

Teaching & Learning Toolkit

A Research-Based Guide to Building a Culture of Teaching & Learning Excellence



Achieving the Dream™

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *ATD Teaching and Learning Toolkit* draws on a wide body of research and innovative practice at community colleges nationwide. The lead authoring team for the *Toolkit* consists of:

Bret Eynon, Associate Provost & AVP for Academic Affairs at LaGuardia Community College (Retired), ATD Teaching & Learning Coach, and Senior Fellow with the Designing the Future(s) of the University initiative at Georgetown University

Jonathan Iuzzini, Director of Teaching and Learning, Achieving the Dream

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This publication would not be possible without the extraordinary work of colleges that are bringing greater attention to teaching and learning to improve student success. We thank all of the educators who have devoted their time to these efforts and who shared their stories with us.

The ATD Teaching and Learning Toolkit adapts and integrates elements of the *New Learning Compact: A Framework for Professional Learning and Educational Change*, co-authored by Randy Bass, Bret Eynon, and Laura M. Gambino. Published in 2019 by Every Learner Everywhere, the Framework is licensed by the authors under a Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License, and used in the *ATD Teaching and Learning Toolkit* with the authors' full permission.

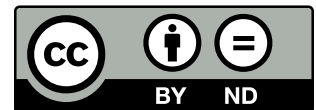
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About Achieving the Dream

Achieving the Dream leads a growing network of more than 277 community colleges committed to helping their students, particularly low-income students and students of color, achieve their goals for academic success, personal growth, and economic opportunity. ATD is making progress in closing equity gaps and accelerating student success through a unique change process that builds each college's institutional capacities in seven essential areas. ATD, along with nearly 75 experienced coaches and advisors, works closely with Network colleges in 44 states and the District of Columbia to reach more than 4 million community college students.



Achieving the Dream™

Achieving the Dream is pleased to share this inaugural version of our *Teaching & Learning Toolkit*. Grounded in research and informed by the strong work of many of our network colleges, we have designed this resource to support college teams in building institutional capacity in teaching and learning.

Our recent work in two key teaching and learning initiatives—*Engaging Adjunct Faculty in the Student Success Movement* and the *Open Educational Resources (OER) Degree initiative*—has yielded deep learning for us and our colleges. We have gained considerable insight into how educators and college leaders collaborate to create new opportunities for professional learning done well, how educators leverage evidence-based practices to support student learning and success inside and outside of the classroom, and how institutions reinforce the centrality of teaching and learning to their student success mission through their policies and practices. We have recently begun to leverage these learnings with colleges in the Achieving the Dream Network, offering in-person and virtual coaching to support your teaching and learning capacity building.

This *Toolkit* synthesizes research from the field and stories from our colleges and offers you and your team a vast array of worksheets and planning templates to take this work forward at your institution. Our goal is that college teams of faculty, faculty/educational developers, Student Affairs professionals, and Academic Affairs leaders will use this resource as you collaborate to change your institutional culture. ATD colleges have worked hard over the past 15 years to build cultures of evidence. It is now time to build on that foundation as we build cultures of excellence in teaching and learning. We hope this *Toolkit* will offer a roadmap as you strengthen your work in this key capacity area.

As we release this *Toolkit* in August 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare our nation's health and economic inequalities. The pandemic has surfaced anti-Asian bigotry and hatred, has hit our Native American communities with force, has illuminated health disparities in impact, access and treatment for Black and Latinx communities, and has exposed us in tangible ways, beyond disaggregated data, to the vulnerabilities of the students who need us the most. We are also reeling from witnessing the legacy and depth of systemic racism in practice through the senseless killings of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, who are but a few of the many lives cut short, sending a wave of deep introspection and community action across our country. Our students and communities are depending on the response, the relevancy, the resiliency, the

Addressing equity on community college campuses requires a systemic approach that permeates the institution in policy and practice. The role of faculty is essential in creating campus climates that challenge, inspire, and promote critical thinking and the exchange of ideas that will help to cultivate citizens and community leaders of action.

strength, and the adaptability of their local community college to address in an intentional and bold way the path forward for education and opportunity for all. Addressing equity on community college campuses requires a systemic approach that permeates the institution in policy and practice. The role of faculty is essential in creating campus climates that challenge,



Dr. Karen Stout with 2020 DREAM Scholars, DREAM Scholar alumni, and Dr. Joye Hardiman

inspire, and promote critical thinking and the exchange of ideas that will help to cultivate citizens and community leaders of action. The work of faculty, staff, administration and community partners in cultivating college communities that are free of micro-aggressions, representative of the populations that they serve, skillful in culturally relevant practices, and intentional in development of pedagogical approaches, programs, business practices, and support services that propel economic opportunity and community impact is the mighty imperative that we must all work towards with a sense of pace and urgency. Achieving the Dream's racial equity work has moved even more boldly into the center of its mission and therefore its work with community colleges, including developing webinars and professional learning summits and providing services and resources for institutions in and outside of the Network.

We must now build adaptive capacity to help our communities heal and recover from two pandemics: the pandemic of COVID-19 and the pandemic of systemic racism. In times of rapid change like now, the ability to be flexible and to adapt is critical. Research shows that many organizations are not well equipped to handle the uncertainty, the unpredictability, the volatility, and the complexity that characterize disruptive times. But ATD colleges that have worked on strengthening their Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT) fundamentals are prepared. These seven fundamental capacity areas are rooted in principles of change management: leadership commitment to change; embracing the power of data to inform decision making; communicating why change is needed; restructuring core operations, policies, and procedures to effect change; bringing people together to plan and execute change; fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement; and centering equity in all organizational decisions. We are seeing colleges leverage their strengths in these areas as they position themselves to be responsive to COVID-19. Many of our colleges are moving from strategic planning to scenario planning. You are doing strategic resource allocation in new ways. You are preparing for

multiple potential futures and a “new normal” when the new academic year begins this fall.

