

Supporting Faculty Development Through Policy and Practice

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Over the last decade, we have seen significant advances in equity-minded reform of longstanding educational practices to increase college access and completion, thanks in part to the efforts of faculty. Today, for example, [at least 25 states](#) are implementing multiple measures placement and corequisite remediation to lower barriers for students to access credit-bearing courses and the supports needed for success. Changes such as these are doubling and even tripling [success rates](#), with students from persistently marginalized and racially minoritized communities being given a fairer shot at becoming confident and successful learners on a clear path to graduation. We are talking specifically about increasing rates for Black, Brown, Asian American and Indigenous students, adult learners and students with low incomes.

While the work of researchers and the subsequent efforts of policymakers and administrators have ushered in changes like these, the ultimate success of any such innovation or reform lies with faculty. Faculty have the most direct impact on students' experiences, helping to shape their conceptions of themselves as learners and college students, and building not just their capabilities but their confidence. Without the passion and incredibly hard work of faculty, student success simply wouldn't be possible.

During the pandemic, faculty voiced a need for support.

The calls from faculty for substantive professional support could not have been more apparent than during the pandemic. Based on a Carnegie Math Pathways survey of 300 faculty in March 2021, educators overwhelmingly voiced a need for quality professional development to help them be more effective with online instruction and with teaching in general. The need for support in three critical areas arose from the responses:

1. Instructional practices that promote equitable and inclusive student engagement and success remotely.
2. Specific tools to foster collaborative and independent learning online and which can be easily applied in both in-classroom and remote settings.
3. Robust training on how to use these tools and other instructional technology.

While born from the associated increase in remote learning during the pandemic, the overarching message is clear: Faculty need support to foster the necessary changes in the practice.

They need time to commit to their own professional learning, and they need examples of best practices, with guidance on how they can be applied in their own classrooms (virtual or otherwise). They want connections to others with whom they can learn, share and grow their practice. In the case of the Carnegie Math Pathways, these findings reinforced a model of robust professional development with peer learning and the use of technology to strengthen student engagement and collaboration, an approach

development with peer learning and the use of technology to strengthen student engagement and collaboration, an approach that has demonstrated the same high [success rates](#) online as in person.

Faculty offer expertise in corequisite implementation.

Administrators and policymakers can gain insights from faculty experiences during the pandemic, particularly with respect to implementing and continuously improving reforms like corequisite remediation.

The 2020 update of the SStF [Core Principles](#) includes for the first time explicit attention to implementation considerations and the necessity of effectively supporting faculty and staff. Reformers increasingly are recognizing that most failures of innovation are, in fact, failures of implementation. When it comes to implementing and scaling corequisite remediation, for example, faculty in multiple areas play a critical role in creating the learning experiences and classroom and institutional climate worthy of our students. Ensuring quality learning — and achieving equity in opportunity and outcomes for Black, Brown, Asian American and Indigenous students, adult learners and students with low-incomes — requires meeting the needs of faculty and investing in their success.

Providing faculty with support is a shared responsibility.

Aligning good policy with the practical resources necessary to ensure reforms are successfully implemented is hard, ongoing work. But senior leaders can prioritize evidence-based reforms and the corresponding [support for the vital mid-level leaders](#) who powerfully shape faculty experience. And state and system policymakers can set the terms of reforms by attaching the resources necessary for effective implementation of the models that work for today's students. For corequisite remediation for example, reformers agree that it pays for itself over time through increased retention and completion, but that successful implementation requires up-front support for faculty to learn new ways of designing courses and supporting student learning.

Leaders at every level have a vital role to play in ensuring faculty receive the support they need to implement new models and provide students with the high-quality education they need and deserve.

[◀ Faculty Are Key to Student Success](#)

[Lessons from Corequisite Math Reform ▶](#)

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