Faculty Collaboratives
SUMMER 2017

From the Editor .................................................. 3

ANALYSIS
Faculty Collaboration for the Future
Susan Albertine, AAC&U ........................................... 4

Leveraging Networks and Technology to Promote Faculty Learning
Elizabeth Holcombe, University of Southern California ....................... 7

PRACTICE
From Faculty Fellows to Equity-Minded Collaborators
Christina Chávez-Reyes, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; Emily Daniell Magruder, California State University; and Debra David, San José State University .......... 10

The Genesis of LEAP IN
Kathy Johnson, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis; T. J. Rivard, Indiana University East; and William J. McKinney, Indiana University ...................... 12

Embracing LEAP in Kentucky
Molly Dunkum, Western Kentucky University; and Tracy Knowles, Bluegrass Community and Technical College ...................................................... 14

Massachusetts Brings It All Together
Robert J. Awkward, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; Bonnie Orcutt, Worcester State University; Catherine L. Pride, Middlesex Community College; and Lori Dawson, Worcester State University ...................... 15

Picking Up Where We Are in North Dakota
Katie Woehl, Valley City State University; and Ryan Zerr, University of North Dakota . 16

Upholding Academic Quality in Oregon
Sandra Bailey, Oregon Institute of Technology; and Kay Sagmiller, Oregon State University ................................................................. 17

#LEAPTexas
Terry Di Paolo, Dallas County Community College District; and Loraine Phillips, Georgia Institute of Technology ........................................... 18

High-Impact Practices for Regional Reform in Utah
Matthew Morin, Chaffey College; John R. Taylor, Southern Utah University; Jennifer Peeples, Dan McInerney, Norm Jones—all of Utah State University; Phyllis Safman, Utah State Board of Regents; and Marianne McKnight, Salt Lake Community College . 20

LEAPing into Open through Open Learning ’17
Gardner Campbell, Virginia Commonwealth University; and Beverly Covington, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia ...................... 22

Meeting People Where They Are in Wisconsin
Peggy James, University of Wisconsin–Parkside; and James Robinson, University of Wisconsin–Parkside ...................................................... 24

RESEARCH
Professional Development for Student Success
Rebecca Dolinsky Graham, University of the District of Columbia .................. 26

REALITY CHECK
Shifting How We Think About Faculty Work
Anne V. Kelsch, University of North Dakota .......................................... 31
n nature, unintentional alliances are often responsible for sustaining our world. Amit Ray, author of Mindfulness: Living in the Moment, observes, “Collaboration is the essence of life. The wind, bees, and flowers work together to spread the pollen.” On college campuses, partnerships also are necessary to create rich learning ecologies in which students can thrive. In response to this need, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), with support from Lumina Foundation, launched the Faculty Collaboratives project—a large-scale, sustainable network of resource and innovation hubs and a curriculum for faculty professional learning. Phase 1 (2014–16) of the project comprised five LEAP States—California, Indiana, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. In 2016, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oregon, and Virginia joined Phase 2 of the project. In this issue of Peer Review, all ten teams share their experiences of establishing networks and state hubs—virtual centers with public URLs for communications and community organizing.

AAC&U Vice President Susan Albertine directed the Faculty Collaboratives project from its launch until her recent retirement. Under Susan’s leadership, the Faculty Collaboratives project developed and sustained connections among LEAP States faculty. Faculty Collaboratives teams used Twitter and other technologies to share expertise and best practices across institutions. To help state teams assess their progress, Susan and the project teams created a Faculty Collaboratives Rubric, modeled on the VALUE rubrics, which can be found at www.aacu.org/node/17663.

Now an AAC&U Senior Fellow, Susan has passed the Faculty Collaboratives baton to C. Edward Watson, AAC&U’s Associate Vice President for Quality, Advocacy, and LEAP Initiatives. Eddie, as he is known, has a long history of working with faculty, most notably as Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Georgia, where he led university efforts associated with faculty development, future faculty development, student learning outcomes assessment, learning technologies, learning spaces, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

I asked Eddie to share his thoughts about the Faculty Collaboratives’s future, and he graciously provided the following remarks:

Many important strategies were developed and lessons learned as a result of the Faculty Collaboratives project, and this issue of Peer Review provides replicable highlights from the participating states. As AAC&U looks to the future to continue efforts to develop and facilitate sustainable practices supporting LEAP work, Lumina’s Degree Qualifications Profile, and other interrelated projects, it’s valuable to revisit the key mechanism of student learning and student success in higher education. Indeed, faculty and their activities are at the heart of this work. The Faculty Collaboratives project was built upon this recognition, and next steps involve the adoption of approaches that promise to further increase faculty engagement with LEAP-related best practices. Fortunately, there are some clear paths forward. For instance, most institutions already have change agents at work on their campus whose central mission is to foster institutional climates and cultures that reinforce excellence in teaching, learning, and assessment in the service of student success. These are Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs).

CTL professionals have well-established relationships with faculty and possess a practical and applied knowledge regarding how learning works. These are strategically key campus representatives to lead faculty engagement with institutional and state-level initiatives such as LEAP. Encouraging LEAP co-ownership by CTLs offers a highly efficacious and collaborative avenue for sustaining and promoting the new communication channels, resource hubs, and other state-level approaches that resulted from the Faculty Collaboratives project. By leveraging CTLs and more closely connecting their activities to central institutional projects, state-level initiatives can be locally customized and sustained over time. AAC&U will be promoting such strategies in the coming months to further the accomplishments of the Faculty Collaboratives project.

While project leadership and other key players may change, the overarching goals of the Faculty Collaboratives project remain the same—to help faculty and educators engage in high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment focused on achievement of essential college learning. Through networking, campuses can navigate their changing landscapes to create flourishing learning environments for all students.

—SHELLEY JOHNSON CAREY
Faculty Collaboration for the Future

Susan Albertine, Senior Scholar, Office of Integrative Liberal Learning and the Global Commons, AAC&U

At the launch of the Faculty Collaboratives project in 2014, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) invited faculty from LEAP States to experiment with a state-based infrastructure for Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP). In many ways, this was akin to building the boat while they were sailing it. We designed the project to reach LEAP outcomes for student success by embracing and nurturing faculty leadership at the state level. We wanted to give faculty sustainable options and opportunities—the means and modes—to direct their own professional learning. Project leaders intended reciprocal effort to help states and systems find direction and energy through faculty participation. At the project’s opening, ten states and state-based consortia had formally joined the LEAP States initiative. Funded by Lumina Foundation, the three-year grant aimed to make LEAP, Lumina’s Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), and related activities in these ten states sustainable so that momentum would continue beyond the grant funding.

BACKGROUND

To provide a liberal education for all college students in the United States—giving priority to traditionally underserved students—calls for wide and deep, as well as equitable and compassionate, engagement among educators. This effort is an investment in the future of democracy. It requires networking robust enough to meet faculty where they are, welcoming educators for whom working conditions are contingent as well as those who are secure. Designing the Faculty Collaboratives, we decided to take a leaf from LEAP. Liberal education liberates minds for a life of learning just as valuably for educators as it does for students. We hoped integrative state-based structures could sustain inclusive liberal learning.

By summer 2017, all ten states that participated in Faculty Collaboratives have sustained the effort. Each state has designed and made, to one degree or another, an infrastructure to keep them going. The generosity and good will of participating faculty and system administrators—a group embracing the many educators of many titles involved in the project—yielded insights and principles, advice for policy and advocacy, and practices for professional leadership and learning that can guide educators for years to come.

THEORY OF ACTION

From the start, our project goal was to scale up the LEAP initiative. In the first decade of LEAP, hundreds of individual institutions adopted the framework. LEAP States builds on the momentum in individual institutions by creating networks in state systems or consortia. Interinstitutional collaboration can also respond to the unique conditions—culture and society, policies, politics, and processes—of higher education in states.

The LEAP States project began during a period of expansion among national initiatives for learning-centered reform (Kezar 2016). Several AAC&U initiatives, including LEAP, Quality Collaboratives, Developing a Community College Student Roadmap, VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education), General Education Maps and Markers (GEMs), high-impact practices (HIPs), and Signature Work (http://www.aacu.org/aacu-programs) have grown concurrently with Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) and Tuning USA project, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment’s Assignment Library (https://www.assignmentlibrary.org), and national efforts such as the Center for Urban Education’s Equity Scorecard (https://cueasc.edu/tools/the-equity-scorecard/), the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education’s Interstate Passport (http://www.wiche.edu/passport/home), and the American Association of Community Colleges’s Pathways (http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/pathways/pages/default.aspx).

This proliferation of reform projects in higher education has introduced challenges of its own. How are faculty to make sense of proliferating initiatives that center on or converge with LEAP and the DQP? How it is possible to keep generative activity going after a grant ends and funding disappears? How is it possible to maintain momentum
when administrations change and educators face new policies and regulations?

We organized Faculty Collaboratives to be a venue for integrative learning and ingenuity, sustaining a family of projects over time under the fluid conditions of higher education. In partnership with state system administrations or higher education boards or councils, we wanted to encourage educators to collaborate with administrators to align strategic planning with LEAP, to build a durable infrastructure that will help simultaneously to meet state goals for student success and connect higher education in the state with national frameworks and initiatives. We reasoned that outreach to growing numbers of faculty for professional learning and leadership could be intentionally fostered to support an array of activities in the future. From the perspective of AAC&U, outreach to educators can multiply through state networks and the structures that support them.

**PROJECT ARCHITECTURE**

The Faculty Collaboratives placed LEAP and the DQP at the center of our efforts. Each participating state partnership identified a set of faculty fellows to join administrators in leading the project (see figure 1). The state teams then made their own plans to introduce nationally significant initiatives to colleagues.

We laid out an array of initiatives and invited the teams to choose their own direction. Initially, we named LEAP, DQP and Tuning USA, VALUE/Multi-State Collaboratives, GEMs, HIPs, and Signature Work. Teams could customize their choice of “big” initiatives and add local work as they saw fit. We welcomed engagement in convergent initiatives and statewide strategic plans. The stories from each of the partnerships emerge in the reports gathered in this issue of *Peer Review*.