The framework and resources provided in this *Toolkit* will support our institutions as we respond to the pandemic of COVID-19 and the pandemic of systemic racism. Over the past few years, ATD has begun to argue that we must focus new attention and energy on teaching and learning, that to move the needle on student success in a really meaningful way, we must support the work of full-time and adjunct faculty inside and outside of the classroom. We must design our student success efforts at an institutional level so that faculty are at the table, helping to lead this critical work. Educators are our students' primary and most frequent point of contact, regardless of whether this communication is face-to-face or virtual. It is important, now more than ever, to invest in building institutional capacity in teaching and learning.

Our DREAM 2020 opening plenary speaker, James Fallows, said, “Community colleges are America's institutions of the moment.” This rings even more true today. That localness, innovation, and commitment to work hard to find solutions is at the center of our current response and will be at the heart of our recovery as a sector. I want to thank all the faculty, staff, and administrators for the work that you're doing on the front lines of the student success movement. These are difficult times, and your resolve and commitment to create compassionate, student-centered institutions will improve the lives of our students and their families and communities.

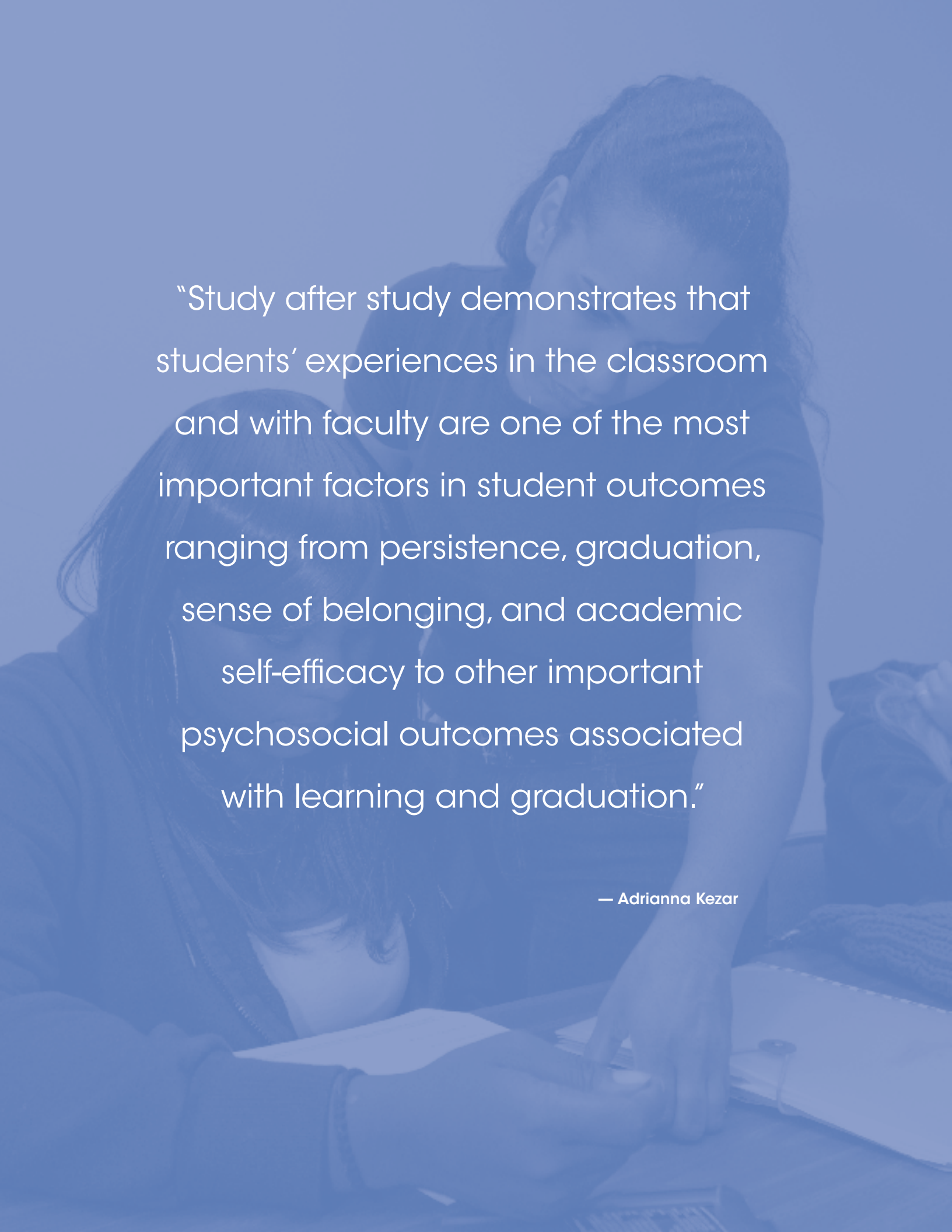
Sincerely,

Dr. Karen A. Stout

President & CEO
Achieving the Dream
July 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Title	Page
Introduction	Reforming our Reforms	6
Chapter 1	Evidence-Based Pedagogy & Practice	22
Chapter 2	Supporting Student Success	42
Chapter 3	A Community of Learner/Teachers	66
Chapter 4	Strategic Action to Support Teaching & Learning	102
Chapter 5	A Hub for Innovation & Change Strengthening Your College’s Professional Learning Infrastructure.	136
Appendix	Teaching & Learning in Times of Upheaval	162



“Study after study demonstrates that students’ experiences in the classroom and with faculty are one of the most important factors in student outcomes ranging from persistence, graduation, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy to other important psychosocial outcomes associated with learning and graduation.”

