

Rise, Teach, Learn - Season 2, Episode 6

Touring the Spring 2022 Faculty Learning Communities

00:03

We acknowledge and are mindful that CSU Chico stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land and the waters that run through campus. We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that wants to stay in the Mechoopda people for centuries.

00:27

Welcome to the Rise, Teach, Learn podcast. I am Dr. Chiara Ferrari, Director of Faculty Development at Chico State and we are happy to make these resources available to our campus community and beyond. The podcast is hosted by Dr. Jamie Linn Gunderson and she will engage in timely conversations with faculty, staff, and students and give you a taste of the Chico experience. Subscribe to our podcast and explore the many resources available on our website. Thank you for listening.

01:00

Hello, and welcome to Rise, Teach, Learn. I'm your host Jamie Gunderson. In this episode, we will tour the upcoming Faculty Learning Communities hosted by the Office of Faculty Development, and we will discuss opportunities to collaborate on and expand our teaching practices across campus.

01:24

I'm so excited to be sitting with the Director of Faculty Development, Chiara Ferrari, and she is here today to tell us about all the really exciting opportunities coming up in spring for faculty learning communities and other FDEV or faculty development programs. So, Chiara, thank you for talking to me today. And I'll just turn it over to you to give us an overview of all you have to offer in the spring.

01:48

So, thank you, Jamie, I'm excited to be here for a chance to promote the spring 2022 FDEV programs. I'm also excited that the FLC leads are here with me so they can share more details about what they plan on doing in their programs. But I do want to start by saying that when I was, I'm still a faculty member, but when I was not a Faculty Development Director, I remember participating in a lot of FDEV programs. And frankly, my favorite part of participating in FLCs, or workshops or other programs, was the opportunity to engage with faculty in other disciplines in other colleges. And just to learn perspectives that I was not able to learn in my own department only, and in my own college. And so, I would say that one of the key benefits of attending these types of programs is really to expand your understanding and vision of the university by discussing issues, by discussing ideas with colleagues that might have very different perspectives and might work in very different disciplines. So that is, that is one of the things that I've always enjoyed about participating in FDEV programs.

03:16

I also want to clarify and I know that this is an open question that I receive often and I try to answer in the November's Zine, but FDEV programs are absolutely open to lecturers, and so please feel free to apply to these programs. If you're teaching in the spring, you can participate and be compensated if there is compensation in these programs. Another thing that I want to clarify, another benefit of attending FDEV programs is that you can actually include the participation and the outcomes of the FDEV programs in your RTP dossier. So, this counts as professional development, this counts as training that you are taking to improve your pedagogy, to explore equitable and inclusive practices. So, these are all programs that have evidence that you can add in your dossier. And of course, one more benefit is that through these programs, you can make connections to both student success, but also you can connect your own research and scholarship with your pedagogy and instruction. So hopefully, these are good enough reasons to apply to our programs. And let me give you a quick overview of what we will be offering I sent out a call, most deadlines are December 6th. So, you have some time to apply for these programs. But in the spring, we will be offering a Closing the Equity Gaps FLC run by Professor Erik Wasinger. We will be offering a new FLC on Teaching Climate Change and Resilience, run by Professor Mark Stemen. We will be offering an FLC on Hyflex and Inclusive Pedagogy run by our own, Jamie Gunderson. And we will be offering a Faculty Writing Community. And also, there is an open call for grants on scholarship of teaching and learning that will be focusing on projects that center equity, diversity, and inclusion. So, it seems that there's something for everyone. And I hope that you will find something interesting that you can apply for.

05:42

That sounds really exciting. There are a lot of opportunities available for not only our faculty, but also our lecturers. So here to tell us a little bit more specific about each faculty learning community are the leaders of these FLCs. And so first up, I'd like Dr. Wasinger to just give us a little overview of the Closing the Equity Gaps specifically, what participants will stand to learn and gain through participation.

06:08

Thank you, Jamie, I'm really excited to be here. I'm also really honored to be hosting the Closing the Equity Gaps FLC For the third time. We will spend some time together, learning about how to mitigate the equity gap problem that seems to be impacting many of our classes. Certainly, in STEM, we have seen it quite a bit, we will take some time to read some pertinent literature, we'll spend quite a bit of time actually just interfacing with each other from around campus, and talking about ideas, things that have worked, things that haven't worked some new ideas, things new to try for our classes. And we'll dig into the data, we'll look at the equity dashboards, both the ones on campus and the ones hosted by the CSU system to not only learn about the equity gaps in our own classes, but in our colleges at our university. So, we can put into context, the problems that we're trying to solve. Now, of course, equity gaps are a bigger problem than just our classes, and we will talk about what it would mean to address a societal problem and how that then shows up at our classes. But of course, really what we have control over is our classrooms. And so, we'll probably focus mostly on that. At the end of the day, faculty will be asked to make a change to their curriculum, not a wholesale class wide change, but one assessment, one assignment, a syllabus, something of that nature, to address equity gaps, and try to become try to host a little bit more equitable, inclusive, and diverse course.

