a clear foundation for his practical advice."

—Peter Felten, coauthor of *The Undergraduate Experience: Focusing Institutions on What Matters Most*

Praise for *Teaching with Classroom Response Systems*

"A must-read for anyone interested in interactive teaching and the use of clickers. This book draws on the experiences of countless instructors across a wide range of disciplines to provide both novice and experienced teachers with practical advice on how to make classes more fun and more effective."

—Eric Mazur, Balkanski Professor of Physics and Applied Physics, Harvard University, and author, *Peer Instruction: A User's Manual*