— Adrianna Kezar

Reforming Our Reforms

Achieving the Dream is strengthening its focus on a key element of educational achievement: learning and teaching. Guided by new research, we encourage college leaders to support enhanced learning and teaching excellence by providing faculty and staff educators with high-impact professional learning opportunities and engaging them as collaborative partners in all student success initiatives. In this *Toolkit*, we offer resources designed to help college teams advance this strategic effort.

In recent decades, colleges and higher education organizations nationwide have launched multiple initiatives to build student success. Spotlighting the goal of “completion,” these groups have helped many campuses make substantial structural changes and focus concerted effort on improved student outcomes. ATD has played a prominent role in this work, supporting hundreds of community colleges nationwide in the effort to build success for students.

Now, ATD and other education reform networks increasingly recognize that greater success will require a sharper focus on the quality of learning and teaching and strategies that support educators. In a recent talk entitled *The Urgent Case*, ATD President & CEO Karen Stout signaled this change:

If we are to put students at the center, excellent teaching and support for quality instruction must be at the core of our work. Creating greater urgency for teaching and learning in institutional reform is long overdue... But the onus cannot be solely on faculty to do more.

They need support and time for more reflective practice and to participate in ongoing collaborative professional development. They need support and incentives to enable them to teach and learn in new ways.¹

We are strengthening network-wide attention to learning and teaching and the professional development processes necessary to support quality instruction. We recognize improved teaching and learning as critical to our goals of increasing student success and advancing equity in American society. This *Toolkit* offers resources for cross-functional teams to use as they build a culture of teaching and learning excellence at ATD colleges.

This *Teaching and Learning Toolkit* is a preliminary version of a resource for our entire network. It will be revised through field testing and engagement with educators nationwide, leading to publication of a refined *Toolkit* in 2021. This process reflects our commitment to supporting our network colleges in building institutional cultures of excellence in teaching and learning.

¹ Stout, K.A. (2018). *The urgent case: Focusing the next generation of community college redesign on teaching and learning*. Dallas Herring Lecture, Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, North Carolina State University. <https://www.achievingthedream.org/resource/17642/the-urgent-case-focusing-the-next-generation-of-community-college-redesign-on-teaching-and-learning>

Teaching & Learning in Higher Education

Learning and teaching stand at the core of higher education. This comes as no surprise to faculty, particularly community college faculty, who have long focused on teaching and whose efforts have generated many successful innovations. Yet, in broader conversations about higher education, the vital importance of teaching has been overshadowed by other issues. “An odd feature of the public policy discussion of higher education is the near absence of attention to the quality of teaching,” wrote Sandy Baum and Michael McPherson, who led the Commission on Undergraduate Education for the prestigious

Guided by new research, we encourage college leaders to support enhanced learning and teaching excellence by providing faculty and staff educators with high-impact professional learning opportunities and engaging them as collaborative partners in all student success initiatives.

American Academy of the Arts and Sciences. “In higher education, questions about what and how much students are learning and how their learning is related to the quality of instruction they receive tend to take a back seat. Instead, questions about college admissions, pricing and cost, debt, and financial returns dominate the news and policy discussion.”²

This oversight is not limited to the media and public policy. It’s deeply embedded in the structures and cultures of higher education itself. Status is bestowed on colleges and universities based on their research output rather than undergraduate teaching quality. Support for ongoing improvement in the craft of teaching has been erratic at best, an afterthought at many institutions. Meaningful assessment of learning—an essential tool for improvement—has only recently gained visible traction. The failure to value teaching

quality extends to the ways faculty themselves are educated. An alien visitor observing graduate programs where future faculty are trained might conclude that teaching was almost irrelevant to faculty work. As one engineering educator who studied the field once commented, “College teaching may be the only skilled vocation that neither requires prior training of its practitioners nor provides it to them on the job.”³

Student success movements of the past two decades have largely replicated this pattern. According to the Aspen Institute’s Josh Wyner, “Our reform conversations center on everything but teaching.”⁴ Reform efforts such as Completion by Design, Complete College America, Guided Pathways, and ATD have spurred attention to advisement, admissions, and curricular reorganization, but have not prioritized instructional quality and professional learning. “Focusing on teaching and learning is still not central to the field’s overall theory of change,” Karen Stout has argued. “We still have much more to do

to build a deep focus on pedagogy and to support our colleges in building a culture of teaching and learning excellence.” Partially as a result, Stout contends, the impact of a decade of higher education reform has not fully met expectations:

Our collective reform efforts have not yielded the desired results. By almost any measure, as community colleges, we are still not meeting our goals, particularly for low-income students and students of color who now make up most of the students at our nation’s community colleges.⁵

With this in mind, Stout suggested, “we are now in the stage of ‘reforming our reforms.’” Building on the strides made in advancing cultures of evidence, ATD is now focusing increased attention on strategies that help institutions create cultures

2 Baum, S., & McPherson, M. (2019). Improving teaching: Strengthening the college experience. *Daedalus*, 148(4), 5–13.

3 Brent, R., & Felder, R. M. (2003). A model for engineering faculty development. *International Journal of Engineering Education*, 19(2), 234–240.

