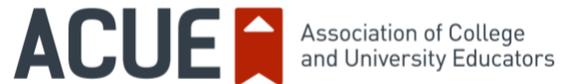




Sacred Heart  
UNIVERSITY



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## **Sacred Heart University joins national initiative to support teaching and learning**

*Faculty develop evidence-based techniques to promote student success*

January 25, 2018—This semester, Sacred Heart University’s Office of Digital Learning (ODL) launches a partnership with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to equip faculty across multiple disciplines with the instructional skills shown to promote student motivation, learning, and persistence. Faculty who complete the program, which complements the university’s ongoing faculty development, are awarded a nationally recognized Certificate in Effective College Instruction that is co-endorsed by ACUE and the American Council on Education (ACE).

Provost Dr. Rupendra Paliwal initiated this accredited ACUE course on “effective teaching practices” as an important faculty development initiative. In keeping with SHU’s focus on academic excellence and desire to celebrate the teaching practices of its faculty, this course will give an opportunity for faculty participants to develop as reflective practitioners. “Sacred Heart has always been known for its commitment to teaching,” says Steven Michels, Assistant Provost for Teaching and Learning, who worked with Dr. Paliwal to bring the course to SHU. “Our partnership with ACUE is simply one example of how dedicated our faculty are to improving their craft.”

The course complements our existing faculty development initiatives, such as the week-long Summer Institute. It further provides peer collaboration opportunities with the in-person enrichment programming we’ve developed to frame the online course experience,” says Jaya Kannan, Director of the Office Digital Learning. “These events will give faculty the opportunity to learn together and share concrete examples of what is happening in their classrooms.”

ACUE’s Course in Effective Teaching Practices is based on more than three decades of research that shows effective teaching improves learning for all students. The Office of Digital Learning will coordinate this course for this first cohort of 30 SHU faculty participants, in the 25 learning modules throughout this spring 2018 semester. The course will be jointly facilitated by Michels, Kannan, and Wendy Bjerke (Digital Learning Faculty Fellow and Associate Professor, CHP).

The goal is to get SHU faculty to reflect on their practices, develop new strategies, and learn from their peers about innovative practices going on in the SHU classroom. The course will culminate in May 2018, in a three-day collaborative workshop for faculty members to incorporate evidence-based techniques into existing course designs.

Aligned with the latest research in cognition and adult learning, ACUE's course addresses over 200 evidence-based teaching practices, covering how to design an effective course; establish a productive learning environment; use active learning techniques; promote higher-order thinking; and utilize assessments to inform instruction and promote learning.

"I volunteered for participation in ACUE's comprehensive Course in Effective Teaching Practices in order to enhance and refine my current pedagogical skills so I could best help my students succeed," said SHU nursing professor Dr. Sue Goncalves. "As a champion for lifelong learning, I jumped at the opportunity offered to me to become credentialed and strengthen my own evidence-based teaching practices and level of expertise."

ACUE's Community of Professional Practice provides continued support for educators to grow in the scholarship of teaching through member forums, expert webinars, weekly newsletters, the "Q" blog, and "office hours" with leading scholars in college instruction.

"We strive to get faculty thinking about the fundamentals of good teaching and stay abreast of recent trends in higher-ed. We are hopeful that more faculty will take the course in the future," says Kannan. "It enriches teaching, but the real expected outcome is that it improves students' learning."

**About Sacred Heart University:** Sacred Heart University, the second-largest independent Catholic university in New England, offers more than 70 undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and certificate programs on its main campus in Fairfield, Conn., and satellites in Connecticut, Luxembourg and Ireland. More than 8,500 students attend the University's five colleges: Arts & Sciences; Health Professions; Nursing; the Jack Welch College of Business; and the Isabelle Farrington College of Education. The Princeton Review includes SHU in its guides, *Best 382 Colleges—2018 Edition*, "Best in the Northeast" and *Best 267 Business Schools—2018 Edition*. It also placed SHU on its lists for "Best College Theater" and "Most Engaged in Community Service," each of which comprises only 20 U.S. schools. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks SHU in its *Best Colleges 2018* guidebook and calls SHU the fourth "Most Innovative School" in the North. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* also names SHU one of the fastest-growing Roman Catholic universities in its 2016 almanac. Sacred Heart fields 32 Division I athletic teams and has an award-winning program of community service. [www.sacredheart.edu](http://www.sacredheart.edu)

For additional Sacred Heart University news, please visit <http://www.sacredheart.edu/aboutshu/news/>.

**About ACUE:** The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) believes that all college students deserve an extraordinary education and that faculty members play a critical role in their success. In partnership with institutions of higher education nationwide, ACUE supports and credentials faculty members in the use of evidence-based teaching practices that drive student engagement, retention, and learning. Faculty members who complete ACUE's Course in

Effective Teaching Practices earn a Certificate in Effective College Instruction endorsed by the American Council on Education. ACUE's Community of Professional Practice connects college educators from across the country through member forums, podcasts, and updates on the latest developments in the scholarship of teaching and learning. To learn more, visit [www.acue.org](http://www.acue.org).

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