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## **New Study Shows UA - Pulaski Technical College Achieves Stronger, More Equitable Student Achievement through Campus-wide Investment in Quality Teaching**

*Grades and passing rates up, DFWs down - with greater impacts for Black and Latino students - when taught by ACUE faculty using evidence-based teaching practices*

*As community colleges struggle with enrollment and retention, UA-PTC is making quality teaching a 'top priority' to attract, retain, and prepare students for in-demand careers*

NEW YORK & NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS (June 16, 2022) - The [Association of College and University Educators](#) (ACUE) and the [University of Arkansas - Pulaski Technical College](#) (UA-PTC) today released results of a new two-year study that showed significantly more students passing courses, fewer receiving DFW grades, and attaining higher average course grades when taught by ACUE Certified faculty – with Black and Latino students experiencing even greater gains.

ACUE, which offers the only nationally recognized higher education teaching credential endorsed by the American Council on Education, began its partnership with UA-PTC in 2017 with the goal of equipping all its instructors with evidence-based teaching practices. Today, 98% of all UA-PTC full-time faculty have become ACUE Certified.

**UA-PTC Chancellor Margaret Ellibee, Ph.D**, who will be retiring at the end of June, has made quality teaching a core part of her legacy and core to UA-PTC's student success strategy. Chancellor Ellibee said, "Like so many community colleges across the country, we've had to quickly transform ourselves to retain more students and keep them engaged. As our top priority, quality teaching has been central to how we are breaking down barriers that stand in the way of student success for all our students – and the data proves it works."

Since the partnership began, ACUE and UA-PTC have led a longitudinal study evaluating the impact of effective teaching on student outcomes. To date, ACUE researchers and institutional partners have [published 21 reports](#) on the results of their analyses. The UA-PTC findings further confirm numerous [independently validated](#) studies demonstrating better outcomes for students taught by ACUE Certified faculty.

Today's [new study](#) looked at two cohorts of UA-PTC faculty that completed the ACUE certification program in [Effective Teaching Practices](#) between the spring 2018 and 2019 semesters. The study analyzed student outcomes for 15,580 non-unique enrollments in courses taught by the first cohort of ACUE faculty and for 12,994 non-unique enrollments taught by the second cohort.

[\[Read Research Brief\]](#)

Findings from Year 1 (2017-18):

Among students taught by the first cohort of ACUE faculty in 2017-18, **there was a significant effect on students' likelihood of passing courses and receiving fewer DFW** (grade of D, F or withdrawal from course) **grades. The positive drop in DFW grades was greater for Black students with the probability of earning DFW grades dropping 7 percentage points.** In this study alone, an additional 120 students passed their courses and 145 fewer students received DFW grades in their courses the year after faculty completed the ACUE course than would have otherwise.

Findings from Year 2 (2018-19):

Among students taught by the second cohort of faculty in 2018-2019, **significantly fewer received DFW grades and average course grades improved, with greater impact for Hispanic/Latino students.** In this study alone, 250 fewer students received DFW grades while faculty were completing the ACUE course, and 201 fewer students received DFW grades the year after faculty completed the ACUE course.

In the years that followed the study, UA-PTC leaders emphasize they had an even stronger footing to maintain student engagement and learning through the pandemic, which they credit to greater faculty adaptability across learning modalities as a result of ACUE programs.

“Effective teaching enabled us to buck national trends, as our DFW rates remained steady throughout the pandemic,” said **UA - PTC Provost, Summer DeProw.** She added, “There’s a lot of talk around training faculty to become experts in their fields, but we never teach them how to teach. At UA – Pulaski Technical College, we’re changing that by investing in ACUE programs to reach every faculty member to the benefit of every single student. The data makes it clear: we’ve seen a clear return on investment for our students’ futures.”

As a two-year community college, UA-PTC plays a key role in the education and workforce training pipeline in the Central Arkansas region. UA-PTC students are enrolled in associate of arts, associate of science, and certificate programs that prepare them for in-demand jobs in allied health professions, business and information technology, advanced manufacturing, automotive technology, and much more. However, while many UA-PTC faculty are working professionals with direct industry experience, they had not previously been equipped with the practices needed to teach those vocations to students.

“My students have greatly benefited from me taking the ACUE course,” said **UA-PTC faculty member, Dr. Madhushaw Reniguntala, who teaches chemistry.** “I learned ways to motivate students, strategically engage all students in the class, and promote higher order thinking – which ultimately led to higher student retention and success.”

“Quality teaching is transformative, and we applaud UA – Pulaski Technical College’s leadership for making it the core of their student success agenda, leading to stronger and more equitable outcomes,” said **Scott Durand, ACUE’s Chief Executive Officer.** “In this study alone, grades, passing rates, and DFWs were positively impacted for hundreds of students, with Black and Latino students seeing the greatest benefit, when taught by ACUE faculty. Now, with nearly all UA-Pulaski Tech faculty ACUE Certified, all students will be able to experience deep learning and engagement that can set them on a path for career success.”

**About ACUE:**

The [Association of College and University Educators](#)' (ACUE) mission is to ensure student success and equity through quality instruction. In partnership with colleges, universities, higher education systems and associations, ACUE prepares and credentials faculty in the evidence-based teaching practices that improve student achievement and close equity gaps. Numerous and independently validated studies confirm that students are more engaged, learn more, and complete courses in greater numbers—more equitably with their peers—when taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty. ACUE's online, cohort-based credentialing programs are delivered through institutional partnerships and open enrollment courses endorsed by the American Council on Education.

**About UA-PTC:**

University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College provides access to high-quality education that promotes student learning and enables individuals to develop to their fullest potential. Through university-transfer curriculum, workforce training, and economic development initiatives in business and industry, UA - Pulaski Tech offers many exciting opportunities to get a competitive edge in today's job market. The college offers associate of arts and science degree options, including programs in allied health and human services, aerospace technology, business, culinary arts, information technology, technical sciences, as well as continuing education and community services. The college awards Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees to graduates of the university-transfer program, as well as Associate of Applied Science degrees, technical certificates and certificates of proficiency. For more information, visit [www.uaptc.edu](http://www.uaptc.edu).