4 Wyner, J. (2014). *What excellent community colleges do: Preparing all students for success*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

5 Stout, K. A. (2018). *The urgent case: Focusing the next generation of community college redesign on teaching and learning*. Dallas Herring Lecture, Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research, North Carolina State University. <https://www.achievingthedream.org/resource/17642/the-urgent-case-focusing-the-next-generation-of-community-college-redesign-on-teaching-and-learning>



of excellence in teaching and learning and position faculty as leaders in the work of equity-focused educational change. Initial efforts in this direction include ATD's work with Open Educational Resources and our initiative focused on support for adjunct faculty. We have also expanded on our ICAT and now offer colleges a diagnostic tool to help them better understand the landscape of teaching and learning on their

campus. Our Holistic Student Support work addresses the role of faculty in supporting student learning and development outside the classroom as well as inside. This *Toolkit* aims to advance campus-based efforts to support all educators in using evidence-based practices, to build campus cultures of teaching and learning excellence, and to help the entire ATD network strengthen our work around this key issue.



SPOTLIGHT • SIDEBAR INTRO. 1

Teaching and Learning in a Time of Upheaval

As this *Toolkit* was being prepared, the world changed. First, the COVID-19 pandemic swept the country, disrupting higher education along with the rest of our national life. We are painfully aware of the challenges that this situation has created for students, educators, and entire institutions.

Then, in late May, the brutal murder of George Floyd, coming on the heels of centuries of racial injustice, sparked a passionate national self-examination and debate. As we write, the movement around police violence, justice, and inequality in American society continues to evolve and raise powerful questions for all.

In response to these developments, we have created an Appendix that spotlights the implications of these

developments for teaching and learning and suggests possible strategies for campus teams. This Appendix cannot be comprehensive—that will take many new books and unfolding conversations—but we could not ignore these developments as the *Toolkit* went to press.

While we cannot predict the future with any clarity at the time of this writing, we remain firmly convinced that the challenges we face will underscore rather than diminish the importance of quality teaching and learning. We must advance teaching and learning for the sake of our students—and our institutions. The Appendix represents an initial attempt to consider the implications of this new situation for those seeking to advance equity-focused teaching and learning on their campuses.

Evidence-Based Change

Chapter 1 of this *Toolkit* summarizes the growing body of research that demonstrates the value of evidence-based teaching practices and their impact on student learning. It highlights key

Changing pedagogy at scale requires broad effort. Faculty must be engaged to adapt, test, and refine new approaches to fit campus contexts. Faculty work must be understood as part of the larger educational ecosystem. We must go deeper to spur systemic change, creating the conditions needed for individual and collective transformation of practice.

active learning and culturally inclusive pedagogies that have been shown to advance equity while building student engagement, retention, and achievement. When done well, accelerated remediation and High-Impact Practices (HIPs) such as First-Year Experience, Undergraduate Research, and ePortfolios have demonstrated similar impact. “Study after study,” writes USC educational researcher Adrianna Kezar, “demonstrates

that students’ experiences in the classroom and with faculty are one of the most important factors in student outcomes ranging from persistence, graduation, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy to other important psychosocial outcomes associated with learning and graduation.”⁶

As a field, how can we do more to support these proven approaches to learning and teaching quality? Our effort cannot focus on hectoring faculty or offering cookie cutter prescriptions. Changing pedagogy and practice at scale requires broad, sustained, and thoughtful

effort. Faculty must be engaged to consider, adapt, test, and refine new approaches to fit campus contexts. Faculty work must be understood as part of the larger educational ecosystem. We must go deeper to spur systemic change, generating the conditions and support needed for individual and collective transformation of practice.

6 Kezar, A. (2017). Foreword. In C. Haras, S. C. Taylor, M. D. Sorcinelli, & L. von Hoene (Eds.), *Institutional commitment to teaching excellence: Assessing the impacts and outcomes of faculty development* (pp. vii–viii). Washington, DC: American Council on Education. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Institutional-Commitment-to-Teaching-Excellence.pdf>



Building on Kezar's work, the Community College Research Center (CCRC) argues that systemic change involves organizational development on three broad fronts. **Structural change** occurs when policies, structures, and procedures create a framework for new behaviors that improve the student learning experience throughout the institution. **Process change** alters how people do their jobs and is transformative when enough individuals change their practices to ensure that large numbers of students encounter innovative forms of learning and teaching. **Attitudinal change** occurs when individuals understand their work in new ways and they together create a new culture that encourages a keen and productive focus on teaching and learning.⁷



Just as quality teaching matters to student learning, so quality professional development matters in supporting pedagogical change.

In this *Toolkit*, ATD argues for the systemic changes needed to create a culture of excellence in teaching and learning. In Chapter 2, we discuss the importance of connecting faculty with Student Affairs professionals and understanding their shared responsibility for student learning and success. In

Chapter 3, we spotlight the particular importance of professional development, which has the potential to engage educators across difference, support the adoption of evidence-based practices, and link structural, process, and attitudinal change. Chapter 4 discusses the institutional commitment necessary to support sophisticated, accessible, and effective professional development programs.

⁷ Kezar, A. (2013). *How colleges change: Understanding, leading, and enacting change*. New York: Routledge.

