We misidentified the group in the first picture below, in the introduction -- and we are sorry! The group in the photo is actually the 2015 Faculty Teaching Learning Academy at Los Angeles Community College District, not Foothill College FTLA as was previously noted in the caption. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,
Olivia Loy
Director of Communications
The RP Group

When the Strengthening Student Success Conference (SSSC) began 12 years ago, "professional development" was a concept and practice that was typically restricted to the occasional professional conference and broadly-focused campus flex day (days void of instruction or students so that staff and faculty could align around campus-wide topics of concern).

These limited approaches to professional development inspired us at the RP Group to design the Strengthening Student Success Conference to be a different professional learning experience. Specifically, we wanted to help colleges break down silos and create a space where educators across departments, divisions, and offices could share their work and learn from each other.

In the early years of the conference it was challenging to find college work and research to highlight. The conference committee had to seek out session material, and particularly ideas that were backed up by data and had demonstrated effects on student success.

Much has changed over the last decade.

Institutions and educators have become more committed locally, statewide, and nationally to increasing student success and completion by critically examining the student experience, breaking through silo walls, and productively using data to assess outcomes.

As part of this sea of change, it has become clear that the area of professional learning and development has changed as well, namely, colleges are increasingly investing in professional learning infrastructure and support for all educators.
Specifically, in organizing this year’s conference, we have observed a notable rise in the number of college professional development academies, institutes, communities, and groups on community college campuses throughout the state. While each of these types of professional development opportunities varies in their approach and focus, all are aimed at helping educators grow and improve in order to increase student success.

Although a few college academies and institutes have been in existence for a while (the Los Angeles Community College District, for example, began their Faculty Teaching and Learning Academy in 2008), this year, we are seeing a jump in college-based professional development programs (academies, institutes, professional learning communities, inquiry groups, and more) as reflected in proposals submitted to the Strengthening Student Success Conference.

This is a marked change, and perhaps a tipping point year, where it seems evident that colleges are taking action to make opportunities for educator growth at all levels - from administration to faculty, to staff -- which has always been a critical, though largely overlooked, aspect of student learning.

Below are summaries of ideas and topics in six proposals we received, some of which will be featured as sessions at the 2017 Strengthening Student Success Conference. Please reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,
Rose Asera, PhD
Program and Professional Learning Developer
The RP Group

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**Equity Pedagogy Matters: The Urgency of a New Faculty Institute (NFI)**

**Evolution of Faculty Leadership: Creating Leaders Through Faculty Learning Communities**

**Faculty Teaching Learning Academy at Foothill College: Reflecting on the First Year**

**Planting Seeds for a Culture of Equity with a New Faculty Professional Learning Institute**

**Student Equity and Success: Part-time and Full-Time Faculty Engagement in Faculty Learning Communities**

**From the Ground Up: A Grassroots Effort to Institutionalize Culture Change and Develop Success Initiatives Via Broad-Based Inquiry Groups**
asks new faculty to participate in a cross-disciplinary, cohort-based, Professional Learning Community that explains both the theory behind and best practices in enacting equity pedagogy.

The goal of the New Faculty Institute is to create safe spaces for faculty to discuss, wrestle with, and ultimately apply research-based best practices in empowering, encouraging, and equipping all students to reach their full potential.

Why
Most community college educators are not required to complete coursework on teaching and learning prior to working with students. Instead, according to the College, faculty are deemed competent based on their content level mastery, which is problematic because it places content mastery higher in importance than the needs of the learners, which can then reinforce and perpetuate inequitable educational practices.

Initial Outcomes
Data has shown that this program increased participants’ pedagogical knowledge as well as their confidence in integrating new, equity-based approaches to teaching and learning. In a survey conducted after completion of the NFI, the vast majority of participants said they:

- began to focus on differentiating their instruction;
- have a better understanding of the need of positioning their students' life experiences as instructional anchors;
- design their work now so it invites students to apply ideas such as equity, fairness, and or justice; are now aware that some students face race-based obstacles that other students do not.

In addition, most NFI participants mentioned the necessity and timeliness of this type of institute.

Evolution of Faculty Leadership: Creating Leaders Through Faculty Learning Communities

Skyline College

What
The Faculty Learning Community (FLC) at Skyline College supports collaboration with other faculty teaching the course through "high-challenge, high-support" instruction and also offers a place to develop leadership skills. The FLC, which includes pedagogy workshops and meetings, was a response to the creation of a pilot, open access, co-requisite, transfer-level English course. Skyline created the five-unit accelerated course to give access to students who would have previously been in developmental English.
When the pilot scaled up to 21 sections, the English department created the Faculty Learning Community for faculty who taught the course to support the evolution of their pedagogy in order to provide robust support for the enrolled students.

Skyline also created the FLC because it believes that faculty leadership, partnered with administrative leadership, is necessary for producing instructional and institutional change and improving equitable outcomes for students. Often, according to Skyline educators, faculty members remark that they do not have any interest in going into administration – overlooking and devaluing the leadership traits that they possess. The collaboration of leadership and administration inspired leaders at Skyline to address the need to promote faculty leadership and help develop models for faculty leaders.

**Initial Outcomes**
The initial data shows that after the new, FLC-supported course, Black-Non-Hispanic, Filipino, and Hispanic students had greater access to transfer-level English. In Fall 2010, only 44 percent of Filipino and 44 percent of Hispanic students passed transfer-level English. In the accelerated course, 87 percent of Filipino students, and 65 percent of Hispanic students successfully completed the accelerated English course.

Leadership has also expanded as a result of the FLC. New faculty leaders have emerged to facilitate the FLC, and other faculty in English have initiated new leadership roles within the department and division.