07:57

Alright, so in addition to tackling the equity gaps on campus, we also wanted to have an FLC that aligned to some of the strategic priorities and because the workshops were so popular, we wanted to have Dr. Mark Stemen lead us in an FLC centered on Teaching Climate Change and Resilience. So here to tell us more is Dr. Mark Stemen.

08:19

Oh, thank you, Jamie. Well, I think all of us are aware, you know, the fires and floods in the last four years of climate change is a really, a pressing issue for us. And it's also really pressing on our students, and they have been asking about it. And what we're finding in almost all of their classes. And so, what we wanted to do was to put together an FLC for the entire campus, and we're inviting participants to come in and try to think about how they could integrate climate change and resilience into one of their classes, regardless of discipline. But the goals of our faculty learning community are varied and wide. We really want to start primarily to help faculty integrate climate change and resilience into a core course that they're teaching in a meaningful and just way, and to do so we want to provide faculty with materials that are well researched, relevant and relatable to their discipline and to their specific course. We also, because this is such a tough issue, we want to provide faculty with the tools and resources to engage the emotions that young people bring to their experience when talking about climate change. At the same time, we're coming out of a pandemic. And so, a big part of this is we just want to provide a place for faculty to reconnect from almost two years of this social distancing and to create a community of scholars who can continue to support this important work and that after the FLC concludes that we have two other related goals with this is that we're hoping to provide junior faculty with a publication possibility in the new journal, that CSU Chico is putting forward on teaching on sustainability and climate change and we're working with the Chancellor's Office on that. And we also want to support the work of campus sustainability coordinators across the state. And to that point, one of the things that's exciting about this FLC is it will actually be broadcast to other campuses within the system. In coordination with the sustainability coordinators network. Each of the campus has a sustainability coordinator. And they've been working together to try to get more of this activity on their campuses. So, in this FLC, we'll talk about things just like the basics of the science and the policy behind climate change, and really help people understand the latest things that we're learning, we're really going to try to focus on providing the materials to give the faculty the ability to change a class assignment to come up with some new activities to come up with new research possibilities for the classes. At the same time, we have to recognize that these impacts do not fall equally across our society and climate justice and equity are important aspects of any discussion about climate change, as well as the idea that we need to engage not only our campus, but also our community. And so, we will have opportunities for civic engagement in all of this. What are the other exciting things about this is that climate change isn't just a concern for our faculty and our students, but also members of the broader society, and there are a lot of larger entities out there that nonprofits, educational associations that have wanted to get engaged in this work. And we're really fortunate to be working with Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI) out of San Rafael, and specifically, the work of drawdown, which is the large solutions-oriented aspect of climate change drawdown was this great work of Paul Hawken, to come up with all the solutions that we need to face this issue. And we really realize that what students are desperate for is not just to know the problem, but to know the solutions that they're going to be able to get out of this. And we are very

fortunate to have Elizabeth Bagley, formerly of drawdown now with SEI working with us on this project. And our real goal is to take that information and bring it into the classroom into specific syllabi. And so, we will be actually asking faculty for syllabi, so that we can go out and find material for their class. In this workshop, in this faculty learning community, we're not asking anyone to leave their discipline, we will come to them with the materials that they need. So, we're really excited about this. It's going to be an exciting venture all of us and we look forward to it. As the spring comes forward.

12:47

Another exciting opportunity for you as a faculty to expand your teaching practice and align to the strategic priorities of the university will be to engage in the Hyflex and Inclusive Pedagogy FLC. And that is one that I'm going to be hosting. My background is in Universal Design for Learning. So, I hope to bring my expertise in not only the recognition, but also the implementation of universal design for learning within my teaching practice and my learning, but I want to bring that into the FLC. And really get our participants focused on creating activities, assignments, assessments, and syllabi that promote engagement and interaction with all learners. In addition, one of the pieces of this FLC is also going to talk about modes of instruction, and specifically, we're going to really target hyflex instruction and we are going to try to adapt our current teaching and learning to make it most accessible for students through the hyflex model. So, meaning that a student anytime anywhere can log on either synchronously with the class or asynchronously to complete their work. But nonetheless, they have options in how they're accessing and engaging in the material. And so, the hyflex and Inclusive Pedagogy faculty learning community is going to focus on just that, and participants will come out of that FLC with a couple of tangible assignments, assessments, or activities, they'll have some flexibility in what they choose to adapt, but that have been adapted and aligned to the principles of Universal Design for Learning. And hopefully, what we learn together in this FLC will help expand into our teaching practice, much like some of the other FLCs that we've mentioned today.

