Faculty Development Buyer's Guide

Propelling Student Success through Investment in Faculty

ACUE

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Getting to the Heart of the Student Success

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Completion matters.

A college degree remains the surest path to a prosperous life.

Americans are more civically engaged, lead healthier lives, and have a significant increase in lifetime earnings when they hold a postsecondary degree.

Over a decade ago, higher education embraced national completion goals.

Higher Education is committed to graduating more students, particularly the Pell-eligible and first-generation college students. Institutions have adopted new "student success" interventions, from advising and enrollment management to digital tools for early intervention. But still not enough students are completing college. National average graduation rates hover between 30 and 60 percent.

How are we tackling completion?

Most "success" supports occur outside of class.

Although investments in mental health services, proactive academic advising, emergency financial assistance, and support programs all work to bolster the student, their implementation demands substantial resources and ongoing costs, without a guaranteed return on investment.

Often, other investments like tutoring, predictive analytics, and advanced course design rely on effective teaching practices to be successful.

It's time to get to the heart of the matter. In class.
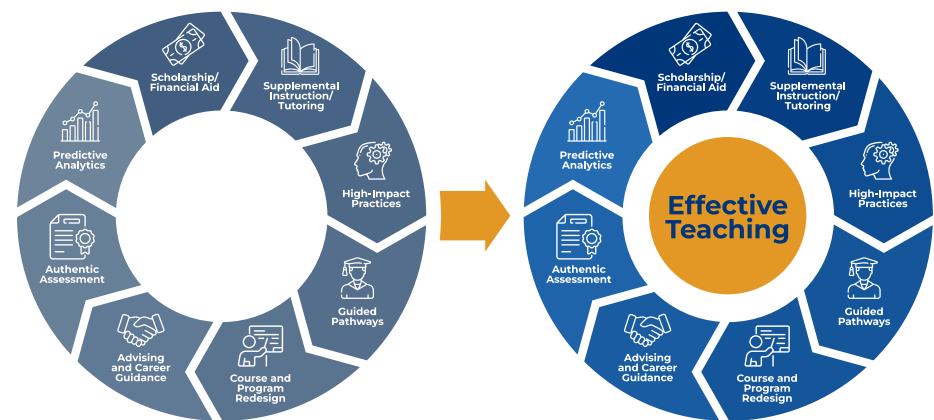
Getting to the Heart of the Student Success

Today's typical college students lead busy lives. They are holding jobs and managing family responsibilities, alongside their studies. Many don't have time to take advantage of tutoring, advising, and other support services.

If they do one thing, it's go to class.

Their time with professors is the best, sometimes only, opportunity to make a difference. Institutions have an obligation to make that time together the best it can be.

Are we doing enough to support faculty?

Through no fault of their own, faculty aren't prepared to use evidence-based and equity-promoting teaching practices that are proven to create engaging learning conditions, make content relevant, promote deeper learning, and develop lifelong skills.

Comprehensive training in pedagogy is largely absent from most PhD programs. When hiring, institutions often look to pedigree and publications, creating little reason for graduate training to change. Professional incentives for full-time faculty emphasize service and research.

Adjuncts from professions outside of academia, such as nursing, law, and the building trades, to name just a few, are experts in their fields but not necessarily in how to teach those vocations.

Getting to the heart of student success requires that institutions ensure their faculty have the support they seek so that students get the quality of education they deserve.

The Power of Effective Teaching

The Power of Effective Teaching

Great teaching delivers student success.

It is well known that students are more engaged, learn more, and complete more courses more equitably with their peers from effective instruction, and alumni are twice as likely to be living fulfilled lives with rewarding jobs, finds Gallup and the Strada Education Foundation

Student impact from effective teaching practices

- Boost grades
- Eliminate equity gaps
- Decrease DFW rates by 3% or more
- Increase course-completion rates
- Higher self-efficacy and confidence increase

Great teaching delivers faculty success.

Faculty are able to engage more students, improve learning, feel reinvigorated and rewarded by their teaching, and reduce equity gaps when they participate in comprehensive faculty development.