The project leadership asked teams to design and create a large-scale, sustainable network of resource and digital communication hubs and a curriculum for faculty professional leadership and learning. We asked for organizational work with educators and infrastructure work using both virtual and grounded centers for activity. Each team made sense of the project individually and swapped ideas across the states through project venues. Beginning early in the project, teams debated the use of information and communications technology—including internet websites and social media practices—and made decisions about the features and functions of the hub.

The state stories in this issue present an array of different designs emerging from what was often a spirited debate over organizational strategies and about technology and social learning. What, for instance, would be an effective balance of face-to-face meetings or conferences and social media events? Teams also debated the curriculum—the material from national and local initiatives shared on the hub, which became a “how-to” curriculum on ways of applying DQP and LEAP to practical educational problems. In general, we expected the hubs to help faculty leaders document and share what works for them locally—incorporating scholarship of teaching and learning, for example—and to engage their own communities. We also asked teams to create and use an educational framework that helps faculty make sense of the fast-multiplying family of proficiency initiatives. In the meantime, the AAC&U staff and consultants organized national networking. We intended to spread and share resources while raising national awareness. Project staff and consultants used Twitter (tag #faccollab and #leapstates) and a listserv for communication in addition to organizing project meetings and attending state conferences that each state hosted. I created an electronic portfolio that served as a hub site for both Faculty Collaboratives and associated LEAP States activities. The Faculty Collaboratives Digication eportfolio comprises news and information about project activities and connects to the state hubs (https://tinyurl.com/ygc4lo7b). AAC&U also created a resource hub for LEAP networks (http://www.aacu.org/resources/leap-networks).

Phase 1, beginning in 2014, engaged teams from five states: California, Indiana, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. Another five LEAP States—Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oregon, and Virginia—joined for Phase 2 in 2016 (see figure 1). The first five LEAP States that joined the project in Phase 1 received most of the project funding. In return, they set ambitious two-year goals and served as models for the second group of states. We asked Phase 2 states to study the work of the first group and to plan their own efforts, which we hoped—successfully, as it turned out—that they would move forward on their own.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES**

Three years later, we have reached the breathless moment when the project sails on its own. In this issue of *Peer Review*, we have invited team leaders to share the most important lessons they have learned. To synthesize the learning, our team of staff and consultants at AAC&U report here on discoveries made as work unfolded across the states. Rebecca Dolinsky Graham reports on landscape scanning and participant interviews conducted in the first two years. Elizabeth Holcombe reports on her study of social media and social learning throughout the project. Anne Kelsch

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**FIGURE 1. PARTICIPATING SYSTEMS, COUNCILS, CONSORTIA**

- California State University and California Community Colleges
- Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
- LEAP IN (LEAP Indiana); Indiana Commission for Higher Education
- Massachusetts Department of Education
- LEAP Texas (coalition of systems and institutions in Texas)
- North Dakota University System
- Utah System of Higher Education
- Higher Education Coordinating Commission (Oregon)
- University of Wisconsin System
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
FIGURE 2. PROJECT ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

The Faculty Collaboratives rubric is based on the Integrative Learning VALUE rubric and can be downloaded at www.aacu.org/node/17663.

Performance Outcomes
- Equity in practice
- Integration
- Transfer and sustainability
- Communication and social learning
- Reflection and self-assessment

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Connect to Other Networks
Utah identified specific ways to reach convergent networks by connecting with faculty where they are. The team realized that they needed to move beyond their traditional general education statewide leadership. They reorganized a standing committee at the state level, introducing representation from centers for teaching and learning. They met with directors of teaching technology and continuing education. Their ideas for interpersonal communication and intergroup networking helped the Indiana team reshape their work and inspired Kentucky and Massachusetts as well.

Create New Communities
Virginia created a massive open online course (MOOC) as a collectivist endeavor (openlearninghub.net). Open to any educator, the MOOC brought together communities of open learning, liberal education, and general education advocates. The online hub offers a syndicated blog. It attracted nearly fifty bloggers, whose free-ranging explorations have potential to launch innovation in and beyond Virginia.

Cross Boundaries for Equity
California and Indiana made significant advances by partnering across higher education sectors. The California State University LEAP leadership and the California Community College Student Success Network have committed to an equitable partnership that was years in the building. The title of their 2016 convening sums it up: “Crossing Boundaries for Equity-Minded Teaching and Learning.” LEAP Indiana has found a home for faculty collaboration hosted by Indiana University, leading a statewide effort with Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and other public and private institutions toward improved student transfer.

Provide Stable Resources
As an independent membership organization, LEAP Texas has sufficient resources to offer continued support for faculty and assessment fellows. United to advance authentic assessment of student learning on statewide Texas core objectives, LEAP Texas provides structure and practices that other state teams can study. The independent model provoked much thought across the project. Public systems would do well to recognize the need for stable resources, funding, staffing, events, and structures to support faculty engagement.

Revitalize Campus Leadership of Statewide Networks
Several states, especially those involved in LEAP States for a decade, found an opportunity through the project to renew statewide leadership. Some accomplished this work by creating new networks among faculty, campus, and system administrators, as Wisconsin is doing. As Wisconsin leaders learned, “you must be willing to adapt, to change, and to roll with the punches.” Oregon has reorganized faculty development efforts through their new statewide council, renewing the work of an earlier learning outcomes and assessment task force with representation from both universities and community colleges. North Dakota has created new communities of practice for faculty through their long-standing statewide general education council.

Engage in Strategic Planning
All ten projects anchored their work in or connected it to a state council or system office, with an identified staff liaison responsible for integrating the faculty professional learning into strategic plans. Particularly cogent examples of strategic planning designed to converge with LEAP and faculty professional learning appeared in Kentucky, Massachusetts, Texas, and Wisconsin—each designed differently.

STANDING ON COMMON GROUND
In the coming years, we anticipate seeing results of this work. Each state has made a foundation that is strong enough to build on and durable enough to support activities no one has imagined yet. Both faculty leaders and state system administrators have come together to reach mutually respected goals for student success. They’ve done this work with extraordinary creativity and truly modest resources. We have launched Faculty Collaboratives to bring educators together on common ground, a place for generosity and hope.

REFERENCE
The LEAP States initiative was started by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as a formal collaborative of institutions organized at the state or system level that offers educators in institutions, state systems, and consortia an array of opportunities to work together. The Faculty Collaboratives initiative—the next step of LEAP States that created a sustainable network of resources, innovation hubs, and a curriculum for faculty professional learning—sought to engage faculty across LEAP states in learning about proficiency initiatives, liberal education, and student success. Prior research has demonstrated the value of networks for learning, as people are likely to change their beliefs or behaviors through interacting with others (Tenkasi and Chesmore 2003). When intended to promote faculty development and learning, such networks are also known as communities of practice (CoPs) or professional learning communities (PLCs) (Kezar and Gehrke 2015).

As described in the project profiles published in this issue, each state built or is in the process of building a network of faculty interested in learning collectively about student success, liberal education, and proficiency initiatives. One hope was that the project would build community and promote social learning across space and time through technology; specifically, states built online innovation hubs designed to serve as both repositories of information and dynamic spaces for interaction and learning. State project teams were also encouraged to explore other uses of technology, such as social media and blogging, to build their networks and enhance communication.

To get a better understanding of each state’s activities, the learning that took place, and the strategies used to build community and promote learning, AAC&U conducted a qualitative study of the project using several sources of data: social media posts, an exploration of state hub websites, document review including state periodic reports, informal conversations with project members, and participant observation/attendance at conferences. This article distills critical insights learned from the project’s Phase 1 states (California, Indiana, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin), who became engaged in the project in 2014, and shares them to demonstrate the value of statewide networks of faculty for professional learning and engagement.

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

States that were especially successful at engaging faculty across the state and building relevant, useful hubs spent significant time up front surveying and mapping the landscape of existing resources in their state and assessing the needs of their fellow faculty. States had different existing infrastructures—teams that surveyed what already existed and identified gaps had greater success during the project in creating something durable and useful beyond providing a repository for information. California and Utah both conducted interviews or focus groups with faculty across the state to assess their needs and determine how best to meet them. California team members set out to design their project around the needs of faculty in their state, and they interviewed faculty about the online resources they use for professional development and teaching in order to direct their hub development efforts. Utah, on the other hand, began the project with assumptions about faculty needs and the direction their efforts would take; however, in the course of their focus groups they found that these assumptions were not correct. The Utah team ended up taking their project in a different direction than originally intended as a result of conducting a needs assessment. The Texas team also evaluated the existing LEAP Texas infrastructure to determine where the gaps were and how they could best position themselves to fill those gaps.

Several of the states referred to this as focusing on audience rather than content—thinking about who would be using their resources and what their needs are rather than just the content itself. Several
project leaders mentioned their discovery that the “if you build it, they will come” mentality is misguided. There are now a plethora of online resources on teaching and learning, and the only way to break through the noise to make something relevant and indispensable is to make sure it fulfills a need. Indiana and Wisconsin learned this lesson along the way. They built up their hubs and then sat back and reflected on the need to consider their audience, which they are now successfully doing.

**TRANSLATING PROFICIENCY INITIATIVES TO FIT LOCAL UNDERSTANDINGS AND PRIORITIES**

Through assessment of needs in their states, Phase 1 teams identified local concerns and priorities of their faculty audiences and framed conversations about proficiency initiatives so that they connected with these local needs. Teams took care to translate the proficiency initiatives into the native or local languages of faculty members. Additionally, a team member from Indiana noted, “We needed to ‘translate’ the language to clarify how to apply [the proficiency initiatives] in practice. It has been important to frame them in terms of problems that faculty identify.” The California team connected the proficiency initiatives with ongoing efforts in the state, such as projects on assignment design, threshold concepts, disciplinary apprenticeships, and metacognition, all of which have enthusiastic existing audiences.

**CONNECTIONS WITH EXISTING NETWORKS**

Some of the Phase 1 states were able to capitalize on meaningful existing networks to gain traction for their activities and ideas. By connecting with these networks, the state teams significantly eased the burden of building relationships and making inroads into the consciousness of faculty across their states. For example, the California team plugged into an existing partnership between the California Community College system (CCC) and the California State University system (CSU) by incorporating some of their existing concerns into Faculty Collaboratives planning, as described in the previous section. They joined previously planned meetings, connected with already engaged faculty, and steered many of the existing conversations in slightly different directions to meet everyone’s goals. Texas also had a robust existing network through LEAP Texas, a dues-based membership organization with existing programming and an existing network of hundreds of faculty and administrators throughout the state. Wisconsin was also able to leverage the existing LEAP infrastructure in their state, though networks there were not quite as robust as in Texas due to the changing higher education landscape in that state.

**ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY**

The Indiana team discovered that their state had never had a statewide faculty network, so they had to build theirs from the ground up. However, they learned from Utah’s discoveries and are exploring ways to connect the CTLs in their state. Additionally, faculty across the Phase 1 states learned about national organizations they could connect with, such as the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education. While all the Phase 1 states still had to work to build relationships, those that identified and connected with existing networks were able to get their projects off the ground more quickly and devote more of their time and energy to core tasks rather than network building.

There are now a plethora of online resources on teaching and learning, and the only way to break through the noise to make something relevant and indispensable is to make sure it fulfills a need.
example, the AAC&U project staff hosted several facilitated Twitter chats around project-relevant topics, which attracted participants from nearly all project states and encouraged cross-pollination of ideas. Utah experimented with Twitter to share information and connect with faculty across the state. Additionally, Texas used Twitter to promote several week-long series of online events, each organized around one of their six core objectives. These events included facilitated Twitter chats, webinars, live streams from Periscope, and daily questions for participants to answer on Twitter using the #LEAPTexas hashtag. California used a videoconferencing platform called Zoom to host “Collaborative MeetUps” on topics of common interest such as growth mindset in the classroom, how to start a faculty learning community, or transparency in teaching and learning. These were sixty-, seventy-five, or ninety-minute sessions facilitated by Faculty Collaboratives team members. Wisconsin created “Salon Sessions” through Blackboard Collaborate, in which faculty participated in thirty-minute informal chats on preselected topics such as equity-mindedness, general education, or VALUE rubrics. And Indiana used their learning management system, Canvas, to host discussions about various project topics.

While these innovative uses of technology all encouraged engagement with the project, a key lesson teams have learned is that technology is best used to complement or supplement rather than supplant in-person relationship building. Phase 1 states all had more success engaging participants in online activities if participants also had opportunities to meet and connect in person. Multiple project participants noted the value of attending the 2016 all-project meeting and getting to meet face-to-face with others. There were significant upticks in Twitter activity around the project during and immediately after conferences, including those hosted by state teams. For example, the California team utilized a series of small conferences to build relationships with CSU and CCC faculty and seek input on potential collaborative meetup topics. After engaging participants in this way, they were able to generate excitement and buy-in around their digital activities. This finding is also borne out in research on faculty development networks: hybrid modes of development that incorporate both online and in-person elements can work, but some people just prefer one way of communicating to the other (Brooks 2010). To connect with the most people, it is important to have both online and face-to-face components that complement one another. Similarly, one project participant noted that “online activity should be in service of [our] goals and purposes rather than an end in itself.” Teams that were clear about their project’s purposes were able to leverage technology in ways that successfully complemented their other activities and helped them meet their goals.

CONCLUSION
The Faculty Collaboratives project revealed four key lessons for how to promote faculty learning by leveraging the power of networks and technology. First, states that were especially successful did up-front work to determine their audience and its needs before deciding on the details of their project’s design. Second, states that framed Faculty Collaboratives work in ways that aligned with faculty members’ existing priorities were able to generate more buy-in and engagement. Third, teams that connected with existing networks in their state had an easier time building an audience and generating engagement than teams that tried to create new networks from scratch. And fourth, state teams utilized technology to engage participants in a variety of ways, but it was generally most successful when it complemented project goals and supplemented in-person activities. The insights from this study can help other groups or states interested in building faculty networks or exploring innovative uses of technology to promote faculty learning and development.

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From Faculty Fellows to Equity-Minded Collaborators: The California Faculty Collaborative’s Story

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The story of the California Faculty Collaborative (CFC) is about human relationships and collaboration as an equitable practice for facing higher education’s challenges. Where we are now is linked to how we got here. While collaboration seems a natural human activity, Kezar and Lester (2009) note that unconscious norms, like academia’s emphasis on individual autonomy, can make it very difficult to achieve. Distinct from teamwork, cooperation, or networking, collaboration requires that a group develop shared norms, values, and responsibility through an interactive process over time. It should not be surprising that when six fellows—three from California Community Colleges (CCCs) and three from California State Universities (CSUs)—and the original hub director and state liaison (both from CSUs) came together in 2015, there was some skepticism about whether we could translate the language of national proficiency initiatives into problems that faculty identify in their own practice. We also worried that our disparate histories and locations presented obstacles to authentic collaboration. Yet, as we delved into different initiatives and taught one another, we discovered a shared commitment to equity.

If equity was an obvious starting point, it was not an easy one. We did not know how to become—or help our colleagues to become—equity-minded. We began by grappling with equity as a “threshold concept”—a concept that, once deeply understood, enables learners to see the world as experts do (Meyer and Land 2005). Just as threshold concepts in the curriculum challenge undergraduates to question prior knowledge and adopt values of academic disciplines, equity has the potential to transform our understanding of faculty roles within higher education:

- **Equity is troublesome**: it conflicts with the assumption that fairness means treating students the same (equally).
- **Equity is integrative**: once educators understand it, they see institutional processes as related rather than separate.
- **Equity is transformative**: it leads educators to view their students as possessing assets rather than deficits and to see themselves as responsible for creating conditions for students to succeed.

Learning occurred as we tackled an authentic problem together—What does it mean to be equity-minded practitioners? What does equity-minded practice look like in the classroom?
As a threshold concept, equity created conditions for collaboration—none of the fellows was an expert, so all had to risk stepping outside accustomed roles. Learning occurred as we tackled an authentic problem together—What does it mean to be equity-minded practitioners? What does equity-minded practice look like in the classroom?

Creating our hub presented a second problem too complex to be solved by individuals—another opportunity to collaborate and to labor together to produce something coherent, integrative, and new. Here, too, fellows had questions, not answers—What exactly is a “digital innovation hub”? Is there an example to follow? Moments like this rendered us vulnerable and able to acknowledge that we are not experts in adapting technology for academic purposes or even in teaching and learning. Thrust into the position of learners, we confronted within ourselves resistance to learning that we had seen—and not always known how to approach—in students. When the group did not know how to move forward with hub design, thresholds had to be crossed. One member suggested design thinking to gain understanding of the target audience.

Together we explored new digital tools (Zoom, Prezi, Slack) and developed an online collaborative process to create a dynamic hub with content curated around questions, not topics, and an easy-to-access space for faculty to meet, explore, and create something new.

The fellows also found that collaboration requires setting hierarchies aside: hierarchies of institutions (community college and university), disciplines (between and within humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences), academic rank and appointment (contingent or tenured; administrator, staff, or faculty), in addition to statuses that cling to personal identities and histories as they intersect with race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religious affiliation, educational experiences, and professional trajectories. To put it another way—collaboration is an equitable practice.

**CROSSING BOUNDARIES**

To culminate the grant-funded phase of our work, our collaborative hosted a convening in September 2016 at the College of the Canyons titled “Crossing Boundaries for Equity-Minded Teaching and Learning.” Attended by thirty educators from eleven CCCs, six CSUs, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), it marked the completion of two goals of the national Faculty Collaboratives project: (1) enabling faculty to make sense of large-scale national proficiency initiatives as tools promoting achievement of essential college learning for all students, and (2) launching a digital hub to promote professional learning opportunities to a statewide network. Our goal was to practice with faculty what works with students. After reading together and reflecting on what faculty need and want to learn to best support our students, participants imagined ourselves as a continuing community of practice. Visions of our future selves, shared via sticky notes, revealed four themes:

- becoming equity-minded practitioners (e.g., “[I will have] learned about equity in enough detail to apply it in the classroom.”)
- improving classroom practice (e.g., “[I will have] greater sensitivity to student needs.”)
- improving campus structure and culture (e.g., “[I will have] created a culture and mechanisms on campus that facilitate and support integrative learning with faculty and staff focused on equity and student success.”)
- connecting with colleagues across boundaries (e.g., “[I will know] how to be a boundary spanner inside my institution and between CSU & CCC.”)

This activity confirmed that faculty are hungry for shared professional learning and that educators across segments of public education share values.

**LASTING LEARNING**

At the Basic Skills Initiative Leadership Institute, sponsored by the California Community College Success Network (3CSN) in 2016, our team articulated a theory of change:

We believe that creating spaces (online and face-to-face) for equity-minded professional learning and learning-centered collaboration (between practitioners at CCCs and CSUs) will inspire faculty to improve (inter)disciplinary teaching practices, thereby closing achievement gaps and inequities on our campuses and in our state.

While we embraced virtual collaboration, we know that face-to-face experience built trust for crossing the equity threshold. An evolving work in progress, our hub is intended to be a space for faculty gathering, sharing, and learning. Sustaining this work without funding for faculty time presents a challenge. What we know will last is our authentic experience of professional learning: we understand the initiatives; are now familiar with equitable practices like Reading Apprenticeship, transparent teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, design thinking, empathy mapping, and faculty learning communities; and value the process of learning together. Collaboration is an equity-minded practice, both the end and the means. The ongoing work of our collaborative is to recreate that for and with colleagues.

**REFERENCES**


EAP IN is our chosen name for the statewide network of faculty who have been catalyzed through the Faculty Collaboratives project. In 2013, Indiana became a LEAP state through a resolution passed by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. There were significant goals: (1) to collaborate with other states, (2) to improve the quality of postsecondary education, and (3) to scale innovative models for teaching and learning. Leaders hoped to integrate state-level and campus-level initiatives, amplifying the impact on student learning. We launched our network eighteen months later.

GETTING STARTED

Our fledgling network was shepherded into existence by a small band of committed faculty leaders from across Indiana University, and then strengthened through the energy and enthusiasm of seven faculty fellows selected from our public institutions. A cross-institutional steering committee was formed based on recommendations from chief academic officers, and a needs analysis helped to shape initial priorities. Our early goals were ambitious. We envisioned a virtual “hub” that would enable LEAP IN to help faculty engage in national initiatives, while also filling gaps that exist on our campuses for faculty support. At the same time, we wanted a collaborative workspace for projects that our Faculty Fellows hoped to pursue. We quickly learned that needs varied across institutions, with two-year campuses wanting help with new faculty and four-year campuses concerned with shifting faculty roles and responsibilities and tensions between teaching and research. Since Indiana has no statewide faculty network, it was challenging to focus on LEAP state priorities. Faculty saw value to networking, but their interest tended toward individual professional development. Keeping the “LEAP” in LEAP IN required constant care and tending, not to mention a strategic communications plan.

