



*Center for
Community College
Student Engagement*

Faculty Discussion Guide

Teaching and Learning Within a Guided Pathways Framework

A PLAYBOOK

INTRODUCTION

What follows is a discussion guide that can be used to collect information from faculty about their experiences with innovative teaching practices.

To access the full CCCSE Focus Group Toolkit, visit <https://cccse.org/resources/focus-groups>. Featured on this page is the Focus Group Manual, which provides comprehensive guidance around planning and conducting focus groups with students, faculty, and staff. This manual contains several appendix resources, such as templates for invitation emails and consent forms as well as sample intake survey questions and basic focus group opening questions. In addition, the Toolkit includes a variety of discussion guides (including this one) devoted to a diverse array of topics important to community college student engagement and success.

FACULTY DISCUSSION GUIDE

OUTCOME #1

To learn what institutional policies, practices, and processes promote effectiveness and success for faculty, specifically as they relate to student success.

1. What inspired you to become a community college instructor? Did someone approach you about the possibility of teaching at a community college? Did you seek it out on your own?
2. What do you feel you bring to your role as a community college instructor? What makes you an effective teacher (e.g., knowledge/experience in your field, good teaching skills, ability to relate well with students, other)?
3. What kind of professional development opportunities does your college provide to help faculty develop more effective teaching and learning strategies?
 - a. How do you work with other faculty at your college to support improvement in teaching practices? What about part-time faculty?
 - b. Can you describe a time when you've shared teaching strategies with colleagues? Or when you have successfully implemented a strategy you learned from a colleague?
 - c. When you first started teaching at this college, were you assigned a faculty mentor? Have you served as a mentor?
 - d. What do you do on your own to stay abreast of engaging and effective teaching practices?

- e. What are some of the incentives offered for faculty who engage in professional development opportunities and/or undertake this type of teaching? (Intrinsically motivated rewards?)

OUTCOME #2

To understand the engaging practices that innovative faculty are using in their classes.

- 4. Think about a specific course in which you make the most use of an engaging practice. Go through the process of designing a course. What do you think about as you are designing a course?
 - a. What resources have been helpful?
 - b. Where did you find these resources?
 - c. As you are designing a course, do you think about how you will know whether learning is going on, what you will observe when it is happening, and how you will assess that it is happening? Describe that process.
 - i. How is student self-reflection part of the assessment process?
 - ii. What tools do you use that help students document and monitor their learning (e.g. electronic portfolios)?
 - d. How do you incorporate course-level learning outcomes into your course design and assessment processes?
 - e. If program-specific learning outcomes are incorporated into your course design and assessment processes, how do you do that?
 - i. How are program-level outcomes tied back to institutional-level outcomes or mission statements?
 - ii. How is program-level work tied to the larger vision for student success at the institutional level?
 - iii. How has your college integrated feedback from employers to improve program-level learning outcomes for graduates?
 - f. How does your college measure student achievement of learning outcomes?
 - i. Is this assessment at the course, program, or institutional level? [Probe about assessment at the college, program, and faculty level. For example, do faculty see grading as relevant to this discussion? To what degree do they see a connection between measuring success at the course level and measuring success at the program or institutional levels?]
 - ii. Is the assessment disaggregated by student demographics/characteristics?
 - iii. How are the assessment data shared? How are the data used to improve teaching and learning strategies?

5. To what extent have you integrated active and applied learning experiences (e.g., apprenticeships, field work, group projects, clinical placements, service learning, etc.) into your courses?
 - a. Why did you decide to include these experiences in your courses?
 - b. How did you learn about how to incorporate them into your courses?
 - c. How did you identify community partners to implement these applied learning activities?
 - d. How did your students respond to these experiences?
 - e. How do you know that these experiences were effective? (Data or success stories?)
 - f. Did you notice a difference in student learning compared to other classes where these types of experiences were not integrated?

6. Paint a picture of what collaborative learning looks like in your courses.
 - a. How are your groups chosen? Do your groups change from one project to the next?
 - b. What encouraged you to incorporate collaborative learning?
 - c. How do your students respond to it?
 - d. What do you observe that indicates your students are learning the course content? If another instructor were to try this in their classroom, what should they look for?
 - e. Let's move from talking about collaboration at the course level to collaboration at the program level. What does collaboration look like at the program level at your college?

7. How are your activities structured so that all students are engaged? How do you monitor that all students are engaged? What strategies do you use if you notice a student is not engaged?
 - a. Let's continue discussing when everything is clicking just right. You feel like students are learning, everyone is getting what they need from the class. Describe that class. What's going on? What are you doing? What are students doing? How are people working and learning in that class? Describe one of your typical classes in which all students are engaged.
 - b. What does equitable participation look like in your courses? How do you assess equitable participation?

8. How do you incorporate cultural awareness and inclusivity into your classes?
 - a. Have you taken any kind of cultural competence training?
 - b. How would you distinguish equity from equality from diversity? (Are these terms fundamentally different or more or less the same to you?)

9. What percentage of the time would you say you spend lecturing? What percentage of the time would you say you devote to students working with other students? Do you intentionally structure your class time to incorporate different types of instruction? Why or why not?
10. What specific things have you done to really captivate your students—to pull them in and engage their interest?
11. What would you say are the most important things you can do to help your students succeed? Inside the classroom? Outside the classroom?
12. What is the biggest challenge to implementing engaging teaching strategies? How have you overcome this challenge?

SUMMARY AND CLOSE

13. Can you tell us about a favorite moment where you felt your work made a difference?
14. What advice would you give a new, just beginning community college faculty member?