Engaging Faculty in Reform:

Building Buy-in, Supporting Instructional Improvement

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We conduct quantitative and qualitative research on:

- Teaching and learning in higher education
- Access to and success in postsecondary education
- High school to college transitions
- Missions, governance and accountability
- Workforce education
Welcome to Scaling Innovation

The Community College Research Center (CCRC) is proud to launch the website for Scaling Innovation, a research and implementation project that examines how promising instructional reforms in developmental education can be introduced, sustained, and scaled to enhance students’ learning, persistence, and academic progression. This website is designed to share insights about the ways that innovative course structures and pedagogical approaches are reshaping the teaching and learning experiences that take place in developmental education classrooms. It will feature reflections and professional learning resources created by our partners as well as commentary and research by CCRC.

Scaling Innovation is funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

New Paper From Scaling Innovation

Strengthening Developmental Education Reforms: Evidence on Implementation Efforts From the Scaling Innovation Project

Drawing on a scan of current reform efforts as well as fieldwork at 11 colleges, this paper examines trends in developmental education reform implementation and provides a framework for strengthening reform efforts and broader institutional capacity. Learn more →
Context of the Research

**Accelerated Learning Program:** Enrolls developmental writing students in introductory college-level English course along with a companion support course.

**California Acceleration Project:** Statewide network of colleges engaged in reforms that shorten developmental English and math sequences through revision of curricula.

**Concepts of Numbers:** Pre-algebra content is organized by concepts rather than topics and employs a discovery based approach to teaching.
## Data Collected at 9 Community Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Interviews</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator Interviews</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation Activity Observations</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Minutes</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Call Notes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why examine faculty engagement?

• To be fully optimized, promising reforms may require faculty to make changes to classroom practice
• Little research on the experiences of faculty teaching in reformed contexts
• Greater understanding of faculty experiences can facilitate:
  – More informed implementation process
  – More meaningful faculty learning opportunities
How do faculty members respond when asked to participate in a new reform?

What supports increase faculty willingness and ability to participate in instructional reform?
It’s really hard to get faculty to look at teaching differently or changing curriculum in drastic ways when they’ve invested their identity in that way of teaching. ‘You’re not challenging a certain curriculum; you’re challenging me or the essence of who I am.’
Faculty Orientations Toward Reform

**Ready to Act**
- Teaching philosophy aligned with reform philosophy
- Willing to change, but in need of support
- Participation not related to reform philosophy

**Ambivalent**
- Engaged with other professional priorities
- Awaiting evidence on effectiveness
- Uncertain about own ability to change

**Reluctant to Change**
- Satisfied with status quo
- Unconvinced of reform effectiveness
- Discomfort with reform approach
I’m no longer using [grammar] worksheets, but I’m perplexed on how to deal with grammar in this class.
I’m not sure I have the disposition for all that group work. I’m not a group work kind of guy.
Faculty Orientations Toward Reform

I feel my students need those two levels. Some college-level instructors have no patience for them.
How do faculty members respond when asked to participate in a new reform?

What supports increase faculty willingness and ability to participate in instructional reform?
What supports increase faculty willingness and ability to participate in instructional reform?
Share Information to Dispel Fears and Misconceptions

**Unconvinced of effectiveness**
- Reform purpose and theory of action
- Outcome data
- Evidence of student performance

**Uncertain of ability to implement**
- “Vision of the possible”
  - Videos of classroom practice
  - Peer observation
  - Curricular materials and student work
Design Varied Engagement Structures to Meet Varied Needs

Reform Implementation Timeline

Orientations Toward Reform

- Ready to Act
- Ambivalent
- Reluctant to Change
## Faculty Questions Evolve Over Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Reform</th>
<th>Reform Implementation</th>
<th>Classroom Practice</th>
<th>Pedagogy and Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the evidence of success?</td>
<td>How is the new course structured?</td>
<td>What are the course materials, assessments and assignments?</td>
<td>What instructional techniques are most effective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will this reform address student needs?</td>
<td>Which students are eligible and how will they be enrolled?</td>
<td>How will I use class time?</td>
<td>What are students learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is it better than the current system?</td>
<td>What are course policies?</td>
<td>What will I do in class tomorrow?</td>
<td>How can I support struggling students?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reform Implementation Timeline
What does faculty learning typically look like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occurs in isolation</td>
<td>• Professional norms of autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Few opportunities for adjunct engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decontextualized</td>
<td>• Designed for broad appeal across disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• One-time workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sharing strategies in the abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated to pedagogy</td>
<td>• Focused on fostering disciplinary expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of instructional leadership within departments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Typical Talk About Pedagogy

Highly Prescriptive

Sharing Strategies
Keep Engagement Purposeful
Keep Engagement Purposeful

**Purpose**
- The learning objective is clear and relevant to participants.
  - *Introducing a new pedagogical approach*

**Activity**
- The activity is designed to help participants meet the learning objective and is grounded in classroom practice.
  - *Observing a teaching demonstration*

**Venue**
- The venue is aligned with the purpose and activity.
  - *Monthly meeting of a faculty inquiry group*
### Ground Professional Learning in Classroom Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESS CONNECTED TO CLASSROOM PRACTICE</th>
<th>GROUNDED IN DAILY TEACHING WORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Designed for broad appeal across disciplines and/or colleges</td>
<td>• Infrastructure for ongoing collaboration, experimentation and refinement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presentations by consultants</td>
<td>• Examination of course materials, including classroom activities, assignments, and assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One-time workshops</td>
<td>• Review of wide array of data including course outcomes and student work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Descriptions of “best practices”</td>
<td>• Sharing strategies in the abstract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Generalized descriptions of context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharing strategies in the abstract</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
For more information

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the accelerated learning program

ENG 101

ENG 052