First Year, First Friday
The new faculty orientation program

When: 3:30-5 pm, first “Friday” of September, October, and November, February, March, and April, followed by happy hour from 5-6 pm, and an open question session in December from 5-7 pm.

Where: 043 Library in fall, various locations in spring

How: Brief presentation from the faculty peer-mentors, followed by discussion and practical activities.

FALL SEMESTER

Friday, September 8
Session #1: It is about time for the first exam or assignment. In this session, we will discuss and share how to write effective exam questions and construct informative rubrics by applying the principles of backwarc design. We will write and review exam questions and rubrics and exchange feedback with other session participants.

Thursday, October 5
Session #2: It is about time to think about assessment. In this session, we will explore various ways to assess students’ engagement in class participation, writing assignments, project reports, etc., as well as to identify noteworthy behavioral problems. We will also brainstorm in small groups other assessment methods and remedying strategies.

Friday, November 3
Session #3: In about a month, students will submit their opinions of their instructors. In this session, we will examine the student opinion survey—how to retrieve the surveys, how to make sense of the results, how to use them as feedback for better teaching, and how not to get overwhelmed by them. We will also discuss and share ideas on how to prime students in advance so they can provide more constructive feedback.

Friday, December 1
Session #4: Open questions (wine-and-cheese event)
Younts Conference Center, 5-7 pm
Facilitator: Ken Kolb and peer-mentors
George Shields (Provost), Ken Peterson (Dean of Faculty), Jeremy Cass (Associate Academic Dean).

SPRING SEMESTER

Friday, February 2
Session #5: We will start the new semester by reflecting upon the teaching experience in the past semester. In this session, we will discuss and share how to develop your voice and be yourself in the classroom. If time allows, we will complete the Teaching Perspectives Inventory and discuss in small groups, in hope to help identify the best-fit teaching styles that suit both teachers and students.

Thursday, March 1
Session #6: By now you probably have a few favorite students. In this session, we will discuss and share how to build relationships with students through interactions in the classroom/laboratory and advising and mentoring outside of the classroom, and how to recruit students for your research programs. We will share and explore effective ways to cultivate meaningful relationships with students.

Friday, April 6
Session #7: It is never too early to get ready for the annual evaluation. In this session, we will examine Furman’s annual evaluation form in detail to make clear (hopefully) what Furman values so you can have a successful and meaningful career here. We will spend time working on the annual evaluation form with the support of the FDC peer mentors.