**Faculty Academy Syllabus**

**2022**

**Description**

Most community college instructors have never taken a course in education or pedagogy. Though experts in their fields, faculty often do not have the skills to reach all their students and don’t have a support system that guides them in trying new approaches in their classrooms. This has contributed to the large equity gaps we see across higher education.

Ventura College’s [Award Winning Faculty Academy](https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/News-and-Media/Press-Releases/2021-exemplary-program-awards) serves as a learning community that is focused on improving instruction and equity in higher education. The academy helps faculty in student-centered instruction, communication and engagement, with a focus on equity mindedness anti-biased practices in the classroom. It provides a supportive peer centered environment to rethink how students learn while exploring innovative techniques to reach and teach students who have challenges in traditional classrooms and/or have diverse learning styles due to unique cultural backgrounds, socioeconomics, or additional factors.

**Outcomes**

* Recognize personal biases both implicit and complicit and address how they impact teaching practices and hinder student success
* Integrate classroom teaching practices that provide access to the curriculum for all students, especially those affected by equity gaps
* Evaluate teaching practices for various classroom formats
* Assess the major challenges for student success in the classroom and explore and implement potential solutions
* Review the research base of best practices for providing culturally sensitive, anti-biased teaching to ensure student success
* Practice new strategies and share with the learning community
* Develop faculty commitment to sharing resources and best practices regarding equity mindedness, cultural competency, anti-biased practices and universal designs for learning

**Texts and Readings**

Faculty Academy is not centered on one textbook nor one pedagogical expert. There will be a variety of materials, both written and media sources, to expand each individual’s knowledge base. Suggested texts for participants include:

Ken Burns, *What the Best College Teachers Do*

Zeretta L. Hammond, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*

Donald L. Finkel, *Teaching with Your Mouth Shut*

**Format**

Faculty Academy runs a full year, beginning in January (spring semester) and finishing the following December (end of fall semester). Participants receive .1 release time. The group meets once per week for 1.25 hours (on Zoom until the pandemic abates).

**Attendance/Participation**

We ask all participants to commit to the Faculty Academy for one full year (spring and fall). Consistent, weekly attendance is essential in creating a cohesive cohort of faculty supporting and learning from one another. And because participants receive release time, an absence from FA is treated the same as an absence from class (i.e. appropriate forms must be filled out).

**Outside of Class Participation**

As a member of the Faculty Academy, you will have the opportunity to read and process the many materials presented and be ready to share your takeaways with your fellow cohort faculty on a weekly basis. By the end of the year, you will have implemented at least 4-5 new strategies/lessons in your class(es). Throughout the year, sharing of challenges and successes with your cohort is encouraged.

**Facilitation**

The facilitators’ role is primarily to act as a “guides on the side.” Acknowledging we are all experts in our field, but may have never had a class in pedagogy, we will be bringing outside consultants and or guests who are experts in equity-based, anti-biased, culturally sensitive teaching and learning practices. We will also tap into the wealth of resources of current and past Faculty Academy participants.

**Session Topics**

The Faculty Academy’s annual curriculum is intentionally fluid and decided upon with input from each cohort. Ideally, each cohort’s curriculum takes into account the interests of the group, the current cultural climate, unique challenges in the classroom, the college and the wider community (ex: pandemic learning). For reference, the 2020 and 2021 (pandemic cohorts) syllabi have included the following topics (listed alphabetically):

* Active Listening Skills for Hearing the Un-heard Voice
* Authentic Assessment Across the Curriculum
* Creating Culturally Sensitive Syllabi
* Experiencing and Applying Inquiry-based Learning
* Exploring the Power of Why in Teaching Methods/Curriculum
* Feedback Forum: How Useful (or Not) is My Feedback?
* Fostering an Open, Trusting Classroom Climate from Day One
* Fostering Authentic Student-to-Student Interactions, Online & IRL
* How Democratic Is My Classroom?
* How to Ask Better Questions
* How to Foster Students’ Growth Mind-Set
* Implementing The Power of Students’ Stories
* Making Sense of Our Equity Data
* Mediating Difficult Conversations
* Strategies for Approaching Current Outside Issues in the Classroom
* On Accountability: How to Get Students to Come to Class Prepared
* On Grading and Ungrading
* Teaching for Critical Consciousness
* Uncovering Personal Implicit and Complicit Biases and Micro-Aggressions
* What Do the Best College Teachers Do?  A Brief Look at the Work of Ken Bain (and others)
* Why Are Men Giving Up on College?

**Assessment and Evaluation of Faculty Academy**

You will be offered the opportunity to analyze (confidentially) your individual classes and or course’s equity-gaps by race, age, and gender.

A pre-test/post test data set will be provided for you to personally assess the effectiveness of the implementation of new strategies.

Collectively aggregated (anonymous) data will be collected and presented to faculty participants, facilitators, as well as being provided to administrators to document the efficacy of Faculty Academy on closing the equity gaps.

You will also be invited to participate in a program evaluation of your Faculty Academy experience and the effectiveness of the format and facilitators.

**Outreach and Dissemination**

As a current Faculty Academy member and in the role eventually of an alum, you will be invited to participate in future workshops and Flex-day events as well as to disseminate what you have gleaned from Faculty Academy at your department meetings and or informally with your colleagues. We hope you will embrace a new role as an ambassador for Faculty Academy.