Karp, M. M., & Fletcher, J. (2014). *Adopting new technologies for student success: A readiness framework*. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/adopting-new-technologies-for-student-success.html>

Why do we focus such considerable attention on professional development (or as it is increasingly termed, professional learning)? As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, research shows that educators who engage in well-designed professional learning processes are more likely to effectively implement new strategies and improve student outcomes. For example, in their acclaimed study, *Faculty Development and Student Learning: Assessing the Connections*, Condon and colleagues asked and answered key questions related to professional development.⁸ They start with the fundamentals:

Research provides new insights into the characteristics of effective professional learning programs—the qualities of professional development ‘done well’.

- ▶ When faculty take part in sustained professional development, do they learn the intended new skills and approaches?

The answer to this question, based on surveys and focus groups, was a clear “Yes.”

The researchers then asked more challenging questions and examined an array of evidence from syllabi and activity plans, student work and student achievement. In each case, the answer was significant and positive:

- ▶ Do faculty who take part in sustained professional development then make the desired changes in their teaching practice? *Yes.*
- ▶ Is this improved teaching associated with improved student learning? *Yes.*

Chapter 3 will examine the Condon study at greater length. It will discuss other examples of research on the impact of professional learning. Together, Chapters 3 and 4 spotlight the implications of this research for designing effective professional learning strategies on ATD campuses.

Given the vital importance of professional learning to building a culture of teaching excellence and our equity-focused efforts, it is encouraging that professional development programs and

Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) are increasingly common in higher education. More than half of college faculty report having taken part in professional learning activities.⁹ In Chapter 5, we suggest ways that campuses can build upon this foundation to launch new Centers and strengthen those that already exist.

As we do this work, we must recognize that not all professional development processes are created equal. A one-hour workshop in which faculty sit and listen to a lecture is not the same as a thoughtful process that engages faculty in sustained collaborative inquiry into their practice. Just as quality teaching matters to student learning, so quality professional development matters in supporting pedagogical change. Fortunately, research not only demonstrates

that professional learning makes a difference. It also provides new insights into the characteristics of effective professional learning programs—the qualities of professional development “done well.”

These characteristics are summarized in a new research-based resource, the *New Learning Compact: A Framework for Professional Learning and Educational Change*.¹⁰ Created by a team of nationally known professional development experts, including ATD staff, the *NLC Framework* identifies key evidence-based strategies for supporting all educators in effective professional learning activities. It also provides guidelines for the institutional strategies and commitment required to sustain an effective professional development program. The *Framework* includes inquiry tools for self-assessment and planning related to professional learning and educational development. Using these tools, campuses can more strategically deploy best practice in professional learning, engaging educators as respected partners in the effort to advance student success and equity-focused change. With permission from the authors, we have adapted resources from the *NLC Framework* and incorporated them into Chapters 3 and 4 of this *Toolkit* in order to help teams consider evidence-based design principles as they build professional learning on their campuses.

8 Condon, W., Iverson, E. R., Manduca, C. A., Rutz, C., & Willett, G. (2016). *Faculty development and student learning: Assessing the connections*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Wright, M., Horii, C. V., Felten, P., Sorcinelli, M. D., & Kaplan, M. (2018, January). Faculty development improves teaching and learning. *POD Speaks*. https://podnetwork.org/content/uploads/POD-Speaks-Issue-2_Jan2018-1.pdf

9 Haras, C., Taylor, S. C., Sorcinelli, M. D., & von Hoene, L. (Eds.). (2017). *Institutional commitment to teaching excellence: Assessing the impacts and outcomes of faculty development*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Institutional-Commitment-to-Teaching-Excellence.pdf>

10 Bass, R., Eynon, B., & Gambino, L. M. (2019). *The new learning compact: A framework for professional learning and educational change*. Every Learner Everywhere. <https://www.everylearnersolve.com/asset/YAhR8dclZb0mzn4v2zXh>

Building a Culture of Excellence in Teaching and Learning: ATD's Four Cornerstones

What would a culture of teaching and learning excellence look like? How would we recognize it? What are its signature features or characteristics?

To support the work of cross-functional teams and campus stakeholders, ATD has identified four Cornerstones of Excellence that would shape a campus with a culture of learning and teaching excellence. Building on evidence-based research and the best new thinking in the field, these Cornerstones of Excellence together outline a forward-looking vision that campuses can use to inform their work.

1. Full-time and adjunct faculty use evidence-based instructional practices to foster student learning.

Research into learning and teaching highlights an array of pedagogically rich strategies that, when done well, enhance learning and success, particularly for students who are first generation, low-income, and/or students of color. To close the equity gap, faculty leaders must adapt these strategies to local contexts and guide implementation at scale by both full- and part-time faculty.