Faculty impact from learning effective teaching practices

- Build confidence in their teaching skills
- Achieve a significantly higher growth mindset (and increase growth mindset in their students).
- Boost retention by 4% for first-year students
- Discover more enjoyment in working with students

Great teaching delivers institutional success.

Strategic goals are met with efficiency, retention rates rise, faculty report feeling invested in and supported, and students thrive.

Institutional impact from implementing development of effective teaching practices

- United mission between the public and students
- Scale and elevate the efforts of the Centers for Teaching and Learning
- $600k boost in first-year student revenue
- 8x return on investment in quality teaching

Examine your current student success efforts

Review your current student success efforts

More than workshops

A rubric that can assist you in doing a thorough evaluation can be found in the Success & Equity Through Quality Instruction toolkit. This resource, developed in conjunction with Sova, Strong Start to Finish, and Education Commission of the States, contains a detailed methodology to evaluate the maturity of your campus' student success efforts in five areas:

1. Strategy

2. Equity

3. Approach

4. Evaluation

5. Culture
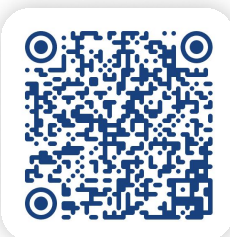
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Select a Professional Development Provider

Select a Professional Development Provider

Now that you have insight into the strengths and opportunities in your current initiatives, it's time to partner with a provider that aligns with and will support your needs.

The following pages in this guide break down important questions and considerations to help you assess a faculty development partner for your campus.

Key Questions: Quality of Courses and Certifications

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Assessing the Quality of the Courses and Certifications

Prioritize a faculty development provider with courses and certifications based in researched and proven methodologies. Consider providers who are endorsed by third parties and have a track record of changing behaviors.

Key questions to consider:

- What is the development process for courses, workshops, etc.?
- What learning design do they use, and is it aligned with the principles of adult learning?
- What results can the company attribute to the faculty development implementation?
- Do faculty alter their behaviors following training completion and, how will you know?
- Is their offering grounded in researched methodologies?
- Do they have endorsements or support from third-party organizations?

Assessing Course-Taker Satisfaction

Instructor satisfaction is integral to the success of faculty training. Faculty invest valuable time in participating in the professional development you offer, therefore, the provider you choose should have consistent positive feedback from their course-takers to ensure the success of your program.

Key questions to consider:

- Does the provider consistently receive positive reviews?
- Who is included in this process? (e.g., national experts, faculty…)
- Are the courses highly regarded or recommended by faculty who complete them?
- Can you connect with a faculty reference to discuss the offering?
- What's the overall feedback from faculty about the learning design?
- Is the provider responsive to the partner's needs and dedicated to continuous improvement?

Key Questions:
Quality of Courses and Certifications

Aligning Professional Development with Institutional, Faculty, and Student Needs

Ensure the provider you choose has a range of options for the course-taker. Aligning the catalog with institutional, faculty, and student needs fosters engagement. This ensures that the educational offerings meet the specific requirements and interests of the institution, faculty, and students, contributing to an effective learning experience.

Key questions to consider:

- How many courses does the provider offer?
- Are there certifications?
- How often does the provider update their courses and content?
- Do the courses have a consistent time commitment, or do they vary?
- Do the courses address current and relevant issues in higher education that have a direct impact on the contributing to a wholistic culture of learning on campus?

Key Questions: Quality of Support and Implementation

Facilitating Faculty Engagement in the Training

Teaching expertise may vary among staff, and initially, there may be hesitancy about the commitment to training. Therefore, support from your provider in onboarding instructors to the program is an important element to its success.

Key questions to consider:

- Is there a support system for facilitating completion and encouraging faculty buy-in?
- What resources does the organization provide to enhance faculty engagement?
- How does the provider assist campus staff in staying accountable for the training and its goals?
- Are there any incentives or rewards for completing the curriculum?

Scaling Your Existing Center for Teaching and Learning

Some campuses have Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and some do not. Depending on the need of your institution, your provider will need to fill a gap or collaborate to scale and bring emphasis to the existing CTL.

