**Building Capacity for Change:**

**Strengthening Professional Learning on Your Campus**

***Frequently Asked Questions***

The Building Capacity for Change program was highlighted in a cover story in the March/April 2022 issue of *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. [Free access to the article is available here](https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/vchn20/54/2).

**How will this program benefit my college?**

To address key challenges – enrollment declines, equity gaps, and the need to better prepare students for career and citizenship – colleges must engage faculty and other educators as partners. This program will help your college leverage research-based high impact professional learning strategies to build those partnerships, advancing both student and institutional success. And in so doing, it will build long-term capacity for responding effectively to whatever challenges and issues emerge in years to come.

**What do you mean by “professional learning”?**

What has long been called “faculty development” or “professional development” is now increasingly discussed as “professional learning.” This new term recognizes that some faculty dislike the idea that they need to “be developed,” and builds instead on the idea of life-long learning. It also recognizes that while faculty are essential, other groups (such as Student Affairs educators) may also be involved in and benefit from professional learning programs.

**Why is professional learning important?**

A decade of research has demonstrated that professional learning is the key to educational improvement. Quality implementation of evidence-based pedagogies is essential to advancing equity and building student learning and success. High impact professional learning is an essential step towards quality implementation of effective pedagogies, at scale.

**What kinds of pedagogies will this program spotlight?**

Drawing on the *ATD Teaching and Learning Toolkit* and a broad body of research, this program will review a broad range of evidence-based pedagogies and practices, from active learning pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching to High Impact Practices, inquiry learning, accelerated remediation and open pedagogy. Teams will select and learn more about the pedagogies that fit the needs of their campuses.

​**We typically organize faculty professional development separately from support for Student Affairs professionals. Can you explain more about this approach that connects Student Affairs with teaching and learning?**

ATD recognizes that learning takes place both within and outside the classroom and sees advisors and co-curricular leaders as educators. Shared professional learning can build cross-divisional collaboration, support faculty innovation, and help the entire institution work together to build equity and student success.

**Can I register as an individual or must my college send a team?**

This program seeks to advance broad institutional change as well as change in individual teaching and learning practice. To this end, the program is designed to support collaborative team efforts that can spur broad change.

**Who should we include on our team?**

We recommend a team of 6-10 members, representing diverse campus perspectives, such as faculty leaders, student affairs educators, professional development leaders, coordinators of success initiatives, and an upper-level administrator (Dean or above). Team members who bring knowledge of professional learning and who are positioned to lead change will strengthen the team.

**What’s the time commitment for participating team members?**

The program is built around 8 virtual synchronous seminar meetings (2 hours each), beginning in September 2022 and concluding in April 2023. It also involves individual reading, regular campus team meetings, coaching sessions, and contribution to the program’s Canvas site. Team members should be prepared to commit at least 32 hours over the course of the eight-month program. Team leaders who ensure that participants are aware of this commitment will find it easier to reach team goals.

**What’s the role of the team leader?**

In addition to taking part in all program activities, team leaders should be prepared to coordinate the work of their teams, scheduling and facilitating team meetings (virtual or face to face), coordinating with coaches, and ensuring that campus leadership is kept aware of the team’s progress. It will be helpful if the team leader has some role in the campus’ professional learning efforts. Upper-level campus administrators can play a valuable role as part of a two-person leadership team, but it is vital to include someone who can devote a substantial amount of time to team leadership tasks.

**Does everyone on the team have to take part in everything?**

No one is taking attendance. But the team will be much stronger and more effective when everyone is taking part, learning and contributing to the planning process. It is helpful to have a core group of at least 4-5 members who can consistently play an active role.

**What will individual members of the team get out of this experience?**

Team members will have the opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge that advances their individual practice, from evidence-based classroom pedagogies to strategies for designing and leading effective professional learning programs. They will have the opportunity to collaborate in a structured team effort with others from their campus and to meet and learn with peers from other campuses. They will help advance vital change in the structure and culture of their campus. And they will have the chance to advance their own growth as campus leaders, developing broadly applicable leadership skills, connections, and understandings.

