

OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Student Learning Experience
Task Force Report**

May 15, 2023

Executive Summary

Introduction

The OTC Student Learning Experience Task Force was formed by the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in fall 2021 to examine the current student learning experience across the college. The college realizes that not every student is getting an optimal learning experience. The task force was charged with identifying recommendations to improve the student learning experience.

For the purposes of the task force, the “student learning experience” was defined as “the relationships, processes, and perceptions that support and directly develop student learning.” The scope of this project was Academic Affairs. The rationale for conducting the task force work was three-fold:

1. To better provide an optimal student learning experience for all students.
2. To improve the student completion and retention across the college.
3. To examine our teaching and learning delivery, practices, procedures, processes, policies, and supports in order to create and implement strategic improvements.

Method

The Student Learning Experience Task Force members conducted a review of the existing literature and research on the student learning experience and surveyed and interviewed various stakeholders, including current students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Literature and results were reviewed, discussed, and organized during task force meetings, as well as in smaller workgroups.

Findings and Recommendations

The OTC Student Learning Experience Task Force identified several key findings regarding the student learning experience at OTC. The findings are organized into five themes with a guiding principle of prioritizing and valuing quality teaching and learning at OTC. It is important to note that the five themes are not presented in order of importance. Instead, they are interdependent, and no single theme can be fully addressed without considering the impact it has on other themes. In other words, the five themes are interconnected, and implementing recommendations in one theme can lead to improvement in others:

1. Effective Learning Environments
2. Evidence-Based High Impact Practices (HIPs) for Teaching
3. Intentional Engagement and Interaction of Students and Faculty
4. Academic Support for Students and Faculty
5. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Conclusion

These recommendations serve as a guide for improving the student learning experience and demonstrating that OTC prioritizes and values quality teaching and learning. The recommendations can be used for planning and decision-making at multiple levels, including across the institution, among divisions, within departments, and for faculty.

Members of the Student Learning Experience Task Force

Steering Committee

Dr. Julie Coltharp - Dean of Online and Faculty Development (2021-2023)

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OTC Student Learning Experience Task Force Report

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For the purposes of the task force, the “student learning experience” was defined as “the relationships, processes, and perceptions that support and directly develop student learning.”

The scope of this project was focused within Academic Affairs. While recommendations for collaboration or cooperation with other areas of the college exist, the task force did not deeply explore those. The rationale for conducting the task force work was three-fold:

1. To better provide an optimal student learning experience for all students.
2. To improve the student completion and retention across the college.
3. To examine our teaching and learning delivery, practices, procedures, processes, policies, and supports in order to create and implement strategic improvements.

Subsequently, the task force aimed to identify viable recommendations for implementation to better ensure that every student at OTC is getting an optimal learning experience. This report summarizes data collected and reviewed and provides five themes, each with goals and multiple recommendations, for improving the student learning experience. To successfully move forward with implementing the recommendations across the five themes, the task force identified a guiding principle of *prioritizing and valuing quality teaching and learning*.

Research to Inform Recommendations

The following section summarizes research that was conducted and feedback that was solicited for task force purposes, as well as other informative research and reports available to the task force. The task force examined each of the following:

Fall 2021: Clearing Canvas Confusion Report

In fall 2021, Honors student Shannon McKaig Buffington wrote and submitted the report "Clearing Canvas Confusion" to the Center for Academic Innovation Advisory Committee. The purpose of the report was to examine student experiences related to Ozarks Technical Community College's learning management system (LMS), Canvas. Buffington distributed a survey to student groups at OTC, with 57 students responding. Additionally, a small sample of instructors (4) were also surveyed. The survey responses focused on student frustration with course inconsistencies in the LMS, including the home page layout and navigation difficulties.

Results revealed that a majority of students (79%) believed that courses in the LMS should have a consistent home page. Moreover, 58% of students reported having difficulties with course navigation "Sometimes" or "Often."

Spring 2022: Student Voices

In spring 2022, Strategic Initiative One Goal Group Three (SI1 G3) captured the student voice in the Student Voices. The purpose was to gather information about the students' perspective of their classroom learning experiences.

They used mixed methods to gather data, which included the following:

- Direct interviews with 14 students
- OTC-101 students in seated classes were asked questions in a focus group format
- OTC-101 students in online classes were asked to complete an online survey
 - 65 students responded to six open-ended questions about challenges and successes;
 - 44 students responded to memorable moments;
 - 30 students responded to classroom experience.
- Students in a business communication class were asked a question a day in a round-robin format.

Participants included students in their first semester through students with one semester remaining.

