

ACUE-Certified Faculty Experience Transformational Reduction in DFW Rates at Florida Atlantic University



Florida Atlantic University (FAU) is a public Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) in southeast Florida, serving over 30,000 students across six campuses. The main campus of this research-focused university is located in Boca Raton, Florida.

The Challenge

FAU is committed to preparing students to lead in an ever-changing global environment. Seeking to enhance student outcomes in its general education courses and better prepare students for an evolving workforce, leaders made it a strategic priority to invest in faculty development to ensure evidence-based teaching and learning.

The Solution

FAU began a partnership with ACUE in 2019, which expanded in 2021 to offer ACUE Pathway courses leading to the Effective Teaching Certification. A study found that students taught by ACUE-certified faculty achieved significantly stronger academic outcomes, including a remarkable decrease in Ds, Fs, and Withdrawal (DFW) rates. Building on these results, FAU adopted ACUE Complete in order to scale ACUE's offerings and further strengthen teaching and learning.



Stephen D. Engle, PhD

Professor and Associate Provost for Academic Personnel, Florida Atlantic University

Partnering with ACUE has been transformative. Our students are more engaged and earning higher grades. Faculty feel more supported, share best practices with their peers, and feel reinvigorated by their immediate impact. The culture of teaching excellence now ripples across our entire university.

THE RESULTS

39%

Fewer Ds, Fs, and Withdrawals

Students taught by ACUE-certified faculty received 39% fewer Ds, Fs, or Withdrawals.

10%

Higher Grades in General Ed Courses

Students in general education courses taught by ACUE faculty earned 10% higher grades.

2.5%

Higher Course Completion Among Hispanic/Latino Students

Course completion among students taught by ACUE faculty increased 2% overall and 2.5% among Hispanic/Latino students.

Source: [Student Success in Action: ACUE-Certified Faculty Drive Completion, Improved Grades, and Substantial Drop in Ds, Fs, and Withdrawals at Florida Atlantic University \(2026\)](#).

TRANSFORMING FACULTY MINDSET

Improved Faculty Confidence & Well-being

FAU faculty who complete ACUE courses report stronger knowledge of evidence-based practices, experience a noticeable boost in classroom confidence, and help to establish a culture of teaching excellence at the institution. They also describe a renewed sense of purpose, an improved mindset, and a revitalized passion for teaching.

Faculty Engagement

48%

FAU Instructors Participated in ACUE Courses

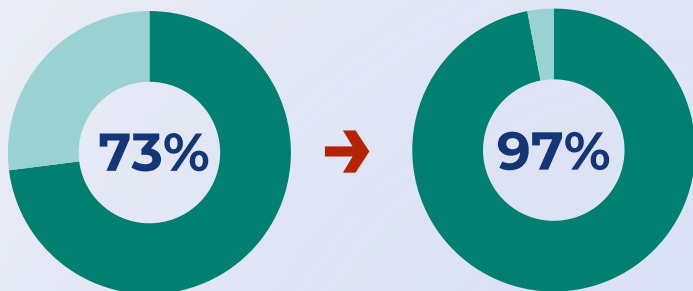
48% of instructional staff participated in ACUE pathway courses and nearly 20% have earned the certification.

99%

Faculty Find ACUE Engaging and Relevant

Faculty agree or strongly agree that the knowledge presented in the modules are relevant to their work.

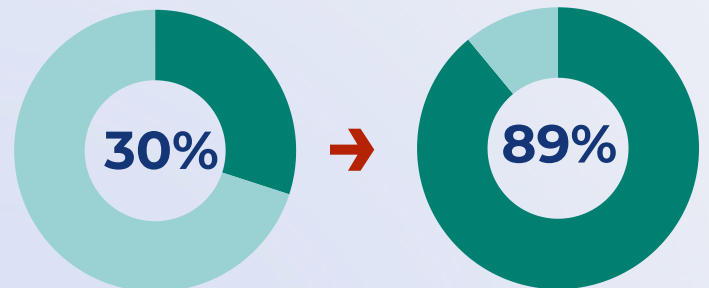
Use research to inform teaching



Before ACUE Course

After ACUE Course

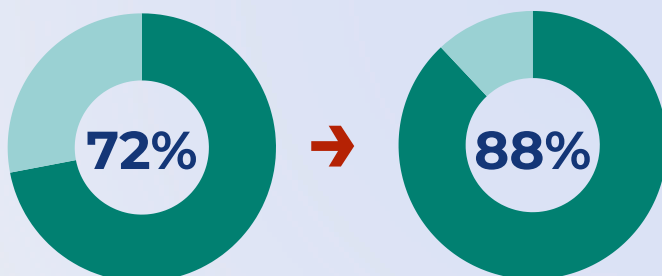
Confidence using active learning techniques in large classes



Before ACUE Course

After ACUE Course

Discuss teaching with colleagues



Before ACUE Course

After ACUE Course

ACUE's Impact

These results are part of a growing body of evidence proving that effective teaching drives lasting student success.

Explore our research studies and learn how ACUE partners with colleges nationwide to achieve scalable, evidence-based impact.

Learn more: acue.org/impact.