We have since built a statewide steering committee. Indiana University provides leadership for the hub. Other institutions help with meetings and professional development aligned with LEAP. We have developed a website with a portal to an interactive open-access Canvas site, a “virtual hub” supporting networking and leadership development. We aspire for our hub to change as issues in undergraduate education evolve. We also recognize that state-specific foci (e.g., Transfer Single Articulation Pathways) will likely continue to need a virtual home on our hub.

LESSONS LEARNED

We have learned how to structure and to prioritize in our efforts. Communication requires us to let people know who we are and what we are about. Sustainability means creating a functional infrastructure allowing the project to live beyond the grant. Education ensures that visitors to the hub understand fundamental principles and the relevance that national proficiency initiatives carry for improvement of learning and student success. We had to learn that faculty do not intuitively understand the relevance of AAC&U’s LEAP initiative and the Degree Qualifications Profile to student success. These concepts are difficult to communicate, particularly if faculty have never thought beyond “what I teach” to “what we teach” across a degree. We had assumed that colleagues would see the value for themselves. Skeptical faculty sometimes dismiss these proficiency initiatives as irrelevant to their own practice or connected to administrative goals to standardize undergraduate education, against the values of shared governance. It is tempting to take “short cuts” with respect to communication and education by relying heavily on hyperlinks to the AAC&U website. We need trustworthy language and values that open learning-centered proficiency initiatives to faculty across the state. One fellow, Beth Goering,
contributed by formulating a communication plan to help tackle these challenges.

Overcoming inertia and finding relevance can be obstacles when the work that faculty already do has achieved merit and been deemed good of its kind by the institution. Faculty often do express passion for teaching, but that passion may not extend easily to pedagogies and practices of reform initiatives for teaching and learning. Our fellows have helped to improve the relevance of the hub by embedding work on disciplinary tuning and high-impact practices into our Canvas site, inviting faculty within their networks to contribute to it.

Currently we have a growing network of enthusiastic collaborators from public and private institutions connected through a listserv. We have successfully held two statewide conferences and have been invited to hold a standing “track” at the Indianapolis Assessment Institute each fall. We are decidedly optimistic about the future. Our leadership team and members of our statewide steering committee have expressed commitment to remain engaged for the long haul. We have models and partners in other states. We’ve found trust, shared purpose, and friendship. Senior leadership at Indiana University has taken responsibility to support this work. Connections opened through our multi-campus system to other networks, including IU’s Faculty Academy on Excellence in Teaching, known as FACET. Finally, we are exploring a self-sustaining dues-based membership process, based in part on what we have learned from LEAP Texas.

**IMPLANTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Leading change is said to entail three key stages: crafting a shared vision, implementing change, and then sustaining the change that has been implemented, often while adapting to new environmental contexts. Cultivating a shared vision across institutions and among people that did not know each other was challenging, but we have done a credible job. During the first year of the project, we leaned heavily on AAC&U publications as well as colleagues in other LEAP states who have articulated so passionately and compellingly the value of liberal education for our students as future citizens, and especially the importance of equity as a core principle. Implementation occurred primarily through the distributed projects of the faculty fellows as well as planning for the annual conference and the building out of our virtual hub. Sustaining these changes will rest heavily on the leadership of Indiana University, Ivy Tech Community College, and other campuses that are AAC&U members. We recognize that our efforts to ensure sustainability must allow for transitions in roles. Faculty members lead busy lives, move in and out of institutions, and in and out of administrative roles at more senior levels. Sustaining the network depends on distributed leadership and it must be augmented by intentional communication through social media and in-person meetings, and by way of conferences that are clearly aligned with the goals of LEAP IN.

What we know for certain after three years of the hub’s existence and two very successful conferences is that faculty are hungry to learn more about best practices in pedagogy and to converse with their colleagues about the future of teaching and learning. This hunger originates in the great passion within our faculty to ensure that students are successful. As long as that commitment holds true, dedicated faculty will take advantage of opportunities to innovate and to find support for their own learning and practice with their colleagues.

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**AAC&U MEETINGS**

**NETWORK MEETINGS**

**General Education and Assessment**
February 15–17, 2018
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Diversity, Learning, and Student Success**
March 22–24, 2018
San Diego, California

**Global Engagement and Social Responsibility**
October 11–13, 2018
Seattle, Washington

**Transforming Undergraduate STEM Education**
November 8–10, 2018
Atlanta, Georgia

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**Can Higher Education Recapture the Elusive American Dream?**
January 24–27, 2018
Washington, DC

**PRE-MEETING SYMPOSIUM**

The Power of Civic Engagement—Across Campus, Within Communities, Beyond Borders
January 24, 2018

**9TH ANNUAL EPORTFOLIO FORUM**

January 28, 2018

www.aacu.org/events
Embracing LEAP in Kentucky

Kentucky’s postsecondary efforts are guided by a five-year strategic agenda, Stronger by Degrees. This guiding document, organized around the themes of opportunity, success, and impact, highlights eleven high-level objectives. One of those objectives is to promote academic excellence through improvements in teaching and learning. Another is to improve the diversity and inclusiveness of Kentucky’s campuses through the statewide diversity planning process and related initiatives. The work of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has provided guidance and foundational support for both objectives.

Kentucky’s Public Postsecondary Education Policy for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion creates statewide definitions, developed from AAC&U’s Making Excellence Inclusive initiative, and highlights the role of high-impact practices in closing achievement gaps. The Council on Postsecondary Education continues to affirm diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values in its statewide strategic planning process. As such, the diversity, equity, and inclusion policy is completely aligned with the statewide strategic agenda, even sharing some common metrics.

The state’s objective for academic excellence centers on LEAP principles, including authentic assessment of student learning and preparation for twenty-first-century challenges by strengthening essential learning outcomes (ELOs). It also promotes pedagogical training and professional development opportunities for faculty and recognizes the critical role that faculty play in student success.

Given the importance of academic quality in the statewide agenda, the Faculty Collaboratives initiative has jump-started the thinking around faculty’s role in student success. In communicating with faculty across the state, Kentucky’s faculty fellows concluded that the best way to reach out and engage faculty is to start with everyday tasks that are important to them. Therefore, one possibility is to focus attention on in-depth discussions about signature assignments. Statewide faculty professional development going forward could focus on linking those signature assignment discussions and high-impact practices to increase student success.

Faculty conversation and collaboration initiated at these professional development events could continue on a faculty innovation hub and at local, regional, and statewide workshops. One idea proposed by the faculty fellows is the KEI program (Kentucky’s Educational Innovators, pronounced “key”). KEI faculty would be pedagogy experts and could serve as valuable resources for colleagues who wish to become more involved in national initiatives. In time, more of the state’s faculty members could become actively involved in teaching and learning communities throughout the state and in various national initiatives.

The LEAP framework helps connect the dots at the state level. The state’s general education transfer policy is based on LEAP ELOs. Some public institutions are participating in AAC&U’s Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Student Learning Outcomes, which uses authentic assessment to evaluate the ELOs of written communication, quantitative literacy, and critical thinking using AAC&U VALUE rubrics. In short, Kentucky has embraced LEAP and its focus on student engagement and deep learning.

While the various initiatives are tied together at the state level, the key to success will be “connecting the dots” for faculty. Faculty, who are often not involved in state-level policy discussions, may view these initiatives as disparate and disconnected. Or they may not see a direct connection to what they do in their classrooms. An innovation hub would not only connect faculty with initiatives and related resources but would also connect faculty with one another. An online professional learning community could be quite helpful in advancing the state’s student success efforts.

Kentucky is committed to student success, and faculty play an essential role. Kentucky’s Council for Postsecondary Education will continue to work with institutions to focus on what’s important to faculty—teaching and learning—and emphasize the role of faculty in student success.
Massachusetts Brings It All Together

As a LEAP State, Massachusetts undertook a major initiative of system-wide transformational change to strengthen undergraduate education by joining the Faculty Collaboratives. The immediate goal was to build faculty knowledge, skill, desire, and leadership to apply LEAP, Degree Qualifications Profile, and Tuning principles for the redesign of general education programs and the assessment of student learning outcomes or proficiencies, both within individual institutions and in the context of student transfer. The longer-term goal was to build ongoing faculty leadership and capacity within and across the state and to adopt and use teaching and learning practices that foster increased student success.

FIRST STEPS
The Massachusetts Transfer Pathways (MTP) is a major initiative that was created to better facilitate students’ ability to transfer from two-year to four-year institutions. This process is replacing the former system of hundreds of articulation agreements among the twenty-eight campuses within the system. Those agreements too often have served as a barrier to student access, achievement, and completion. The MTP initiative is linked to adopting Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education Carlos Santiago’s goals of improving college access and affordability; closing achievement gaps with special focus on increasing opportunities for low-income males and males of color; and raising college completion rates by overhauling developmental education, expanding student support/advising, and creating system-wide transfer pathways.

Phase 1 of the MTP began with meetings of faculty representatives by disciplines, who met with their counterparts across the state to determine the courses a student must complete in the first two years in order to transfer to a four-year institution. These foundational courses were selected by faculty from the three segments of Massachusetts higher education: community colleges, state universities, and the University of Massachusetts system. Two-day meetings of faculty in biology, chemistry, economics, history, political science, psychology, and sociology started the process. The remaining disciplines of business administration, communication and media studies, computer science, criminal justice, early childhood education, English, and physics are now underway.

Faculty segment leaders and discipline-specific faculty for the first seven disciplines have worked collaboratively to develop learning outcomes for their foundational courses by utilizing Tuning. This process is building faculty leadership and engagement by working with other state-wide faculty representatives to provide review and feedback of the final discipline-specific and course learning outcomes. Results will be disseminated by the Department of Higher Education’s (DHE) chief academic officer to the institutional academic officers and then shared with their respective departments and faculties. It is the desire of DHE that the learning outcomes will be universally used by discipline-specific faculty, as the outcomes have been developed by discipline-specific faculty working with other discipline-specific faculty who teach the same courses, and the outcomes will significantly improve students’ ability to transfer, persist, and complete.

