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ACUE contact: Julie Candio Sekel, 201-694-6180, [jcandiosekel@acue.org](mailto:jcandiosekel@acue.org)

Delta State University contact: Peter Szatmary, 662-846-4676, [pszatmary@deltastate.edu](mailto:pszatmary@deltastate.edu)

**Delta State University and the Association of College and University Educators partnership improves student outcomes**

*Findings show students taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty have higher success and lower DFW rates*

Sept. 20, 2018—A study of 4,602 student grades from 314 course sections at Delta State University found that students taught by faculty who earned a teaching credential through the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) had significantly higher success rates than students taught by faculty who are not yet participating in the program.

The analysis examined grades and completion data for all students enrolled in 144 course sections taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty and 170 course sections taught by matched control faculty members during the 2017-18 academic year, representing a total of 4,602 student enrollments. Initial findings show that students taught by faculty who earned an ACUE teaching credential had nearly a 4 percent higher rate of earning As, Bs, Cs, or CRs than students in the sections taught by matched faculty: 86.5 percent versus 82.8 percent, respectively. Students who received Ds, Fs, and NCs or withdrew from courses taught by ACUE faculty totaled 11.8 percent compared to 15.3 percent for those taught by matched faculty.

“We’ve improved the prospects of 88 students—approximately 12 percent of our current freshman class,” said Dr. Charles McAdams, Delta State University provost and vice president for academic affairs, in an article published by *The Hechinger Report*. “And we’ve increased the odds of graduating nearly 3 percent more of our students.”

He added: “We shouldn’t be surprised that good teaching can have this kind of an impact, [and] our work has just begun.”

Delta State University, through a \$3 million grant from the Gertrude C. Ford Foundation, is credentialing all of its new faculty through ACUE and working on a plan to credential all current faculty. Faculty are working with their colleagues and a facilitator to learn about and implement evidence-based teaching practices.

“The preliminary findings indicate a more substantive improvement than just the numbers tell,” said Dr. Gray Kane, director of the Gertrude C. Ford Center for Teaching and Learning at Delta State. “The new faculty who obtained the ACUE credential were compared with a control group

of more experienced professors. The new faculty's students outperformed the veteran faculty's students. Credentialing veteran faculty could lead to even higher gains.”

In partnership with Delta State and other colleges and universities nationwide, ACUE prepares and credentials faculty members in evidence-based teaching practices through comprehensive, online courses, developed in collaboration with and endorsed by the American Council on Education. Aligned with the latest research in cognition and adult learning, ACUE's courses address more than 200 teaching strategies across core competencies such as designing an effective course, establishing a productive learning environment, using active learning techniques, promoting higher-order thinking, and utilizing assessments to inform instruction and promote learning. Using a six-level evaluation approach, ACUE works with institutional partners to measure the impact of its program on faculty, student, and institutional outcomes.

“We're delighted to see the tangible impact ACUE-credentialed educators are having on student achievement,” said Dr. Penny MacCormack, ACUE's chief academic officer. “Faculty spend more time with students than any other college professional, and when students have professors who regularly utilize evidence-based teaching practices, demonstrating they care about students and believe they can be successful, it changes students' lives.”

**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 courses earn certificates 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](http://acue.org).

**About Delta State University:** Delta State University is a four-year public institution whose more than 3,750 students come from most U.S. states and more than 50 countries. The university offers numerous unique programs, including the Delta Music Institute entertainment industry program, and is the only university in Mississippi to offer undergraduate and graduate aviation programs. Situated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, which is recognized as the birthplace of American music, Delta State has become the center of music and culture for the state and the region. The university is also the academic center for the blues, offering an online blues studies curriculum that leads to a certificate for advanced study of blues music. In addition, Delta State offers top-notch academic programs in business, arts, sciences, nursing, and education, among other areas.