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**Faculty Teaching Learning Academy at Foothill College: Reflecting on the First Year**

**Foothill College**

**Full Session to be Presented at SSSC 2017**

**What**
Foothill College brought Faculty Teaching Learning Academy (FTLA) to its campus in the Summer of 2016, based on the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) academy of the same name that has been shared throughout the California Community College Success Network (3CSN) Community of Practice. The initial group at Foothill included 10 STEM and language arts faculty and is aimed at designing student-centered classrooms using equity-mindful practices, providing training on innovative technology that enhances the student experience, and creating opportunities for dialogue on pedagogy and curriculum.

Using a collaborative teaching effort, facilitators and participants begin their FTLA journey by identifying their "why" for teaching, and then, remembering that students are first and discussing how they experience the classroom, participants redesign their class.

**Why**
The idea for FTLA at Foothill was initially inspired by one of the college's English teachers who believed it could help support the college's equity plan. It was also implemented to more deeply involve faculty in the conversation of equity, to help build trust among participants, and to facilitate a better understanding of the ways that the education system has perpetuated the inequities among student populations.

**Initial Outcomes**
The Foothill College FTLA has been sharing their work throughout their district, including presenting to their board, at the 3CSN Equity Institute, and in October, will present at the
Since ending the academy in May 2017, they continue to meet on a monthly basis to share and discuss their teaching practice.

Participants in the LACCD FTLA have also reported changes in their teaching practice, most notably, high levels of collaboration with colleagues, as well as observing increases in student engagement and performance in their classes.

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Planting Seeds for a Culture of Equity with a New Faculty Professional Learning Institute

**Mt. San Antonio College**

*Full Session to be Presented at SSSC 2017*

**What**

With 54 new full-time faculty arriving on campus in 2017, Mt. San Antonio College seized the opportunity to impact the campus for years to come though a special year-long institute themed specifically around equity teaching and learning.

An outcomes-based model was used to guide the program, and innovative models were used in session design. One such model used for the program was a "pair questionnaire," in which partners interviewed one another and recorded responses. Mt. San Antonio also put forth a "quick check" on early term retention where facilitators asked two yes-or-no questions and for one single-sentence follow-up.

**Why**

The College recognized that change is difficult, and that once people establish methods of conducting their work (such as classroom teaching style), modifying what they do is complicated. Working with newer faculty -- especially those just entering an institution in a full-time capacity -- allows growth and development of a student success culture through a group who are still formulating their institutional role and, in many cases, classroom instructional style.

**Initial Outcomes**

Solid data, dialogue, and an increase in participants' understanding of equity were the result of the institute’s first year.

Mid-year assessments also showed that two-thirds of participants had already implemented equity-related pedagogy approaches in their classroom and 82 percent intend to do so in future terms. Over 90 percent are familiar with multiple equity population support services on campus and have referred one or more students to those services.

Also emerging from the institute were 39 new and distinct classroom strategies used by new faculty in their classroom to try to improve early-term retention. These strategies included: "sharing my personal story of struggle," "smiling more and inviting more questions," "playing music as students walk in," and more.

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Student Equity and Success: Part-time and Full-Time Faculty Engagement in Faculty Learning Communities

**Los Angeles Mission College**

*Full Session to be Presented at SSSC 2017*
What
Los Angeles Mission College (LAMC) formed Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) to include full- and part-time faculty aimed at forming an interdisciplinary group to learn about successful implementation of pedagogical practices for effective teaching and to share outcomes.

The faculty participated in four, hands-on workshops facilitated by professionals in the field, followed by an implementation presentation day. To encourage participation, part-time faculty were awarded stipends.

Why
With the increasing number of underrepresented students, all colleges have developed an Equity Plan to implement methodologies to improve student success. The FLC was one strategy implemented at LAMC to address Equity Plan Outcomes and to improve the success of its large populations of minority (87 percent of student body as defined by CCCO data) and first-generation students (55 percent), who have faced significant challenges in succeeding in their courses.

Initial Outcomes
The faculty and student surveys are subjective methods that can be used to assess the effectiveness of these workshops. Overall, the faculty rated these workshops as extremely helpful and expressed interest in implementing the techniques they learned.

From the Ground Up: A Grassroots Effort to Institutionalize Culture Change and Develop Success Initiatives Via Broad-Based Inquiry Groups

Cerro Coso Community College
Full Session to be Presented at SSSC 2017

What
Cerro Coso College used Inquiry Groups to engage staff, faculty, students, and administrators in developing success initiatives broad enough for both instructional and non-instructional units to embrace.

The Inquiry Groups delved into the RP Group's Student Support (Re)defined study's "Six Success Factors" to develop institutional initiatives aimed at making the student experience more connected, focused, and directed, which was no easy feat for this unique rural college with a large online program, five satellite campuses and an emerging inmate education program. This interactive session will provide a synopsis of how a college's grassroots effort led to the adoption of success initiatives that resulted in broad-based cultural change.

Why
Colleges struggle with developing student success initiatives that are embraced by the college community as a whole. Because one of the instructional groups conducted student focus groups (onsite and online) with students from backgrounds that reflected the demographics of the college, findings were reflective of the actual population of students and avoided common skepticism surrounding research that is not reflective nor accurate as a result.

Initial Outcomes
Several initiatives, developed as "toolkits" came out of the instructional groups including one designed to help faculty refer students to support services by providing them with a comprehensive resource guide filled with tools and resources they need to direct students to the right place on campus.

Every unit/department at the college has adopted or has committed to adopt one of the initiatives to keep students connected, directed, and focused.
Connect to your peers, resources, and knowledge: join us on social media!

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