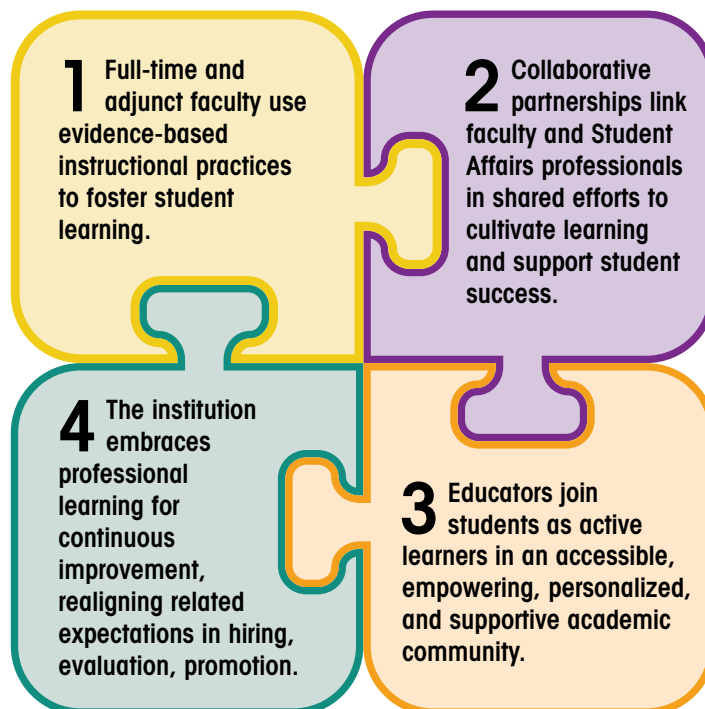
2. Collaborative partnerships link faculty and Student Affairs professionals in shared efforts to cultivate learning and support student success.

Student success initiatives have done powerful work, spurring structural reform and strengthening holistic student supports that benefit students—and strengthen faculty pedagogical innovation as well. To advance this work, and support the students who need it the most, educators from both Academic and Student Affairs must be engaged as valued partners in campus-wide student success efforts such as Guided Pathways.

3. Educators join students as active learners in an accessible, empowering, personalized, and supportive academic community.

Building a culture of teaching and learning excellence asks faculty and staff to examine their practice, test new evidence-based approaches, and see themselves as learner/teachers. Inquiry and reflective practice are crucial to ongoing professional learning processes. Engaging students as partners in this effort ensures broader, more meaningful, and more equitable change.

4. The institution embraces professional learning for continuous improvement, realigning related expectations in hiring, evaluation, promotion. Institutions must support faculty and staff engagement in professional learning with policies, practices, and resources. This is vital to improving outcomes and closing the equity gap. Strategic support for professional learning is essential to meaningful and enduring institutional improvement.



These Cornerstones of Excellence fit together to outline the parameters of a culture of teaching and learning excellence. They offer campuses a vision to strive for, a pathway to greater equity and student success. Their broad nature suggests that realizing this vision will involve changes in structure, behavior, and attitudes. The *Toolkit* is designed to help teams plan and work toward such change.



How to Use this *Toolkit*

Our four Cornerstones of Excellence serve as the basic architecture for this *Toolkit*. Each of the next four chapters explores one specific Cornerstone and helps cross-functional campus teams develop action plans for addressing it. Across Cornerstones, we encourage teams to consider the issues their campus confronts, what evidence-based practices might work best for them, what processes will support change, and who needs to be engaged to advance and support teaching and learning excellence.

Each chapter combines three linked elements:

- ▶ **Narrative:** The narrative in each chapter explains the rationale and the research behind a specific Cornerstone of Excellence. While this *Toolkit* is not a scholarly treatise,

The NLC Framework identifies key evidence-based strategies for supporting all educators in effective professional learning activities.

carefully exploring every nuance in the literature, we do base recommendations on evidence-rich research. We are confident that awareness of the research will help teams develop informed strategies and make an effective case to campus leaders and other stakeholders.

- ▶ **Sidebars:** Where available, we have added sidebars, including resource lists and small case studies of campus work. We look forward to adding additional case studies in future iterations of the *Toolkit*.

- ▶ **Worksheets:** Each chapter includes downloadable worksheets, designed to help teams process the information shared in that chapter and translate it into effective campus strategy. Many worksheets involve a combination of campus self-assessment and action planning, inviting teams to collectively adapt nationally recognized best practices to local conditions and needs.

The worksheets offer you and your team an opportunity to transform the way you engage the entire *Toolkit*. Using the worksheets, you can explore the narrative and sidebars as resources in a structured and purposeful group inquiry process. Taking this active learning approach can not only help your team get more out of the *Toolkit*. It also models precisely the kinds of pedagogical and professional learning dynamics that we recommend you advance on your campus.

The worksheets build cumulatively from chapter to chapter. The worksheets for this Introduction, for example, focus on: A) assembling a team to do this work; B) launching a process of campus self-assessment; and C) brainstorming a preliminary list of goals. These are important first tasks, and the worksheets offer a way to think about them.

The **Chapter 1** worksheets are designed to help your team identify key campus needs related to student learning and consider promising evidence-based instructional strategies you might use to build equity and broad student success. **Chapter 2** worksheets address similar questions related to holistic student supports, focusing particularly on possible collaborations between faculty and Student Affairs educators.

Chapter 3 examines ways to use high-impact professional learning to implement the evidence-based practices your team identified in Chapters 1 and 2. The worksheets help teams assess current campus professional learning practice, identify strategies for strengthening it, and plan ways to leverage professional learning to address the campus challenges identified in earlier chapters.

Chapter 4 highlights the institutional and systemic support needed for high-impact professional learning. The worksheets are designed to help teams identify strategies for mobilizing that support.