**What’s the role of our Chief Academic Officer?**

ATD knows that CAOs play a pivotal role in campus change. The BCC program creates opportunities for structured partnerships linking team leaders with the CAO to ensure alignment with priority campus needs and goals. CAOs and their team leaders collaborate to guide the transition from research and planning to effective implementation. A CAOs Summit offers opportunities for high level exchange on a national stage.

**What is the ATD *Teaching & Learning Toolkit*? How can I get one?**

Published in September 2020, the Toolkit is a research-based guide to building a culture of teaching and learning excellence on your campus. It offers overviews of relevant research, case studies from ATD network schools, and resources for learning more about evidence-based pedagogies, holistic student supports, and high impact professional learning. It outlines a comprehensive framework of Good Practice Principles and provides tools for campus self-assessment and planning processes. The Toolkit can be downloaded [here](https://www.achievingthedream.org/teachinglearningtoolkit).Participants in the *Building for Change* program will receive a free spiral-bound hard copy of the Toolkit to use in the program and beyond.

**The Application form suggests that this program addresses institutional change. What do you mean by that?**

High-impact professional learning builds equity and student success. But it only succeeds when the institution develops structures, policies and practices to effectively support and sustain the professional learning process. In return, building enduring capacity for high-impact professional learning can support transformative institutional change, helping colleges advance as agile and adaptive learning organizations. This program invites teams and their colleges to consider the linkage between equity, professional learning and the institution’s strategic priorities.

**We already have a Center for Teaching & Learning. What would we get out of this program?**

The Building Capacity for Change program will help you deepen and leverage the strengths of your Center. It will connect faculty and staff leaders with best practices drawn from the national research that support high impact design and leadership. And it will offer you tools and strategies for strengthening the ways that your institution supports professional learning.

**Our college does not have the resources to support a Center for Teaching & Learning. Will this program be of use to us?**

The Building Capacity for Change program is flexible, designed to meet you where you’re at and build from there. The presence of an active CTL is helpful but in no way essential to your participation. The supportive community of practice model assumes that every participating campus has strengths, and every team has goals for improvement.

**What will happen in the seminar and coaching sessions? How are the coaching sessions different from the work we currently do with our ATD coaches?**

Utilizing a “flipped classroom” model,the synchronous seminar meetings will focus on dialogue and small group interactive collaboration, helping teams share, deepen and apply what they are learning from readings, videos, and other resources. Guest speakers will discuss campus strategies and answer questions. Teams will meet with other teams for exchange and mutual problem solving. The coaching process will provide opportunities for in-depth support, planning and guidance. This program is different from other ATD coaching processes because it connects to a structured, eight-month collaboration with teams from other campuses, working on similar projects.

**What is the *Action Plan for Professional Learning Impact* (APPLI)? What have colleges typically focused on in these plans?**

The ***Action Plan for Professional Learning Impact* (APPLI)** invites teams to apply the Good Practice Principles for high impact professional learning to the issues and opportunities of their campus. Built step-by-step over the course of the semester, the Plan incorporates short- and long-term goals for strengthening teaching, student learning, and professional learning structures and processes. It asks teams to identify key elements for achieving those goals, including: key stakeholders, resources, short and long-term action steps as well as evaluation and communication plans. It prepares teams to present these plans to key stakeholders to leverage support and incorporation into the institution’s strategic planning and resource allocation process.

**Why do you ask for a letter from the President or CAO?**

Improving professional learning and building capacity for change requires high level as well as grass-roots support. We ask you to get a letter from your President or CAO to make sure that they are aware of this effort and prepared to consider your plan of action when it is complete. Engaging them in advance increases the likelihood of your long-term success.

**What are the advantages of Priority Application?**

Colleges that meet the Priority Application deadline will receive detailed feedback and pre-seminar support, and will learn earlier in the summer if they have been selected for participation. They will have more time to prepare their teams for seminar participation, a key indicator for effective participation. We strongly encourage teams to meet this deadline if at all possible.