A PROJECT IN THE MAKING
The Massachusetts innovation hub is a project in the making. Meetings were held in January 2017 with the DHE web designer to begin a learning assessment web page that will be housed within the strategic initiatives of the DHE website. This website will be a resource for institutions statewide, a showcase of their successes, and an informational resource that they can draw on, including materials from Massachusetts, from national resources, and from other LEAP states. The project leaders hope that these resources will spur campus-level innovation and transformational change.
Picking Up Where We Are in North Dakota

Katie Woehl, Associate Professor of Psychology, Valley City State University
Ryan Zerr, Director of Essential Studies and Professor of Mathematics, University of North Dakota

A recent history of robust grassroots statewide work on general education helped the North Dakota Faculty Collaboratives project build on experience. The organization driving these recent efforts, the North Dakota General Education Council (NDGEC), provided a natural and well-developed network through which the effort could advance. Because the NDGEC consistently brings together faculty from state, private, and tribal institutions to discuss issues related to general education, and often incorporates the work of national initiatives like LEAP, DQP, and VALUE, the North Dakota faculty fellows picked up where we were by seeking new ways to excite and engage faculty.

A FACULTY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The result of our surveys and conversations led us to two primary findings: faculty in North Dakota value opportunities to meet face-to-face to build relationships across institutions, and they want to see the value of national initiatives in their daily work. While faculty see value in an online resource hub, they suggested we could maximize its use if it existed primarily in support of something that purposefully convenes faculty.

Based on these findings, we have laid the foundation for a faculty community of practice that will run over an academic year and focus on one of the North Dakota learning outcomes developed through the work of the NDGEC (written communication, oral communication, quantitative literacy, creative and critical thinking, and breadth of knowledge). We have recruited faculty from across the state and in a variety of disciplines to be part of the 2017–18 North Dakota Faculty Collaboratives Community of Practice.

Our primary goals for the Community of Practice are to

- introduce and connect faculty to the DQP, VALUE rubrics, and other tools in a meaningful way;
- guide and assist faculty in applying these tools to a project in their own courses; and
- provide the opportunity for members of the community of practice to connect with one another and with other faculty in the state over shared interest in these outcomes and initiatives.

To meet these goals, our faculty fellows have initially provided members of the community of practice with readings and examples pertaining to a variety of tools and initiatives, and they encouraged dialogue through online discussion. The faculty will meet face-to-face at the NDGEC’s fall summit for an opportunity to build relationships and continue discussions and idea-sharing that began online. Following the summit, participants will have time to explore how they might use the tools to create or enhance a project in their own course that targets oral and/or written communication (with guidance from the faculty fellows as needed). Finally, participants will present their assignment ideas in a poster session at the NDGEC’s spring summit.

CONNECTING FACULTY

We will also develop an online resource hub for North Dakota. The hub will assist members of the communities of practice as they familiarize themselves with national initiatives and explore tools like the DQP. Additionally, it will provide a way for us to share participants’ assignment ideas and other artifacts that are created through this process. We would also like to use the hub for communication to announce events in the state related to higher education and best practices in an effort to make more faculty aware of these opportunities. Over time this plan will help us meet our fundamental goals of connecting faculty to each other, to information, and to tools that will help them more successfully incorporate outcome-based learning and effective pedagogical strategies in their courses. The hope is that our state’s history of collaboration on issues related to general education stretch ahead into the future, with the work inspired by the Faculty Collaboratives project a key piece in building further momentum for grassroots change.

▶ Katie Woehl, Associate Professor of Psychology, Valley City State University
Ryan Zerr, Director of Essential Studies and Professor of Mathematics, University of North Dakota
Upholding Academic Quality in Oregon

Sandra Bailey, Director, Academic Excellence, Oregon Institute of Technology
Kay Sagmiller, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning, Oregon State University

In 2007, Oregon became a LEAP State. In support of the effort, the Oregon University System (OUS) created the Learning Outcomes and Assessment (LO&A) working group, charged with aligning student learning outcomes and assessment across the seven public universities. In 2011, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission superseded the OUS. Through systemic change, LO&A continued to lead conversations statewide about the meaning and measurement of academic quality in the context of a completion-minded reform agenda.

In the intervening years, community colleges and public universities in Oregon participated in AAC&U-led LEAP and Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) projects, including the Quality Collaboratives and the Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Quality Student Learning (MSC). Recognizing the value of these activities, LO&A expanded its membership to include representatives from community colleges. State-level data on student learning and common rubrics prompted faculty conversations on assignment design and transfer of student learning based on outcomes.

LEAP-related initiatives, particularly the MSC, provide a common evidentiary framework to draw upon when working to improve and protect academic quality as state level and institutional policies move toward outcomes-based funding. In Oregon, this policy shift is embodied in the implementation of a Student Success & Completion Model, which funds public universities by degree completions. By 2020, nearly 60 percent of the state’s total university funding will be completion-based. With the advent of new completion goals comes anxiety and concern over academic quality. LEAP and the MSC have provided LO&A a framework and process to coordinate the assessment of student learning that can potentially be used across the state.

AAC&U’s Faculty Collaboratives project, with the goal to engage and mobilize faculty to lead transformational change, will elevate and support the work that LO&A has been doing for the past decade. LO&A periodically hosts an interinstitutional faculty conference, Teaching TALKS. The conference fosters cross-institutional networking and dialogue about teaching, assessment, and students’ academic growth. Though clearly valuable, these events have occurred sporadically due to inconsistent funding, lack of LO&A bandwidth, leadership changes, and shifting support at the state level.

FACULTY COLLABORATION

The vision of Oregon’s Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is to “foster and sustain high-quality, rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for education achievement beyond high school” (2016). Faculty teaching expertise influences student retention and success; faculty development, therefore, is key to meeting the HECC vision. The goal of LO&A is to create a sustainable model for annual conferences at which faculty can collaborate with colleagues. Sustainability is dependent on dedicated funding and faculty engagement in the planning and implementation of the annual event. LO&A has therefore turned to existing networks for assistance, including the interinstitutional faculty senate, libraries, general education committees, and professional organizations.

Following the lead of Phase 1 states, LO&A has connected with Centers for Teaching and Learning as collaborators in facilitating annual Teaching TALKS conferences.

Under the new model for statewide coordination of higher education that includes both community colleges and universities, Oregon is well-positioned to create a network to bring together experienced educators passionate about enhancing the student learning experience. AAC&U’s Faculty Collaboratives project has provided LO&A with the vision and support to elevate the academic quality and student success dialogues in the state of Oregon.

REFERENCE

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EAP Texas joined the Faculty Collaboratives in 2014, shortly after the state adopted six new core objectives that drive the Texas Core Curriculum. The state’s matriculation into the Faculty Collaboratives project coincided with the launch of a new fifteen-year higher education plan across Texas, 60x30TX. The title of the strategic plan serves as a reminder of the plan’s overarching goal: 60 percent of Texans aged between twenty-five and thirty-four will hold a higher education degree or certificate by 2030 (see http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/9306.PDF). The three stages of evolution for the Texas Faculty Collaboratives—an initial stage of sense making, an intermediate stage of content creation, and a third stage of building sustainable practices—frame this article as we respond to the changing landscape of higher education in Texas.

LEAP Texas is unique among the LEAP States in that it is not driven by a single institution, system of institutions, or state office. Since its 2013 inception, LEAP Texas has been a voluntary organization; more specifically, it is a collaborative established to serve the fifty public community college districts and thirty-eight public universities (many of which are associated with one of the six university systems) across the state. Currently, fifty higher education institutions are subscribed as member institutions of LEAP Texas. Beyond the membership, the mission and vision of LEAP Texas speak to state-wide consortial outcomes for faculty, students, and institutions (see http://leaptx.org).

The Faculty Collaboratives project has built on the early success of LEAP Texas and contributed to the future vision of an organization with the potential to touch the student experiences of over half a million college students. This article outlines the work LEAP Texas is doing to consider, create content for, and sustain student learning and assessment in the state and, through Faculty Collaboratives, a network of states.

STAGE 1: SENSE MAKING AND SHARING UNDERSTANDINGS
Midway through 2015, LEAP Texas recruited a small number of Faculty Fellows and Assessment Fellows from two-year and four-year public institutions. The Faculty Fellows were charged with four main activities:
1. Create networking opportunities for educators to share their experiences and ideas—with an emphasis on the use of social media.
2. Implement a hub—a virtual space that collects information and resources for educators.
3. Engage educators from across the state in conversations about assessment, the core objectives, and the application of related Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE rubrics.
4. Support educators in adopting educational practices that have been encouraged by AAC&U and other nationally recognized groups.

The assessment fellows were charged with advancing authentic assessment of student work for the Texas core objectives. LEAP Texas promoted interinstitutional assessment involving both two- and four-year colleges and universities. Eight institutions participated in the Texas Assessment Collaborative (see http://leaptx.org/development-hub/texas-assessment-collaboratives/).

Reflection and online collaboration enabled the faculty fellows to refine and clarify the purpose and charge of each activity. The hub—what it was, what it could be, and how it would work—became a focus of initial conversation associated with the project. AAC&U proficiency initiatives were viewed as crucial resources and subject matter for the hub. Proficiency initiatives are viewed as design features of learning experiences and assessment that support student learning and the application of learning beyond the classroom.
Regular conversation and exchanges of ideas led to two key outcomes in this stage: first, the work of faculty fellows was separated into individual work on AAC&U proficiency initiatives and collaborative teamwork on state core objectives (see http://leaptx.org/coreobjectives/), and secondly, the hub came to be viewed as a website which would capture information, guidance, and resources associated with the work of the fellows (see http://leaptx.org/development-hub/). In January 2016, a three-day Faculty Collaboratives conference organized by AAC&U brought together the LEAP Texas faculty fellows. By listening to other LEAP States talk about their projects, the conference provided clarity and momentum for the Texas team to begin working on projects and the hub.

