

Hot Topics, Obstacles, & Strategies for Professional Development Units

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OLC Accelerate (November 2022)



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Which of the following best describe you?

Institutional-level leader (e.g., Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Students)

College-level leader (e.g., Dean, Advisor)

Unit-level leader (e.g., Director or Coordinator of Center for Teaching and Learning)

Unit team member (e.g., Instructional Designer, Teaching Consultant, Faculty Developer, Instructional Coach)

Something else

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Our teaching and learning center/professional learning hub is effectively meeting the needs of most instructors.

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

Most instructors take advantage of professional learning opportunities our professional learning unit offers.

Strongly disagree

Somewhat disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat agree

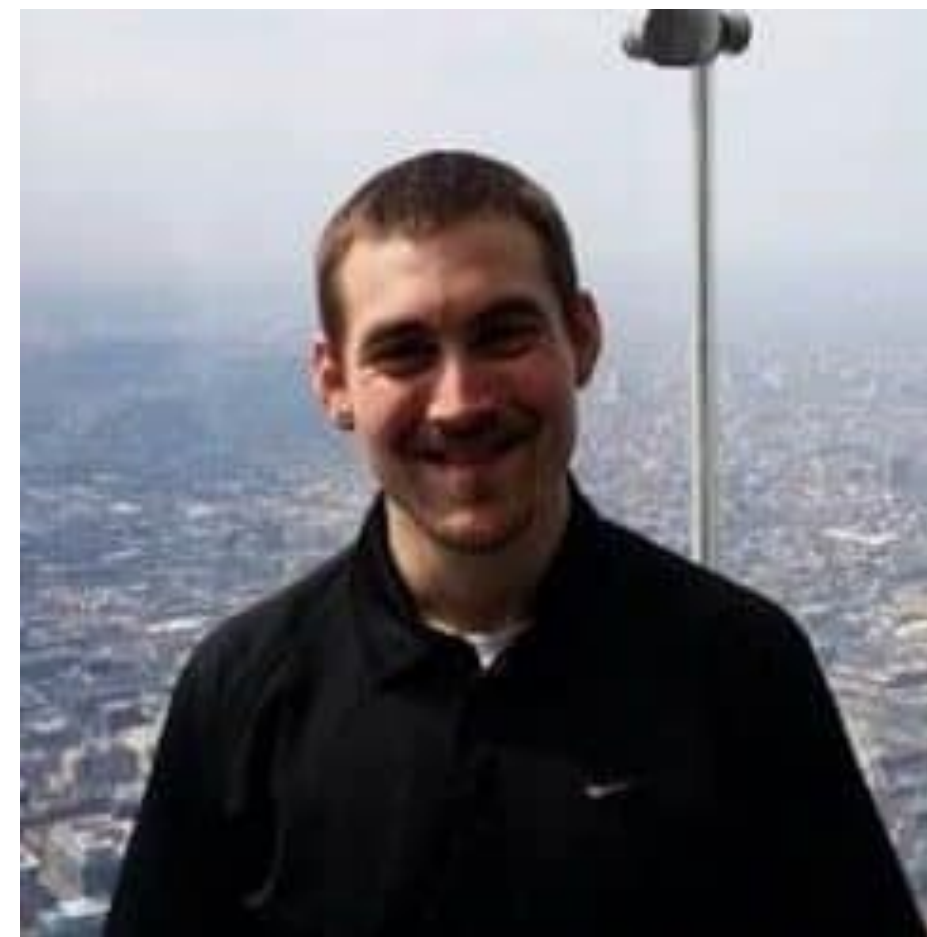
Strongly agree

Session Facilitators



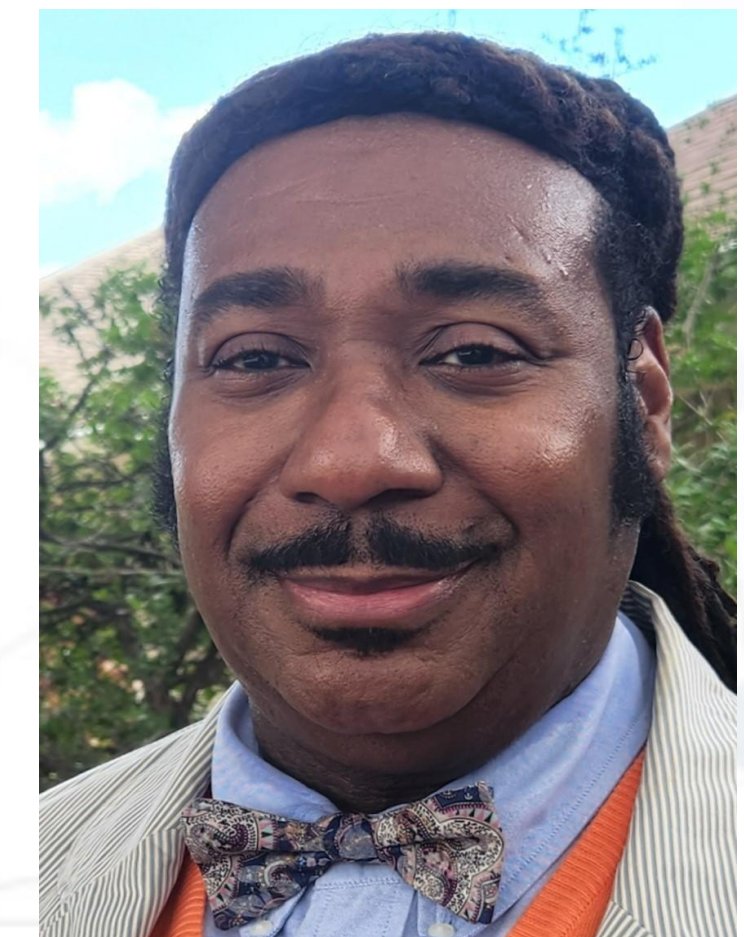
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Our Goals & Agenda



