

SCALING INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS A NASH-ACUE COLLABORATION

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q. What is the purpose of this initiative?

This initiative supports [NASH's priorities](#) to support transformative and collective strategies that advance student success and close equity gaps and it furthers [ACUE's mission](#) of student success through effective instruction. [Research shows](#) that a major element of student success is the [quality](#) of students' instructional experiences and their relationships with faculty. This effort is focused on scaling instructional excellence through ACUE's intentional, high-quality courses for faculty on effective teaching practices.

Q. Why are NASH and ACUE collaborating on this effort?

Through this collaboration, NASH is able to offer its members a unique opportunity to prepare and credential faculty on the essentials of effective college teaching. In partnership with higher education systems, colleges, universities, and associations, ACUE has a strong [track record](#) of preparing and credentialing faculty in the evidence-based teaching practices that improve student achievement and close equity gaps. By working with NASH and through its member systems, ACUE can support more faculty and benefit more students, nationwide.

Q. What program services does this initiative provide?

Four NASH member systems were selected through a competitive RFP process to participate in this initiative. Each will offer ACUE's independently validated [course on effective teaching practices](#) to hundreds of faculty members. Full and part-time faculty, teaching assistants, and other instructors with teaching responsibilities are eligible to enroll, based on the goals and program design described in each system's application. ACUE will provide academic, communications, and other [support services](#) to ensure a successful implementation. Systems and campuses also will also receive research services to document faculty implementation of new teaching techniques and the subsequent impact on student outcomes.

Q. Who was eligible to apply for the initiative?

All NASH members systems were eligible to apply. NASH received 11 applications that were reviewed by an independent committee of higher education leaders.

Q. What can participating faculty expect from an ACUE course?

ACUE's course on effective college instruction is delivered online, through a research-based [learning design](#) that is [certified](#) by Quality Matters (QM). The course addresses all of the core competencies defined in ACUE's [Effective Practice Framework®](#), an [independently validated](#) statement of the evidence-based teaching practices that every college educator should possess. Faculty will learn about and implement proven instructional approaches. Faculty who satisfy course requirements will earn a Certificate in Effective College Instruction [endorsed by the American Council on Education \(ACE\)](#). The Framework's 25 core competencies are organized into five areas of practice:

- Designing an Effective Course
- Establishing a Productive Learning Environment
- Using Active Learning Strategies
- Promoting Higher Order Thinking
- Assessing to Inform Instruction and Promote Learning

Q. Will faculty learn about best practice for teaching *online*?

Yes! ACUE courses include resources for effective instruction, in-person and online. Participating systems and campuses will be able to enroll faculty in ACUE's [Course in Effective Online Teaching Practices](#). This course is fully aligned to ACUE's Effective Practice Framework and specifically recommends hundreds of practices native to online instruction, both synchronous and asynchronous. Faculty who satisfy requirements of this course will receive a Certificate in Effective College Instruction *with a Concentration in Online Teaching*.

Q. Do ACUE courses address inclusive and equitable teaching practices?

Yes. ACUE courses include numerous inclusive teaching practices that help all students learn and are particularly beneficial to traditionally underserved students. These approaches create supportive, inclusive learning environments where all students can succeed, and are shown to close equity gaps. Detailed information about alignment of recommended teaching practices with the principles of inclusive teaching can be found in the [document](#) "Inclusive and Equitable Teaching – ACUE Curriculum Crosswalk."

Q. Are ACUE's courses offered online?

Yes. Faculty at participating campuses within a system are enrolled into online, facilitated cohorts and complete their course together. This online delivery ensures that faculty can continue to receive professional support.

Q. Why are faculty enrolled in facilitated cohorts?

The facilitated cohort approach promotes collaboration and builds community among faculty. Faculty have opportunities to work asynchronously and collaborate through online discussions. They receive timely feedback on required assignments from ACUE national readers. Cohorts can draw faculty from across disciplines to strengthen community and a culture of instructional excellence, and may enroll anyone with current teaching responsibilities, including adjunct faculty and teaching assistants.

Q. How will outcomes be measured?

A program evaluation will follow an [established research protocol](#) that has been used for similar independently validated studies. These [studies](#) have found stronger academic outcomes and closed completion gaps between students of different race/ethnicity and income levels (e.g. Pell status) among students taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty. ACUE researchers work with system and campus researchers to study the effects of this program. Data to evaluate changes in faculty members' attitudes about their teaching and their knowledge and use of recommended, evidence-based teaching practices are collected within ACUE's course. Participating systems and campuses will also provide additional information to examine the impact of this effort on student outcomes related to engagement, learning, completion, and equity.

Q: How did NASH member systems learn about this opportunity?

NASH announced this opportunity to all of its members on January 27, 2020. NASH and ACUE conducted four webinars prior to the proposal deadline on March 6, 2020.

Q. What is the source of funding for this initiative?

This initiative is supported with 2.4M dollars from the [Charles Koch Foundation](#) (CKF), based on the shared belief with ACUE and NASH that the effort will empower faculty to transform the education experience for students through the incorporation of proven teaching methods. With the necessary knowledge, skills, and mentorship, faculty will be able to impact deeper, active learning and greater engagement among their students.