Key questions to consider:

- Can the organization tailor their support for the CTL to meet its unique needs?
- Does the organization highlight and showcase the value of the CTL?
- Does the provider help to measure and highlight the impact of the faculty development courses for the CTL?
- How does the provider contribute to expanding the reach (number of engaged faculty) of the CTL?
- Does the organization provide ongoing learning opportunities for faculty to continue refining their practice?

Key Questions:
Quality of Support and Implementation

Evaluating the Impact of Improved Teaching

Evaluating the impact on campus, especially in specific subject areas or departments like gateway courses, is essential to ensure the chosen provider is delivering on the goals for your program. Understanding the impact quantitatively will provide return on investment data, and qualitative data will tell a story of the improvement of teaching and learning on your campus.

Key questions to consider:

- Does the organization have benchmarks to measure its impact on your goals?
- Can the provider demonstrate enhanced faculty well-being and confidence through their solutions?
- Can the provider supply evidence of improved student success outcomes, such as increased equity or higher grades?
- Can the provider demonstrate an improvement in higher retention rates?

Key Questions:
Quality of Outcomes

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Fostering a Culture of Learning

Beyond the impact of the teaching practice improvements on students, you'll also want to understand if your provider can foster a culture of learning by actively building bridges across departments and incentivizing and celebrating faculty achievements in enhancing their teaching practice. An emphasis on cultivating a learning culture creates a supportive environment that will propel the success of your program.

Key questions to consider:

- Does the provider offer courses for both staff and faculty?
- Are badges, certificates, pins, and celebrations provided or modeled for those who complete courses or certifications?
- How does the provider foster collaboration among faculty across disciplines and departments?
- How does the organization support faculty in innovating and experimenting with their teaching without fear of repercussions?
- Does the provider offer avenues for staff, faculty, and students to receive recognition beyond the campus?

Utilizing Research & Tools for Program Evaluation

Knowing how the provider can support your efforts to conduct efficacy and impact research specific to your campus will shed light on your return on investment and achievement of strategic goals set for the program. Resources like non-biased teaching evaluation templates and other tools will empower your institution to gather valuable insights, measure effectiveness, and make informed decisions for continuous improvement.

Key questions to consider:

- Are there tools available to develop and execute unbiased assessments of the training?
- Does the organization conduct research, or is it the responsibility of the campus to undertake it independently?
- Is the research provided by the organization included in the training cost, or is there an additional fee?
- What types of research, if any, are offered by the provider?
- What is the extent of the research? For instance, does it encompass different institution types, such as 2-year and 4-year? Or does it include surveys for students, faculty, and staff?
- Will the research be shared with the institution or promoted to showcase the efforts of the campus and its faculty/staff?

Key Questions:
Quality of Outcomes

Returning Your Institution's Investment

Developing effective teaching practices for faculty and strategies for belonging for staff is an investment in student success. Therefore, it's important to choose a partner capable of ensuring you and your campus leaders a substantial return on that investment.

Key questions to consider:

- What data does the provider have that demonstrates the return on investment (ROI) for faculty and staff training?
- Does the organization have a method for defining and monitoring success, holding everyone accountable to that goal?
- Has the provider demonstrated a robust return on investment (ROI) with campuses similar to yours?
- Will the provider collaborate with you and your team to set realistic goals for the partnership and work together to achieve them?

Put Effective Teaching at the Center of Student Success

# Put Effective Teaching at the Center of Student Success

ACUE

Student Success Through Quality Instruction

Teaching students and leading a college amidst all of today's challenges can feel like impossible tasks. A focus on creating a culture of effective teaching is a place to begin.

We have every reason to ensure that great teaching and learning are happening in every class to help students succeed. This is the mission of higher education, and it aligns with the expectations of students, parents, and taxpayers. Plus, it is one of the few things we can directly influence and change.

Taking the first step to elevate quality teaching as the cornerstone of student success sparks a transformative shift that will resonate throughout your entire campus. Finding a partner who can help you achieve the specific goals of your institution is imperative.

