



COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OF RHODE ISLAND



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Rhode Island Commissioner Commends CCRI for Promoting Teaching Excellence

College first in state to join national initiative to credential faculty in instructional approaches that drive student retention, graduation, and academic success

April 27, 2018—Rhode Island’s Commissioner of Postsecondary Education Brenda Dann-Messier commends the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) for beginning a national credentialing program in evidence-based teaching practices offered by the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) in collaboration with the American Council on Education (ACE).

“Preparing faculty in the teaching practices that help students become civically engaged and career-ready advances CCRI’s contribution to our state’s economic development, and we are glad to support this initiative,” said Commissioner Dann-Messier.

This February, Commissioner Dann-Messier joined Governor Gina Raimondo and Council Chair Bill Foulkes to release [Rhode Island’s roadmap](#) to meet the Governor's ambitious attainment goal of 70 percent by the year 2025. One of the plan’s key recommendations—to achieve the target of 390,000 Rhode Islanders with postsecondary credentials—is to strengthen investments in postsecondary retention and completion.

CCRI’s partnership with ACUE supports this objective by preparing faculty members with the instructional skills shown to promote student motivation, learning, and persistence. Faculty who complete the program, which supports CCRI’s mission to build on its “rich tradition of excellence in teaching and dedication to all students,” will be awarded a nationally recognized Certificate in Effective College Instruction that is co-endorsed by ACUE and ACE.

ACUE’s course in the foundations of effective instruction is based on more than three decades of research that shows effective teaching improves learning for all students. Karen Bellnier, the director of instructional technology and online learning at CCRI, will lead the faculty cohort in 25 learning modules and mentor them in implementing new teaching practices in their classes. Assuming participants who complete the program teach a typical course load, the ACUE-credentialed faculty members at CCRI will impact more than 3,000 students each year.

“This course complements our current faculty development initiatives that focus on active learning techniques, assignment design and assessment of student learning,” said Rosemary Costigan, vice president for academic affairs at CCRI. “We were most impressed with the

breadth of foundations of effective instruction modules and the flexibility of an online faculty development program. Our goal is to enhance the student’s classroom experience while providing faculty with the tools to support their teaching.”

ACUE’s teaching foundations course is aligned with the latest research in cognition and adult learning and 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. 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 are excited to bring this opportunity to our faculty,” said Bellnier. “The robust Effective Teaching Practices course will be complemented with several opportunities for faculty to connect with each other and share their experiences implementing the new practices.”

About RIOPC: The Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (RIOPC) supports the work of the Rhode Island Council on Postsecondary Education in providing an excellent, accessible, and affordable system of higher education for all Rhode Islanders. RIOPC implements Council policy for public higher education institutions in Rhode Island (the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island).

About CCRI: The Community College of Rhode Island, New England’s largest community college, has full-service campuses in Warwick, Lincoln, Providence and Newport. CCRI enrolls an average of 15,000 students in credit courses and thousands more in noncredit and workforce training classes and programs.

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.

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