14:40

For faculty who are really interested in promoting and improving their own writing. Chiara is here to tell us a little bit more about the Faculty Writing Community and the opportunities through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant.

14:54

Thank you, Jamie, the faculty writing community is one program that most faculty actually mentioned in the faculty survey that we sent out a month ago or so. So, we're bringing it back. This one definitely by popular demand, because many faculty have really commented on how that community helps them. Both learn sort of new techniques in terms of writing, academic writing, but also to keep each other, they help each other stay on track in terms of deadlines in terms of creating some goals. And so, I'm happy that we can support, I'm hoping up to 40 to 50 faculty that can participate in the Faculty Writing Community, I'm looking forward to having cohorts where faculty can be paired with colleagues working on similar either topics or perhaps similar methodologies. And so, we're looking forward to creating these connections and having participated in one a few years back, I was paired with Nik Janos, and Laura Sparks, and I, I am in Media Arts, Design and Technology, Nik is in sociology, and Laura is an English. And somehow, we really created a strong connection that continued well beyond the Faculty Writing Community. So, I've heard from many faculty that what started as a sort of impromptu cohort

developed into actual collaborations and publication opportunities. So, I'm really asking you if you do participate in the faculty writing community, to work closely with some colleagues that have connections to what you're doing, because that might turn into projects or, or scholarship or publications that you might not currently be working on but that might be explored through these collaborations. I'm also looking for some facilitators for this faculty writing community. So, I'm looking forward to receiving some applications for faculty that have participated in this community before that have some experience with book proposals, grant writing, article writing, book publication, but also with faculty mentorship that can lead these cohorts.

17:34

Lastly, we have an open call for grants that focus on scholarship of teaching and learning. This is these are some grants that will be funded through some additional money that we received from the Chancellor's Office through the Provost Office. And as I had mentioned in a previous podcast, eventually, this funding will be utilized to create a new hub for research in equity, anti-racism, diversity and inclusion. So, offering these grants is part of a broader goal from faculty development, to embrace equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism in faculty development in a much more structure, in a much more committed way. And so, faculty can apply to up to \$1,000 awards that will be dispersed as professional development funding. For projects that do include, for example, the use of authentic assessment, or the implementation of Universal Design for Learning, or the engagement with grades and equity gaps dashboard, or the redesign of a course. So, what I'm trying to say is that if you do participate in an FLC, that helps you with your pedagogy, then you can also apply for a scholarship of teaching and learning grant that can turn what you're learning in the FLC into your scholarship and into a publication. So, I hope that you see these opportunities as working together to really support your growth as a teacher, as a scholar, and ultimately can help you advance in your career, whether it's for tenure, or range elevation as a lecturer, but we hope that we can clarify the connections that all these programs have and the opportunities that you can take advantage of.

19:40

I would say one thing I think that's a plus for any of these FLCs just in the ways that they've been designed, it really caters to multiple disciplines and I believe Mark mentioned this in his overview, but it's kind of a come as you are situation. So come from whatever field or whatever discipline you're in with whatever work that you're doing, and we will teach you ways to adapt and expand that work, those creations, that teaching, to really align to some of the larger strategic priorities or to focus our efforts on things like sustainability, climate justice and resilience, closing the equity gaps, or creating more innovative and inclusive pedagogy. So, no matter where you are, or what you're doing, you can reasonably just meet us, we will meet you where you're at. And you can come and expand upon what it is you're already doing well and I think that's important.

20:41

Can I add one thing, Jamie? I think that I really appreciate how you clarify that, you know, come as you are. And we, I strongly believe that everyone can contribute something to these faculty learning communities, I mean, they're called a community for a reason. And while sometimes, offering them as specific days and times makes participation a little bit harder, we do want to make sure that in addition to more flexible workshops, in addition to other events, that we do offer some faculty learning

community where indeed a community can develop out of the conversations. And so, we rely on faculty that have more expertise that have been here longer for some sort of institutional history and their experience. But we also rely on, for example, lecturers that can bring the professional experience into the mix. We rely on new tenure track faculty that are coming from research one universities and have that sort of approach to academia. And so, I agree with Jamie that we want to make sure that we clarify how there's really room for everyone and everyone's expertise, everyone's discipline, everyone's experience in these FLC to create a community that is greater than every individual faculty.

22:25

And there you have it, folks. Today we toured the spring 2022 Faculty Learning Communities, and for more information, I encourage you to explore the resources associated with this episode on our FDEV podcast web page. I'd like to thank our guests Dr. Chiara Ferrari, Erik Wasinger and Mark Stemen for contributing to this episode and for their hard work in providing engaging and expansive learning opportunities for our campus. A big thank you to you for listening and until next time, we got this Wildcats!