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Johns Hopkins study finds increased satisfaction and course engagement among students taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty members at Miami Dade College

ACUE's course improved instructors' knowledge of and skill in using effective teaching practices; course evaluations were significantly higher than college average

February 15, 2018—A new study by the Center for Research and Reform in Education (CRRE) at Johns Hopkins University, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at Miami Dade College (MDC), of over 6,100 student course evaluations finds that students gave faculty credentialed by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) statistically higher marks when compared to college-wide averages. Students perceived stronger instruction across 14 of 15 indicators for both new and experienced faculty prepared in the use of evidence-based teaching approaches. CRRE notes that such changes are typically leading indicators of stronger academic outcomes to follow.

CRRE researchers analyzed the impact of ACUE's Course in Effective Teaching Practices among 57 faculty members and their students beginning in September 2016. CRRE surveyed and interviewed instructors and analyzed 6,119 of their student evaluations before, during, and after instructors' completion of ACUE's course. Faculty enrolled into one of two cohorts, with CRRE's analysis repeated for each group.

Among key findings:

- **Students were more satisfied with courses taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty.** Course evaluations indicated improvements over time in instructors' teaching. When comparing evaluations administered across three semesters, students gave higher marks to Cohort 1 faculty on all 15 measures and on 14 out of 15 measures for Cohort 2 after completing ACUE's course.
- **Course evaluations among ACUE-credentialed faculty were higher, on average, than college-wide averages,** with the difference statistically significant. Spring 2017 student evaluations in courses taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty were 0.12 points more positive in Cohort 1 and 0.20 points more positive in Cohort 2 when compared to all MDC instructors.

- **Faculty strengthened their use of evidence-based teaching practices.** Ninety-two percent of faculty in Cohort 1 and 100% in Cohort 2 reported increases in their knowledge of and skill in using effective teaching approaches, findings corroborated by student evaluations. Specific areas of improved teaching included faculty members' ability to:
 - provide regular feedback on students' learning and progress;
 - create an atmosphere that encourages learning;
 - present information clearly; and
 - assign relevant coursework, among other practices.
- **Faculty recommend ACUE's course to their peers.** Ninety-six percent of instructors in Cohort 1 and 100% in Cohort 2 would recommend ACUE's course to their colleagues.
- **Faculty's confidence in their use of evidence-based practices increased.** Participants felt more confident planning and designing effective class sessions, making learning more engaging, creating a supportive learning environment, promoting higher order thinking, and stimulating productive class discussions through questioning.
- **Faculty embraced course requirements to implement approaches and reflect on their teaching.** Interviewees commended ACUE's learning design, noting that the requirement to implement evidence-based practices was "the best part of the course." Course requirements to reflect, in writing, on their implementation was also noted as a key strength.

"Today's findings further confirm the importance of meaningful investments in our educators' ability to teach well—with a comprehensive set of evidence-based approaches," shared Lenore Rodicio, Miami Dade's Executive Vice President and Provost. "Student course satisfaction and engagement are leading indicators of stronger academic outcomes, and we are pleased, although not surprised, to see higher marks given to our initial cohorts of ACUE-credentialed faculty."

ACUE's Chief Academic Officer, Penny MacCormack, noted that "student perceptions of teaching quality are among the few common metrics across higher education and provide empirical support for initiatives that aim to improve student learning, retention and graduation, such as the High-Impact Practices identified through data from the National Survey of Student Engagement." MacCormack continued, "Given the sheer number of hours that students spend with their professors, class time presents the single greatest opportunity to change students' lives, and we're thrilled to see ACUE-credentialed educators are having the tangible impact we seek and expect."

Steven Ross, Senior Research Scientist and professor at the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University, shared, "It's notable to see such positive findings, repeated across two cohorts of analysis, so soon after this kind of faculty training and development. As it usually takes time for educators to learn and use more effective practices, it is noteworthy that we did not see an 'implementation dip' in their evaluations, but that they showed positive trends."

About Miami Dade College

Miami Dade College is the nation's largest, campus-based institution of higher education with a total enrollment of more than 165,000 students. It is also the nation's top producer of Associate in Arts and Science degrees and awards more degrees to minorities than any other college or university in the country. The college's eight campuses offer more than 300 distinct degree pathways including several

baccalaureate degrees in biological sciences, engineering, data analytics, information systems technology, education, public safety, supervision and management, nursing, physician assistant studies, film and others. MDC is the recipient of top national awards. As Democracy's College, MDC changes lives through accessible, high quality-teaching and learning experiences. It houses the Miami Culinary Institute, the Miami Animation & Gaming International Complex, the Miami Fashion Institute, the Eig-Watson School of Aviation, the Idea Center, the School of Advance Studies, the New World School of the Arts, to name a few. MDC has been named among the nation's "Great Colleges to Work For" by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The College embraces its responsibility to serve as an economic, cultural, and civic leader for the advancement of our diverse global community. Its alumni and employees contribute more than \$6 billion annually to the local economy, and MDC graduates occupy top leadership positions in every major industry. MDC is also renowned for its rich cultural programming. It is home of the Miami Book Fair, Miami Film Festival, the *MDC Live!* Performing Arts Series, the National Historic Landmark Miami Freedom Tower, the Tower Theater, Dyer Building, Koubek Center Mansion and Gardens, the Lynn and Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Image Archives, a sculpture park and a large art gallery system. MDC has admitted more than 2,000,000 students and counting, since it opened its doors in 1960. For more information, visit www.mdc.edu

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 acue.org.

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