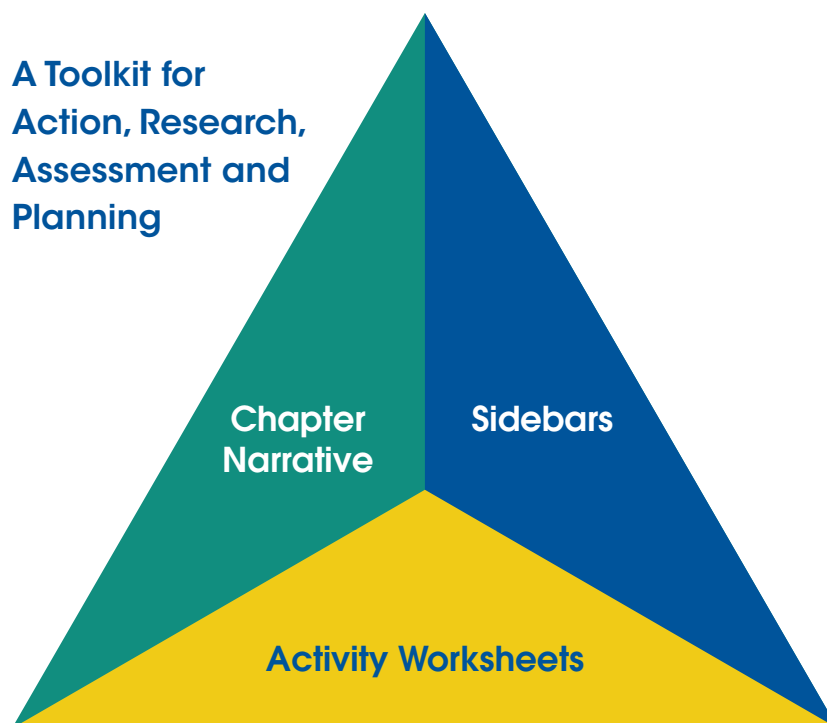
Chapter 5 focuses on the role of CTLs. CTLs and other Professional Learning Hubs (PLHs) can be a vital resource for supporting effective professional learning and advancing evidence-based instruction. The worksheets in this chapter help teams plan a strategy for launching a new PLH or strengthening an existing one.

As you can see, the worksheets are sequential and cumulative in design. In Chapter 5, we invite teams to go back and review worksheets from earlier chapters. **With this in mind, we encourage teams to retain their worksheets and other discussion records.** Our goal is to support a cohesive process, enabling teams to develop a comprehensive approach to building an institutional culture of teaching and learning excellence that benefits students, faculty, staff, and the institution as a whole.

Each worksheet includes brief directions about ways to consider using it. Teams may want to adapt the worksheets or create their own processes.¹¹ However your team proceeds, we encourage you to engage the team with active learning processes, modeling the kinds of productive learning and engagement that we value in our classrooms.

As mentioned above, we have added a special Appendix to this *Toolkit*, addressing the implications of powerful developments taking place in Spring 2020. As we prepared this *Toolkit*, the COVID-19 pandemic and a resurgent national debate over racial justice transformed the landscape of higher education. Without pretending to be comprehensive, our Appendix considers the

A Toolkit for Action, Research, Assessment and Planning



The Worksheets can help your team engage the Chapter narratives and Sidebars as inquiry resources for a dynamic, active learning process.

implications of these developments for efforts to build a culture of teaching and learning excellence. It argues that support for improved teaching and learning will be critical to higher education's effort to respond effectively to these challenges. Educators need support to integrate inclusive pedagogy and develop active learning strategies for the pandemic era. The Appendix builds on the strategies explored throughout the book to spotlight four key steps campuses can take to address this unprecedented situation.

We see all aspects of this *Toolkit* as a work in progress. We look forward to getting your feedback on it. We will be interested to hear the ways it helped you and your campus and the ways that it could be strengthened. We have created a feedback survey, available at https://achievingthedream.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efXnrXLUG0Pi2wd, and look forward to focus groups and other conversations. We invite you to complete our feedback survey and to share stories of the work your college is doing to build its capacity in teaching and learning.¹² Our hope is to refine the *Toolkit* in 2021, based on feedback from the field. We look forward to working with you on this effort to build quality learning and teaching for our students.

¹¹ Worksheets can be downloaded at https://www.achievingthedream.org/teaching_and_learning_toolkit

¹² Toolkit feedback survey: https://achievingthedream.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efXnrXLUG0Pi2wd

Worksheet Intro.1

Building Your Team

A key early step is to carefully assemble a team to work on this initiative, thinking through the different people who could be helpful, depending on this project’s objective. Worksheet Intro.1 provides a space for thinking about the ideal composition of your team and a broader group of stakeholders you may need to engage as the process unfolds.

Worksheets Intro.2A and Intro.2B offer alternative ways for your team to begin assessing the climate related to learning and teaching on your campus, using tools developed by ATD. This can lay groundwork for discussion as you move through the *Toolkit*.

Worksheet Intro.3 focuses on your team’s goals. It can serve as the spur and notes for a brainstorming conversation. Alternatively, if your initiative has an institutionally defined charge or mission, you may want to prepare a preliminary draft to be discussed by the team as it assembles.

We will suggest that you revisit notes from Worksheets Intro.2 and Intro.3 once the team completes its work with the *Teaching and Learning Toolkit*. Please save notes from these conversations for that purpose.

Our team’s primary objective: (Examples)		
<i>This team will work with full-time and adjunct faculty teaching English, psychology, and chemistry to implement collaborative learning strategies across all sections of key gateway courses.</i>		
<i>This team will examine our college’s policies and practices around faculty hiring, professional learning, and evaluation and create a plan to bring these into greater alignment.</i>		
<i>This team will design and launch our college’s new Center for Teaching & Learning.</i>		
Who will serve on this team? <i>(Add rows as needed)</i>		
Institutional role	Name	Key skills/perspective this person brings to the team
Aside from members of the working team, please identify other key stakeholders you should engage in this work.		
Institutional role	Name	Key skills/perspective this person brings to the team

Worksheet Intro.2A

Reviewing Campus Self-Assessments

Directions: If your institution has recently completed one of ATD's diagnostic self-assessments (e.g., the ICAT or the Teaching and Learning diagnostic), we suggest you obtain copies of the results and share them with your team for individual review and collective conversation.