STAGE 2: CONTENT CREATION AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT
Individual project work on AAC&U initiatives and collective work on the Texas core objectives crystallized during early stages of the Faculty Collaboratives project. However, taking concrete steps towards the creation of web content for the hub and considering audience engagement dominated the next stage of project activity. In terms of content, a template was created for each proficiency initiative and associated project, as well as each core objective (see http://leaptx.org/coreobjectives/teammwork/), ensuring consistent, engaging design of information that would eventually be authored by the faculty fellows throughout the project. The following web pages were created to address proficiency initiative information and projects:

- **Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE):** http://leaptx.org/development-hub/value-rubrics/
- **High-Impact Educational Practices (HIPS):** http://leaptx.org/development-hub/hips/
- **Assignment Design:** http://leaptx.org/development-hub/assignments-signature-work/

LEAP Texas promoted interinstitutional assessment involving both two-year and four-year colleges and universities. Eight institutions participated in the Texas Assessment Collaborative (see http://leaptx.org/development-hub/texas-assessment-collaboratives/). Additionally, faculty fellows began using Twitter to engage an audience across the state using #LEAPTexas and, more widely across other projects, using #FACCOLLAB. Tweets and associated use of #LEAPTexas peaked during event weeks when faculty fellows concentrated efforts to engage faculty across the state in information associated with a select core objective (most recently Personal Responsibility). The LEAP Texas mailing list, with over 400 contacts, has been a useful tool to connect institutions and professionals across the state with the work of the faculty collaboratives project.

STAGE 3: BUILDING IN SUSTAINABILITY AND THE IDEA OF THE SANDBOX
The contributions of those involved in LEAP Texas must fit around, on top of, and alongside full-time teaching and administrative loads. This is not an issue unique to the Texas Faculty Collaboratives project, but in Texas this topic triggered a productive conversation about the future and sustainability of the hub. From this discussion, two new steps were taken toward the recruitment of new faculty fellows and a new view of the hub. First, the recruitment of faculty fellows was reframed with a focus on attracting “emerging experts” interested in exploring AAC&U and LEAP proficiency initiatives and sharing the endeavors of their own professional development with colleagues across Texas. Secondly, the hub was reenvisioned not just as a site of information and exchange but as a “sandbox” where fellows could experiment with project design and information sharing to inform future best practices.

In its first eighteen months, the Texas Faculty Collaboratives project has focused on sense making and experimental content creation. Future plans will continue to focus on the needs of LEAP Texas’s audience, how to serve them best, and how to work as the faculty collaborative team membership evolves. At the same time, expect to see more of #LEAPTexas and #FACCOLLAB on Twitter as the Faculty Collaborative work continues to explore how to support higher education professionals and their contribution to student success.
High-Impact Practices for Regional Reform in Utah

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Faculty Collaborative’s initiative’s charge to create sustainable networks for innovation across state systems invites the development of a new genre of higher education reform literature, a body of work directed toward high-impact practices that are systemic, regional in scope, and sustainable. This article contributes to this charge by proposing four high-impact reform practices. Contrary to prevailing contemporary trends that rely on digital tools, the Utah faculty fellows found optimal transformation strategies in interpersonal communication and intergroup networking. Rather than investing time and resources in software platforms, websites, and social media initiatives, the Utah contingent focused its energy on grassroots relationship-building, slow-moving development of contextual understanding, and coordinated problem-solving. At the center of these relational efforts was an interest in building a climate of equity and inclusivity for students and for the professionals that serve them.

**Mid-level Strata Coordination**

Although deans, provosts, and commissioners of higher education seem the obvious choices for mobilizing systemic change, the Utah faculty fellows found that a diverse team of faculty, hybrid faculty-administrators, and mid-level officers of commissioners’ offices were better situated to effect change locally and regionally. The freedom of these individuals to network up and down the hierarchies of their local organizations and laterally across institutions enabled them to build regional networks with high degrees of social trust and stability. The faculty fellows facilitated listening sessions and workshops and organized conferences with members of eight Utah institutions. These events involved upper-level administrators, faculty-administrators, tenure-track faculty, adjunct faculty, and part-time employees. It is unlikely that upper-level administrators alone, limited by constant institutional demands, or part-time or lower-level contract employees, disempowered by workforce insecurity and financial marginalization, would have had the same degree of lateral mobility to forge successful change networks across institutions.

**Design Studio Strategies**

The Faculty Collaboratives project encouraged faculty fellows from the outset to view their work as experimental and innovative. As such, the group chose to structure the project using design studio strategies. Instead of starting with the end goal (increasing, for example, the number of professors engaging in high-impact practices), the fellows initiated the project with a problem—while teaching the majority of courses in many institutions, contingent faculty often have difficulty obtaining the training and materials needed to engage in high-impact practices. Second, the team gathered information and tested assumptions on teacher training and contingent faculty...
Fellows also spoke about reform suggestions what Utah Faculty Collaborative asked colleagues raise. Understanding this critical facet, the suggestions that some committed activists be unaware, skeptical, or hostile to the recognize that the assembled group might be effective for the different institutions. The group then fine-tuned the solutions that seemed most promising. The design studio process allows for innovation and site-specific solutions, as particular outcomes are not championed from the start but evolve through the process. The mid-level faculty/administrative composition of the team became an asset to the implementation of these solutions. Spotting similar functions among varied structures across campuses led the fellows to conclude that existing entities could be repurposed, supported, and networked.

DEEP LISTENING
The notion of “deep listening” springs from a reminder by an advisory group, Public Agenda: “Begin where people are, not where you want them to be” (Kadlec and Friedman 2010). Rather than assuming an audience has the same background, interest, and passion about a reform project, recognize that the assembled group might be unaware, skeptical, or hostile to the suggestions that some committed activists raise. Understanding this critical facet, the Utah Faculty Collaborative asked colleagues what they desired in terms of support. Fellows also spoke about reform suggestions in clear and accessible language, avoiding the “stacking” of reform initiatives on top of one another in a fragmented pile of acronyms. They understood that care had to be taken in implementing the reforms, not simply introducing them. Finally, the group needed to tie initiatives together, clarify how they communicate with and reinforce one another, and keep conversations focused on student learning and educational quality.

INTERINSTITUTIONAL NETWORK GENERATION
Our Utah Faculty Collaborative group capitalized on preexisting interinstitutional structures and networks to enhance linkages and leverage systemic change. First, they engaged the Utah Regents’ General Education Task Force and Utah System of Higher Education’s Utah Teaching Technologies Council networks. Structural differences within Utah campuses showed a lack of communication and collaboration between their Teaching Technology Directors and campus Centers for Teaching and Learning. The fellows realized that an official system-sanctioned working group could be instrumental in preparing faculty across the Utah system to incorporate the insights of LEAP, DQP, Tuning, and other reform initiatives. Utah’s team was delighted to find that some campuses were already using tools like badging and social media to prepare their full and part-time faculty for more effective teaching. It was obvious that these centers understood the unique challenges facing the faculty and that they also already had the mechanisms and structures to deploy AAC&U’s resources.

The organic solution was for the task force to create and connect to a working group of teaching and learning center directors. Advising the regents on general education, transfer, and articulation, the task force has also written LEAP outcomes into Regents’ Policy R470, defining Utah’s postsecondary general education mission. Thereby LEAP entered the mission of the newly established teaching and learning center network. These stable, policy-inscribed networks, with shared nodes of contact for communication (in effect mobilizing networks of networks), promise significant sustainable returns. The new working group is charged with creating a charter that specifies the outcomes of their combined work.

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE SYSTEMS
Unlike most Faculty Collaborative state teams, who pursued web-based solutions early in the initiative, the Utah Faculty Collaborative intentionally eschewed digital solutions in order to focus on interpersonal communication strategies. The faculty fellows used deep listening as part of a design studio strategy to understand how campuses each had unique needs and that negotiating those needs required intimate relational work. The team of commissioners and mid-level faculty and administrators were well-suited to network across institutional lines and transcend competition to build sustainable change systems. As Utah shifts focus toward developing the new general education working group to coordinate teaching, learning, and technology efforts within the frame of system-wide outcomes, the Utah Faculty Collaborative group is grateful to AAC&U for supporting solutions that address higher education’s most pressing challenges through coordination and coalition building.

REFERENCE
LEAPing into Open Learning ’17

▶ Gardner Campbell, Associate Professor of English, Virginia Commonwealth University
Beverly Covington, Senior Associate for Academic Affairs, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

It started with a combinatorial disposition, a taste for what Douglas Hofstadter calls “fluid concepts and creative analogies” (1996). Virginia has been a LEAP state since 2007, so it was natural that the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) would join the Faculty Collaboratives. As a Phase 2 Faculty Collaboratives state, Virginia took the opportunity to contribute something distinctive to the initiative.

VIRGINIA’S INNOVATION HUB

Since 2014, Virginia has embraced the cause of Open Educational Resources. Virginia’s new Open Education Advisory Committee seeks to explore the many varieties of Open Education, including Open Access and Open Pedagogical Practices. In a similar vein, Virginia’s Faculty Collaboratives “innovation hub” focuses on the fluid concept of “open” in education and looked for connections, creative analogies, and combinatorial possibilities among what Jeffrey Pomerantz and Robin Peek puckishly called the “fifty shades of open” (2016). Our hope was that this approach would also illuminate the idea and ideals of liberal education.

With encouragement and seed funding from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), liaison leadership from SCHEV, a steering committee of varied stakeholders from across Virginia, and several months of brainstorming and planning, a plan emerged. Virginia’s innovation hub would not only collect resources but also produce them. It would be a conversation hub, a learning hub, and a creativity hub. It would foster connections among educators in Virginia and reach outward to other networks of educators involved in the many varieties of open education. It would find synergies. The innovation hub would attempt to combine the energies, goals, and conceptual framework of liberal education as articulated in LEAP with the energies, research, and commitment of open educators everywhere. And it would begin this process with a bootstrapping exercise called “Open Learning ’17,” a fourteen-week learning experience designed as a connectivist MOOC (cMOOC), immersing its participants in the study and experience of what the Steering Committee called “all the opens, connected.”

SHARING RESOURCES WITH THE WORLD

Participation statistics demonstrate the energies of these communities. Nearly fifty participants’ blog sites are syndicated into the main hub via RSS (“really simple syndication”). Most participants are in Virginia, but quite a few have joined from other states. One participant is from Cairo, Egypt. From those participants have come well over three hundred blog posts, including

FIGURE 1. SCREENSHOT OF TWITTER TAGS EXPLORER AT HTTP://OPENLEARNINGHUB.NET/TAGS-ARCHIVE/#
reflections, video interviews and panel discussions, and Storified Twitter chats. Using the open-source web-annotation platform Hypothes.is, participants have linked over 250 annotations to the course readings. Over 4,000 unique tweets with the course hashtag #openlearning17 have been contributed, embedding over 2,000 hyperlinks that share resources with the world.