Session Goals

- ❑ Expand participant knowledge on what is currently happening with professional learning in higher education
- ❑ Explore quantitative and qualitative research to identify successes and opportunities to advance CTL's, professional learning hubs, and faculty development
- ❑ Increase understanding of how to better support faculty as it relates to teaching and learning

Session Agenda

- ❑ Welcome and Introductions
- ❑ Overview of CTL and Professional Learning Study
 - ❑ Research design
 - ❑ Methods
 - ❑ Limitations
- ❑ Key Findings
- ❑ Recommendations
- ❑ Reflective Activity
- ❑ Q&A



everylearner
↔
everywhere

About the Study



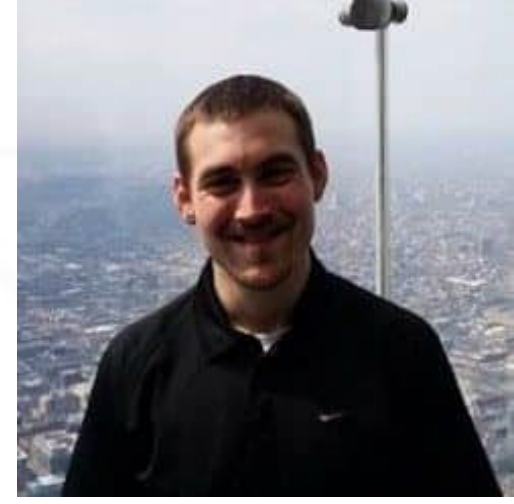


About the Study

Why Did We Do It?




- **Who is Involved:** Achieving the Dream (ATD) and Online Learning Consortium (OLC) with funding from Every Learner Everywhere
- **Driving Question:** What does the landscape of professional learning across the U.S. look like?
- **Key Exploration Areas:** organizational structure, strategic integration, collaborations, integrations of high impact professional learning practices, obstacles to success
- **Key Places to Drill Down:** Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)
- **Key Outputs:** to provide an external report to support professional learning hubs advance their practices and to develop recommendations for Every Learner to better support advancing these practices



About the Study

How Did We Do It?

- 
- **Qualitative data:** In-depth interviews with 20 professional learning leaders
 - Interviews were transcribed and organized to identify key themes; quotes sorted into seventeen coding frames (e.g., “Scope and Focus of CTL Services and Programming”)
 - **Quantitative data:** survey asked respondents about status of professional learning on their campus, the nature of their CTLs/PLHs, and their programs
 - Emphasis on Primarily White Institutions (PWIs) (like Research-1 universities) and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs)
 - ~80 participants
 - **Key limitations:** sample size is moderate, not pure random draw



Our Favorite Findings



Nicole's Favorite Finding

Moving Beyond Standalone Workshops



What was the finding?

- Stand-alone workshops are still the most common form of faculty development, particularly at less-resourced institutions
- Institutions struggled with getting to deeper levels of assessment of their programming

Why is this important?

- Stand-alone workshops tend to have limited impact
- Deeper levels of assessment data help us know what was impactful

What can we do at our institutions?

- Move from standalone to connected programming aligned with strategic planning efforts
- From headcount to deeper assessment practices



Ray's Favorite Finding

Impact of Communities of Practice

What was the finding?

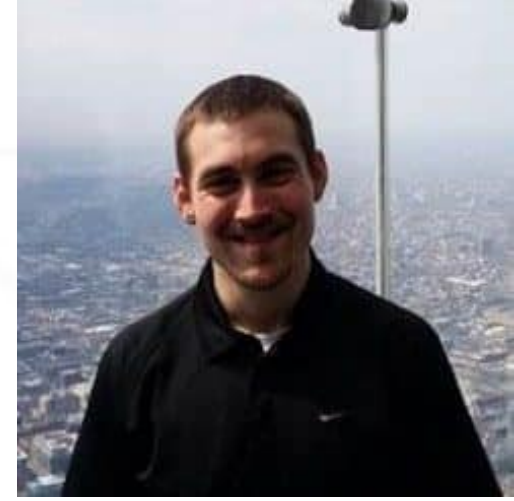
- Those colleges that have implemented communities of practice have experienced improved success with professional learning
- Faculty that engage in some form of a learning community appreciate having intentional and depth over breadth professional learning that informs transforming their teaching practices

Why is this important?