This guide can assist you in ensuring that the partner you select to advance your student success initiative is in line with your goals and accountable for achieving your desired outcomes.
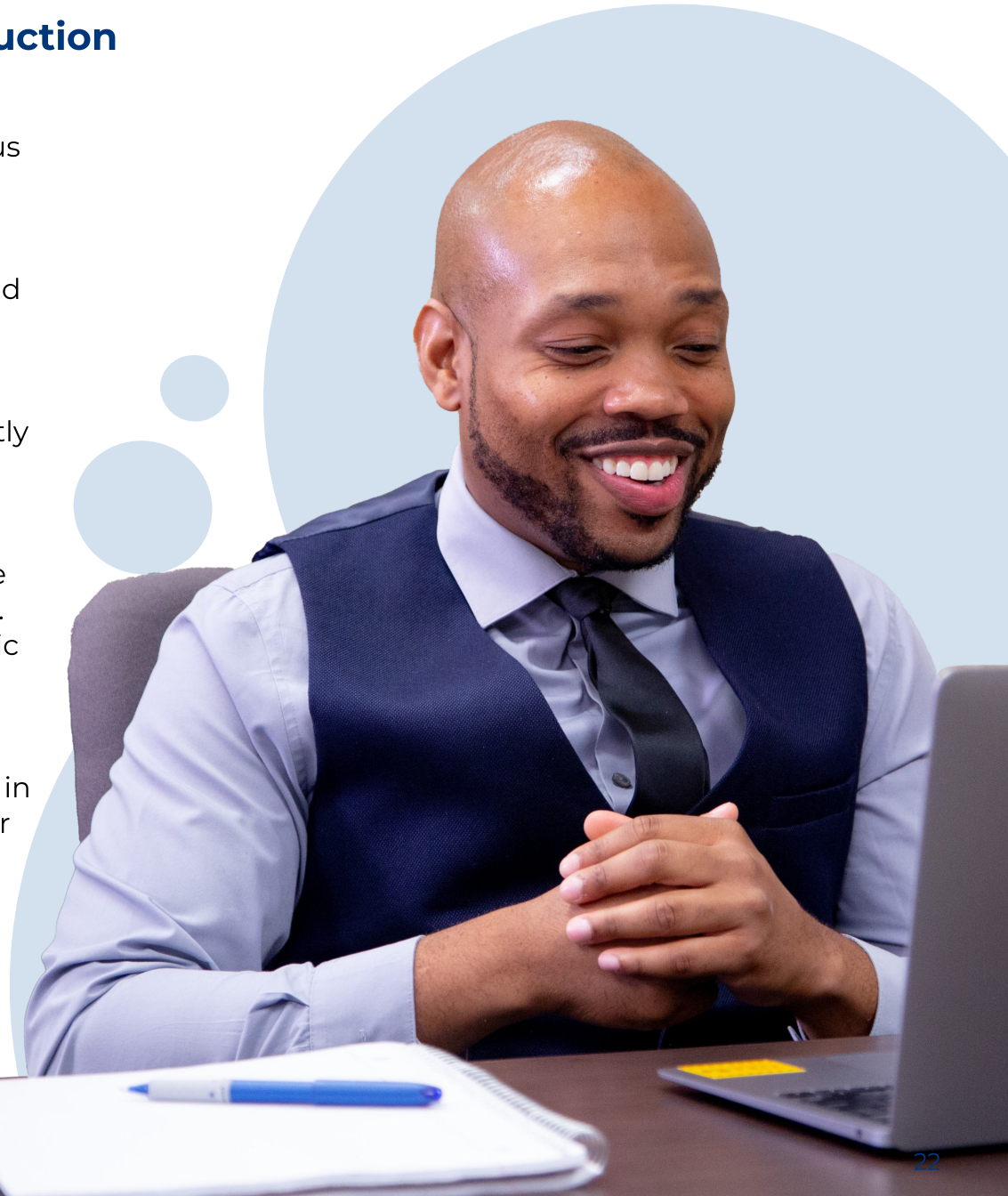
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Backed by a proven track record, the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) has successfully provided faculty training to over 560 universities, colleges, and institutions. Our dedication lies in empowering instructors to amplify their impact, enhance well-being, and boost confidence.

To learn more about how ACUE can help transform your campus with great teaching, reach out to

acue.org/campaign/learn-more