Figure 1 depicts an interactive display of these tweets, organized by user and viewable through a timeline, developed by Martin Hawksey of the UK’s Open University. Like all the infrastructure and resources at openlearninghub.net, Hawksey’s “Twitter Explorer” is open source and freely available. Indeed, one of the things Open Learning ’17 sought to demonstrate was how free or low-cost platforms like WordPress, Twitter, and Google Forms could support a rich set of resources across a network of individual learners. These platforms represent vital elements of the “digital ecosystem” as well as the “digital opportunity” described by Randy Bass and Bret Eynon in their 2016 AAC&U publication, Open and Integrative: Designing Liberal Education for the New Digital Ecosystem. In fact, this publication, with the authors’ participation, was the capstone text.

Resources, reflections, design principles, and a complete assessment report are visible at the hub site, http://openlearninghub.net. This site will be home to what the steering committee plans for our next steps: curation, ongoing conversation and creation, and a continued exploration of synergies between open education and AAC&U’s many LEAP programs, all focused through the goals of the Faculty Collaboratives project.

REFERENCES
n 2005, Wisconsin became the first LEAP State. After a decade of partnership with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), it is only natural that an innovation hub developed through the Faculty Collaboratives project would be relevant and welcome. The hub was intended to bring order to the burgeoning initiatives introduced by the University of Wisconsin System and AAC&U. A lattice of relationships needed to be created that would connect the initiatives and make them accessible to practitioners in a variety of settings. From the outset of this project, we had three tasks:

1. To develop a team of faculty fellows that could spearhead the project
2. To create a sustainable, dynamic socio-intellectual network that would allow practitioners to share, discuss, and craft approaches to learning that were student-centered and problem-centered
3. To keep equity-mindedness in the forefront of our thoughts

A steady stream of actionable items proved to be more productive for the group and also made our team more cohesive. Both characteristics were important to the project.

We learned that our own equity-mindedness needs to precede equity for our students; that is, practitioners need to come together to understand how their actions, institutional frameworks, and pedagogies contribute to education access and outcomes. So, how would we create a place where equity-mindedness could be developed? The power lies in collaboration, first among ourselves—and then extended to our students.

Even as we encouraged our team members to be “professionally literate” in the proficiency initiatives of the Degree Qualification Profile, VALUE, GEMs, and Tuning, their leadership needed to encourage other faculty at their home institutions and beyond to become leaders. We started with a state conference arranged around AAC&U initiatives, continued through hub presentations centered on communication and reflection, and ended with specific hub-based opportunities for sharing.

**DESIGNING OUR HUB**

The hub website is ambitious. It attempts to serve many needs of audiences from all disciplines. To some degree, this makes the hub complex. And while complexity does not always lead to easy, simple app-like interfaces and solutions, it often is necessary to explore multifaceted issues.

The team discussed, planned, implemented, rejected, and revised the hub, attempting to create the best learning space.
Formative reflection on the hub in the middle of the project resulted in flipping the question—abandoning the old structure (the “if you build it they will come” approach) for a functional inquiry—meeting people where they are and asking what they need. The homepage addresses key questions that individuals who know nothing of AAC&U initiatives might have. This was not how we started. It took a launch and a year of experience to realize you have to meet people where they are.

Supporting pages showcase initiatives with video explanations by faculty fellows, and a blog on each initiative page is hosted by one of the fellows. In this way, the team was able to connect content and application demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience (see the Faculty Collaboratives Project rubric).

For those who have been doing the work of LEAP for some time, the hub is intended to make their work visible as well as support their efforts toward publication. In collaboration with library staff at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, we developed an online submission guide with “tell me more” links to AAC&U initiatives, links for local publishing opportunities through Wisconsin’s Digital Common or nationally via Creative Commons, and resources for inclusive excellence.

The searchable collection of learning objects is a key area where submissions are showcased. We are still assessing the balance between filtering the data for a particular need versus providing an efficient user data interface.

The Innovation Hub is designed to grow and adapt and has the capacity to change by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field and incorporating multiple tools for learning. The hub has changed, moving from a top-down model to one that offers multiple points of access, a rhizomatic structure that accommodates interests and experiences. Multiple points in the hub allow users to reference resources, participate in blog discussions, learn about initiatives, and participate in intellectual salons (informal sessions designed for small numbers of participants). The salon is the area on the hub where the community of practice progresses creatively and intellectually through web conferencing.

**ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY**

At the end of the project, the team grappled with the difficult challenge of ensuring sustainability. What we have learned from our very dynamic environment in Wisconsin is that you must be willing to adapt, to change, and to roll with the punches. We are currently exploring a sustainability model that would nestle the Innovation Hub between the UW System and the campuses. We hope to position the hub so that it can encourage innovation and experimentation, creating multiple pathways to student success. It may not end up the way it began, but it will serve as a conduit for connecting skills and knowledge learned in one situation to other situations in time and space, encouraging knowledge transfer and sustainability.

As the first LEAP state, Wisconsin LEAP leaders needed to find renewal. A recent Wisconsin LEAP Assessment report recommended more attention to intentionality across and among campuses in the system. Specifically, the report says:

> Build the UW System’s Faculty Collaboratives HUB as the central repository of LEAP work, innovation, best practices and learning in Wisconsin and beyond. In the process, ramp up networked communities of practice among faculty and staff to build intentionality and capacity of the proficiency initiatives at the heart of the project.

At this writing, discussions are underway at the system and provost levels to make this happen. ⚫

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**FIGURE 1. HOMEPAGE FOR WISCONSIN INNOVATION HUB**
To promote liberal education, backed by years of research and practice, the Faculty Collaboratives project created a network of faculty and administrative leaders engaged in progressive efforts for student learning and success. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) worked directly with educators in ten states (California, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin) to broaden access to tools and frameworks and to foster collaboration and alignment. To broaden our knowledge, project leaders gathered and analyzed data using mixed methods research. We intended to gain a deeper understanding of professional learning related to the LEAP and Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) frameworks. What do faculty know about these initiatives? What do they say they need for professional learning? This article focuses on our data-gathering efforts and highlights our findings.

We wanted to understand the broad array of professional development opportunities that were offered to educators for student success—including content, focus, and availability.

**METHODOLOGY**

First, we reviewed research to understand national trends in faculty collaboration and engagement in proficiency-based teaching and learning initiatives. As “the direct, front-line drivers of student success” (FTI Consulting 2015), faculty members are critical to educational change efforts—and we wanted to know how faculty were participating in those efforts. We learned, for example, that faculty members are motivated by the collegiality embedded in teaching and learning communities (Kezar 2015). We also learned that faculty who spend time improving pedagogy also set “significantly higher learning expectations for their students” (National Survey of Student Engagement 2014, 20). Additionally, faculty use “assessment results for instructional improvement” (Ewell et al. 2011, 10). We wanted to take these national findings and go deeper into professional learning in the project states.

In 2015, as a member of the original FC staff team, I interviewed six project leaders from California, Indiana, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin during a statewide faculty development workshop. During 2015–16, I also talked with sixteen people (mostly faculty) from multiple campuses across two states. I scheduled the interviews at statewide conferences and approached the campus practitioners through convenience sampling. These interviews helped project staff understand the professional development needs in these five states.

To enhance the interview data, I designed a Qualtrics survey for faculty and administrators in the ten project states. Project leaders shared the survey through state-based faculty listservs during spring 2016. We wanted to understand the broad array of professional development opportunities that were offered to educators for student success—including content, focus, and availability. We hoped to identify trends, as well as gaps, in faculty capacity-building and leadership. We wanted to flag what faculty knew about LEAP, DQP proficiency, and student success initiatives. Out of 488 respondents who started our survey, 353 (72 percent) completed it. Faculty made up 74 percent of the respondents (51 percent tenured/tenure track; 14 percent nontenure track, full-time; 9 percent nontenure track, part-time) and 28 percent identified as administrators (some respondents identified as both
ensuring that underserved students don’t fall through the cracks, particularly as “new” projects take hold.

While interviewing campus practitioners during statewide convenings, I explored their participation in professional development for student learning. Practitioners mentioned activities organized by campus CTL centers and local/regional/statewide workshops on learning outcomes assessment, digital learning, and equitable/inclusive practices. Like the project leaders, practitioners talked candidly about their interest in student learning and success. They shared that they are always pressed for time. They often feel isolated and sometimes unsure how to implement the practices they learn at conferences. Several discussed state budget cuts and the lack of compensation for faculty/staff participation in workshops, as some administrators suggest “doing less with less.” Two interviewees stated that faculty are “doing more with less,” placing student learning/success above everything else.

I also asked practitioners about their familiarity with the national initiatives discussed by conference leaders/organizers (see table 3). Several practitioners said they knew “very little” or “zero” about the initiatives, while a few said they were “pretty” or “fairly” familiar with some or most of the initiatives. A few were very familiar with almost all. Of the initiatives discussed at the conferences, LEAP and VALUE were most familiar to campus practitioners. When interviewees expressed familiarity with VALUE, several mentioned their participation in assessment workshops. One noted an introduction to LEAP through an assessment workshop held at the system level. Several stated that although they weren’t directly aware of these initiatives, they were engaged with the concepts and the work associated with these efforts. In other words, the work itself wasn’t necessarily “new” to them.

TABLE 1. WORKSHOP INCENTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCENTIVES</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>SOME YES/ SOME NO</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Were the workshops that you participated in free for faculty and staff?</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were these workshops scheduled at a time that you were available?</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did these workshops include a stipend?</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were these workshops connected to faculty reward structures (e.g., badge, certificate, employment review)?</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“included a stipend,” and 93 percent of the respondents reported that some or none of the workshops were “connected to faculty reward structures” (see table 1).

When we surveyed practitioners in the ten project states about the types of workshops they typically participated in (offering a prescribed list based on a brief online review of professional development offerings across the country), we found the highest levels of engagement in assessment and pedagogical workshops, followed by workshops that focus on high-impact practices (e.g., writing-intensive assignments, collaborative projects, diversity/global learning, service learning, undergraduate research), diversity/inclusion, and “general professional development” (see table 2). In this same list, respondents reported lowest levels of engagement in workshops that focus on transfer, cocurricular learning, and Title IX/civil rights. T/TTF reported higher levels of engagement than NTTF in all of the categories of workshops listed in the survey, with the exception of workshops on new faculty orientation for contingent faculty and student learning (e.g., learning sciences, student development, student motivation).