- This method of professional learning has impact at a deeper level than stand-alone workshops
- Allows for faculty to engage across disciplines, to engage in peer to peer learning and to become best practitioners

What can we do at our institutions?

- Shift from one off PL opportunities to intentional cohorted models of professional learning
- “We act on the premise that faculty engagement and faculty development will lead to improved teaching and learning and student success, including retention and completion.”



Eric's Favorite Finding

Instructor-Institution Collaboration



What was the finding?

- Top-down models can struggle to gain traction (buy-in, ownership)
- Successful programs integrate instructors into the professional learning experience

Why is this important?

- Professional learning can only support and improve teaching if there is genuine engagement, which is more than simply “attendance” or “participation”
- Many institutions have limited resources to incentivize participation in other ways (e.g., stipends, course releases, etc.), so we really need to focus on other methods for buy-in

What can we do at our institutions?

- Consult with instructors about their teaching and learning needs; surveys are great, but consider focus groups with departments, governance bodies, as well
- Invite instructors to collaborate on the design and delivery of professional learning



Our Favorite Recommendations



Ray's Favorite Recommendation

Put Learning at the Core of Campus Culture and Policy



What was the recommendation?

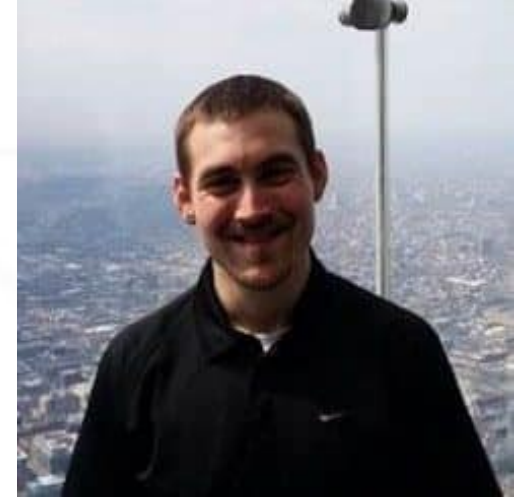
- Institutional executive leaders advancing and centering a culture of faculty development through policies and practices that support and sustain faculty engagement in professional learning
- Operationalize professional learning in ways that are meaningful to faculty while partnering with faculty as CTL leaders, facilitators, and developers

Why is this important?

- High performing Hubs that are central to all aspects of the campus can transform faculty, staff and students perspectives on professional learning
- To improve the learning experience for students historically marginalized in higher education
- Faculty feel valued, validates and affirmed

What can we do at our institutions?

- Take systemic action that demonstrates a commitment to instructional excellence
- House CTL's and Professional learning Hubs on locations that are central to campus life



Eric's Favorite Recommendation

The (de)centralization conversation



What was the recommendation?

- Evaluate - and periodically re-evaluate - the degree of centralization of professional learning

Why is this important?

- Centralization has some advantages (e.g., coordination) and so does decentralization (e.g., “local” tweaking)
- There is no predetermined right balance; both models - and everything in between - may be appropriate based on institutional priorities, circumstances

What can we do at our institutions?

- Conduct a needs assessment on professional learning hopes, dreams, and challenges; what to constituents really need to be successful
- Consult with peer institutions about their models
- Facilitate conversations about the benefits and drawbacks to more/less centralization



Nicole's Favorite Recommendation

Where do you want to be in 3 years? What about 5?



What was the recommendation?

- Plan your path forward strategically!
- Conduct an analysis that looks at your own experience and trends in the field (including this report) and develop a strategic approach to strengthening your professional learning hub.

Why is this important?

- Strategic planning for your professional learning area that links to your campus' strategy, goals, and drivers puts you in a place to support those, as well as advocate for needed resources

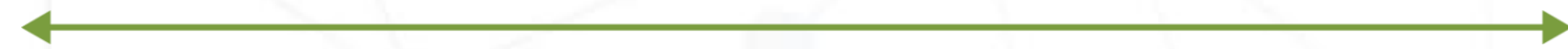
What can we do at our institutions?

- Reflect with your team and collect additional stakeholder data (don't forget students!)
- Align the work you do with campus needs and invest in what makes impact
- Help tame the firehose

**WHAT ARE YOU
THINKING?**



Turn and Talk Chat Response Activity



Share with a neighbor, or in the chat, what you're seeing on your campuses related to these findings and recommendations

Think about one of the findings/recommendations shared

- ☐ What does it look like on your campus?
- ☐ What action would you take to advance PL?
- ☐ What are the biggest challenges you face in your professional learning work, and how can you address them?



Share Out



Announcements and Upcoming Events



SAVE THE DATE

February 14-17, 2023

Chicago



The Report
January 2023

DREAM
ANNUAL CONVENING
2023

The logo graphic for DREAM Annual Convening 2023. It consists of four horizontal bars of increasing length, stacked vertically. The bars are colored orange, blue, green, and dark blue from top to bottom.

Resources and Upcoming Events

**The
Report**



**OLC Research
Center**



**OLC Innovate
2023**



Thank You

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Q&A