We suggest each team member individually review the results and make notes, considering the reflective questions. As a group, use the results, your expertise, and the discussion questions to share thoughts and consider a plan of action.

If your team has **not** recently completed one of ATD's diagnostic self-assessments, we recommend that you move on to Worksheet Intro.2B.

Reflective Questions: As an individual, review the results of your college's ATD diagnostic, and take some time to think about these questions before you begin discussion with your group.

- A. What did the results of this diagnostic suggest to you about the culture of excellence in teaching and learning at your college?
- B. What strengths does your college have in this regard? What areas of need did you identify?
- C. What surprised you? Why? What would you want to learn more about?

Discussion Questions: When you gather as a group, consider these suggestions and questions as possible prompts for group conversation and planning activity:

- A. What do these results suggest about college strengths? What areas of need emerged? Are there ways to use your campus strengths to address the areas of need?
- B. How does your team view these results? Do they seem accurate? What questions do they raise?
- C. As a group try to agree on a list of at least three to five priority areas for action aimed at deepening quality in learning and teaching. Please agree on a list of at least two areas of strength that could help the college move forward in this effort. (Please save these notes for later review and consideration.)

Worksheet Intro.2B

Self-Assessment Tool: Culture of Excellence in Teaching & Learning

Directions: If your institution has **not** recently done one of ATD's diagnostic self-assessments (e.g., the ICAT or the Teaching and Learning diagnostic), your team can do a short assessment activity using this worksheet.

We suggest that each member of your group individually complete this worksheet and the reflective questions. As a group, compile the results, and use your expertise and the discussion questions to consider a plan of action.

These items are intended to help you assess your college's relative strengths and areas for growth in relation to each of ATD's Cornerstones for Building a Culture of Excellence in Teaching & Learning.

1 = completely false 2 = mostly false 3 = somewhat true/false 4 = mostly true 5 = completely true

1.	Most faculty in most departments and programs are learning about and implementing evidence-based instructional practices. [Excellence Cornerstone #1]	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Most faculty in most departments use student learning data to inform their process of reflecting on and improving their classroom practices. [Excellence Cornerstone #1]	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Faculty have frequent opportunities to learn about supports and resources available to their students and are equipped to connect their students with these resources. [Excellence Cornerstone #2]	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Faculty regularly collaborate with their colleagues in academic affairs and student affairs (e.g., on committees and task forces; in joint professional development activities). [Excellence Cornerstone #2]	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Students are regularly socialized to be active learners and advocates in their academic experience. [Excellence Cornerstone #3]	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Academic experiences are intentionally structured to ensure equity, accessibility, and relevance to the student population. [Excellence Cornerstone #3]	1	2	3	4	5
7.	My institution prioritizes faculty professional learning for both full-time and adjunct faculty. [Excellence Cornerstones #1, 4]	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Professional development expectations are clearly articulated in position descriptions. [Excellence Cornerstone #4]	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Each year, faculty can reflect on how their participation in professional learning activities is making an impact on their teaching practice. [Excellence Cornerstone #4]	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Hiring, faculty evaluation, and promotion policies and procedures are intentionally and thoroughly aligned with the institution's teaching and learning priorities. [Excellence Cornerstone #4]	1	2	3	4	5

Worksheet Intro.2B (cont'd.)

Self-Assessment Tool: Culture of Excellence in Teaching & Learning

Reflective Questions: As an individual, after you complete the survey, please take some time to think about these questions before you begin discussion with your group.

- A. What did the results of this diagnostic suggest to you about the culture of excellence in teaching and learning at your college?
- B. What strengths does your college have in this regard? What areas of need did you identify?
- C. What question or questions were hard to answer? What would you want to learn more about?

Discussion Questions: When you gather as a group, consider these suggestions possible prompts for group conversation.

You might start by sharing your answers to the survey. Depending on the size of the group, you might want to walk through them together. Alternatively, you could gather the sheets and tally them, coming up with an aggregate rating for each question.

Then, discuss with these questions in mind:

- A. What do these results suggest about college strengths? What areas of need emerged? Are there ways to use your campus strengths to address the areas of need?
- B. How does your team view these results? Do they seem accurate? What questions do they raise?
- C. As a group try to agree on a list of at least three to five priority areas for action aimed at deepening quality in learning and teaching. Please agree on a list of at least two areas of strength that could help the college move forward in this effort. (Please save these notes for later review and consideration.)

Worksheet Intro.3

Planning for Action

As your team prepares to begin using the *Toolkit* to explore strategies for building a culture of teaching and learning excellence, we suggest you work together to identify concrete goals for this work. Based on your discussion of the team’s mission and your review of diagnostic data, please develop a preliminary set of goals and some benchmarks. (Please save your notes on this for later review.)

What does the team hope to accomplish in the next three to five years? Articulate your goals in broad terms and then in terms of the changes you hope to see at multiple levels of your institution (e.g., academic division, department, courses, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, students).	
Key milestones along the way	
Three months from now	
Six months from now	
One year from now	
Two years from now	
Three years from now	
Five years from now	

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