Faculty emphasis on learning outcomes assessment reflects institutional priority (Kuh 2014; Hart Research Associates 2015), but it also links to prior research demonstrating that faculty do focus on assessment—and they use assessment results to improve their course instruction (Ewell et al. 2011; Paulson 2012; National Survey of Student Engagement 2014). Assessment results not only include course-level assessments (e.g., capstone projects and rubrics), but also programmatic/institutional student success data—which can inform faculty pedagogical practices, particularly when those data are disaggregated by student demographics (Paulson 2012). Although institutions are expanding traditional notions of student success data (e.g., retention and graduation rates) to include achievement in learning outcomes or high-impact practices (HIPs), many institutions are not yet disaggregating these expanded data (Hart Research Associates 2015). Our survey backs this up; close to half of our respondents reported accessing disaggregated retention or graduation rates on their campuses, while only 29 percent of the respondents reported accessing disaggregated learning outcomes data (versus 62 percent of the respondents who reported accessing aggregated learning outcomes data). Although learning outcomes assessment has become a huge focus in higher education, many institutions have yet to meaningfully and extensively track student achievement in learning outcomes. Nor do they track participation in HIPs (Hart Research Associates 2015), which have been proven to benefit all students, especially underserved students (Kuh 2008).

We also asked survey respondents about their familiarity with a set of initiatives for student learning (see table 3). We chose this list because the initiatives were either related to or convergent with LEAP and the DQP. Many, but not all, are housed at AAC&U. Respondents reported highest levels of familiarity with HIPs, LEAP, VALUE, and Faculty Collaboratives. These findings echo the interview data cited above and reflect the work of the FC project. Familiarity (and engagement, per open-ended responses) with HIPs is notable, reflecting a deep level of commitment to student success. This finding may indicate some additional self-selection bias in the survey (i.e., the invitation email may have attracted campus practitioners who are engaged in this kind of work), but it also indicates general awareness of educational practices that are known to benefit all students (Kuh 2008).

Most survey respondents, however, were largely unfamiliar with these initiatives. This finding may underscore the need for stronger public messaging about these initiatives. It also highlights the need to avoid jargon and prevent “acronym over-

### TABLE 2. WORKSHOP CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGGAGEMENT IN WORKSHOPS/CAMPUS EFFORTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING/SUCCESS</th>
<th>TOTAL RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tools and Approaches to Assess Student Learning (e.g., capstone projects, eportfolios, rubrics)</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy (e.g., active learning, collaborative learning, digital teaching and learning strategies, integrative learning)</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Impact Learning Practices (e.g., diversity/global learning, first-year experiences, internships, service learning, undergraduate research, writing-intensive courses)</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Competence</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Professional Development (e.g., grant writing, library services, tenure process)</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Curricular Design/Reform</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Faculty Orientation for Tenure-Track Faculty</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Design</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Faculty Orientation for Contingent Faculty</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning (e.g., learning sciences, student development, student motivation)</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX/Civil Rights</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocurricular Learning</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Pathways and Programs</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
load,” as one faculty interviewee stated, when introducing campus change efforts. As another survey respondent put it, “I’m so tired of having jargon attached to practices that have been effective for decades.” We conclude that leaders can establish entry points that are familiar to faculty—and honor the work they’re already doing, meeting them where they are.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Research findings from this project provide helpful lessons for educators and administrators seeking to implement change on their campuses via professional development. For instance, the names/acronyms of initiatives are less important than connecting to work campus practitioners are already doing—and linking this work to campus reward structures (Truong et al. 2016). As faculty roles change, institutions must find ways to include contingent faculty in professional development. Working equitably with contingent faculty by, for example, offering free, incentivized, and conveniently scheduled or online workshops (Truong et al. 2016), would benefit the majority of students since contingent faculty represent the majority of faculty on campuses (The Delphi Project n.d.).

It’s critical to disaggregate student success data to uncover inequity in student achievement and provide practitioners the opportunity to understand how they might best serve all students. The key is to “inextricably combine” equitable practices and “advanced pedagogies” with cultural competence and inclusivity (Mack et al. 2015, 8), and place those intersections at the center of faculty work, making faculty “agents of change” on campus (Witham et al. 2015, 30).

We also found that assignment design workshops provide potentially impactful entry points for faculty engaging in reform. Assignments are often “the sole province of the faculty” (Kuh 2014, 3), and assignment design workshops “put assessment directly in the hands of faculty, who are . . . best positioned and distinctly qualified to make judgments about the quality of student work” (Hutchings et al. 2014, 6).

Research demonstrates that assessment is a clear priority for campuses, and many faculty are engaging in assessment efforts in their courses. To further advance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIATIVES</th>
<th>VERY FAMILIAR</th>
<th>I KNOW ONLY A FEW THINGS ABOUT IT</th>
<th>I’VE HEARD OF IT, BUT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT IT IS</th>
<th>NOT FAMILIAR</th>
<th>TOTAL RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High-Impact Practices (HiPs)*</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>369</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP)*</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE)*</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Collaboratives*</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education Maps and Markers (GEMs)*</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Matters</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSC)*</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuning Initiative</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>358</td>
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<td>DQP Assignment Library</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>362</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLOA Assignment Design Charrettes</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making Excellence Inclusive (MEI)*</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete College America</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Equity Scorecard</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Collaboratives (QC)*</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>362</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL)*</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>364</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadmap Project for Community Colleges*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Initiative is fully or partly housed at AAC&U
learning outcomes assessment on campus, administrators and CTL staff can take steps to ensure that faculty have ownership of this work (Kuh 2014). Creating communities of practices (COPs) can aid in this goal. Faculty want “the opportunity to dialogue with one another” (Truong et al. 2016), and COPs can bring faculty together across programs, institutions, or regions and "generate greater buy-in among faculty for the work" while providing a pathway to sustainability of project or program efforts (Kezar 2015, 19–20).

COPs require a diverse group of leaders who can ignite sparks and inspire change within a diverse group of faculty. Equity issues, however, undergird these potential collaborations. Of the faculty members that I interviewed, two had extensive experience facilitating conferences or workshops on teaching and learning. Both were white men. In contrast, two other faculty members reported no prior engagement in student success conferences/workshops. One expressed a deep interest in continuous engagement, and the other took time to seek out workshops and sometimes paid for them out of pocket. These two faculty members were women of color. Although it’s not possible to make generalizable conclusions about faculty through such a small set of interviews, the inequity of opportunities available for diverse faculty leaders has certainly been documented (Clayton-Pedersen et al. 2016).

Faculty are dealing with heavy loads. Understanding how to apply tools and frameworks requires time, effort, and continuity. Additionally, faculty benefit from mentoring—and invitations to become leaders for the work. The faculty member I cited above, who was interested in becoming a leader for faculty development, was really excited to engage more deeply on her campus and in her state; her energy was palpable. Institutions must capitalize on this kind of energy and equitably support faculty as educators and leaders for student success.

REFERENCES

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Shifting How We Think About Faculty Work

Anne V. Kelsch, Director of Faculty & Staff Development, University of North Dakota

In the Progressive Era, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis contended that states should operate as “laboratories for democracy.” Looking for ways to collectively respond to the social and economic inequities of the early twentieth century, progressives experimented with policies and programs that ultimately changed how we think about the individual’s relationship to government and the balance of rights and responsibilities citizens and corporations have within the modern industrialized state.

The Progressives worked in their local context as a vanguard of thoughtful practitioners seeking pragmatic solutions to sociopolitical/educational problems. Although the analogy isn’t perfect, the aim of the Faculty Collaboratives project is as radical as the progressive impulse: to shift how we think about our individual and collective responsibilities as educators. Faculty Collaboratives seek to create an environment in which every student benefits from the full potential of a liberal education, ultimately to work toward a healthier democracy and future. Society needs higher education to undertake this practical experimentation. But how do we build support for educators to accomplish the broader change we need?

Participants in the Faculty Collaboratives generated energy and shared ideas for a cultural shift. The project itself arose from an acknowledgment that longstanding and proven approaches, referred to by an alphabet soup of acronyms, have yet to fundamentally change the conversation or bring participation of growing numbers of educators. If the potential of evidence-based practices within LEAP and the DQP is to be reached on a broad scale, institutions need to confront fundamental “misalignments.” It is no secret that the relationship between what we know works and what institutions choose to invest in and reward is off kilter. Shamefully, we have yet to effectively address this reality. Institutions spend millions of dollars competing for students but put a fraction of that into faculty development or learning initiatives that will ensure those students succeed. Resources that support sound pedagogical and curricular practices have greater potential than most institutional investments to reap significant learning, retention, and on-time graduation gains. Yet we continue to hear the longstanding lament that overburdened faculty (many part-time and underpaid) shoulder pedagogical and curricular innovations that go unrewarded in merit and salary decisions.

Jonathan Rossing and Melissa Lavitt (2016) make the initially counterintuitive argument that faculty are “neglected learners.” Raised within an intellectual culture that values narrow research, most are ill-prepared to provide what the twenty-first century requires of higher education. Colleagues who do faculty development work see faculty hungry for professional learning and eager to think about ways of interacting with students and communities that lead to mutual success. Often institutions demand that faculty do this intense work of connecting, touting innovation and engagement in mission statements and strategic plans. But few institutions dismantle the structures that block, fail to reward, and disincentivize that effort. Rarely are faculty afforded the time, resources, and help to rethink and realign their work. Much of what has been successful in the Faculty Collaboratives comes back to supporting faculty in exploring and developing genuine solutions that are responsive to their students, their classrooms, and their community. But a crucial question at this juncture is whether those who do so will thrive in academia because of, rather than in spite of, their investment.

Ultimately, if this effort is going to be the catalyst for radical reform, it must move beyond engaging faculty to engaging the underlying structure and culture of higher education. In confronting the “wicked world problems” of the early twentieth century, Progressives radically altered our thinking about society. We need to radically alter how we think about faculty work.

REFERENCE

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises nearly 1,400 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, research universities, and comprehensive universities of every type and size.

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