Fall 2022: Faculty Voices

Full-time and adjunct faculty were invited to complete an electronic survey that was open from September 26–October 7, 2022. That survey was a combination of both closed and open-ended questions. Of the approximately 700 full-time and adjunct faculty in fall 2022, 111 faculty responded. The open-ended questions were reviewed by the Strategic Initiative One Goal Group Three (SI1 G3) and sorted into themes. From those themes, questions for the Faculty Voices Conversations were developed. The SI1 G3 group, in cooperation with the Faculty Senate, hosted seven Faculty Voices Conversations in late October 2022. These informal gatherings were held at four OTC locations, and faculty could participate in person or remotely. The notes taken from those sessions were also organized into themes.

Fall 2022: OTC Academic Support Discussion and Feedback

Academic Support at OTC includes tutoring, testing services, library services, disability support services, assessment of student learning, academic effectiveness, faculty development, and instructional support. Full-time staff from the Academic Support Division met to discuss their perceptions and roles in the student learning experience at OTC. The groups documented their responses, and all responses were compiled. Additionally, supervisors from each area were asked to meet with their departments and generate answers from their departments to the same questions. In small groups, staff answered and discussed prompts that were aligned with the Student Voices and the Faculty Voices.

Spring 2023: Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators

Administrators were invited to complete a confidential electronic survey during the fall 2022 semester. Of the 47 people invited, eight responded (17% response rate). Due to the low response rate and several task force administrative members saying they had not received the survey, the task force recommended reopening the survey. The survey was sent out again in January/February to those who did not respond in fall 2022 and 18 additional people, resulting in a total of 65 individuals receiving the survey. During the second round, an additional eight people responded, resulting in an overall response rate of 25% (16 out of 65).

2022 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is designed to provide information on learning-centered indicators pertaining to student engagement for community colleges. Results of the survey are published in a report which allows each participating community college the ability to compare their level of success with other community colleges across the nation. The CCSSE was administered at OTC in spring 2022. The task force reviewed and discussed the CCSSE results in fall 2022.

Themes, Goals, and Recommendations

The OTC Student Learning Experience Task Force voted on these recommendations, which present a set of crucial actions organized under five themes, illustrated in the image below. These actions are aimed at enhancing the student learning experience at OTC through the quality of teaching and learning. These recommendations are intended to be a starting point to guide teaching and learning initiatives at the college. By implementing these actions, the college can promote excellence in teaching and learning, nurture a culture of lifelong learning, and provide the necessary resources and support to ensure the success of both students and faculty.



The recommendations are intended to be used for guiding conversations, decision-making, and planning. Many of these recommendations are not specific because they may look different in action depending on the area of the college. The following section provides the goals and recommendations of each theme, as well as a reference to an appendix.

Theme One: Effective Learning Environments

Goals include providing environments in which students feel safe and supported to learn and ensuring necessary support and resources for faculty and students across all modalities.

Advancing these goals will require increased and continual collaboration across several areas of the college including Administrative Services, Academic Affairs, Student Success, and the Data Governance Council. The following recommendations will advance our efforts towards creating effective learning environments.

Goals

- Ensure learning spaces, learning opportunities, and courses (classrooms and content) are accessible, intuitive, and promote cooperation, civility, respect, and a sense of belonging.
- Establish and support a culture of collaboration and problem solving among faculty and staff.

See Appendix A for research.

Recommendations

Goal #1: Ensure learning spaces, learning opportunities, and courses (classrooms and content) are accessible, intuitive, and promote cooperation, civility, respect, and a sense of belonging.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Provide necessary support tools and resources for faculty and students across all course modalities.
2. Establish LMS course standards and utilize course shells to ease course navigation and reduce student cognitive load when accessing multiple courses.
3. Ensure that faculty and students are provided opportunities for proactive training on setting up, accessing, and using instructional technology for teaching and learning.
4. Ensure adequate and timely technical support during course delivery.
5. Review and assess Policy 2.21 - Proctored Events for Online Courses to better define and clarify the practice.
6. Provide collaborative and well-designed learning spaces including classrooms, library, computer labs, academic learning centers, etc.
7. Provide resources and encourage the faculty development and use of reusable and cost-effective classroom resources and manipulatives such as laminated handouts, printed magnet diagrams, white boards, etc.

Goal #2: Establish and support a culture of collaboration and problem-solving among faculty and staff.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Increase faculty, admission counselor, and college navigator collaborative practices to promote student use of academic supports.
2. Seek and incorporate input from faculty and academic support departments on course delivery and when planning, designing, and prior to purchasing classroom or instructional technology, equipment, and furniture.

Theme Two: Evidence-Based High Impact Practices (HIPs) for Teaching

Goals include expanding faculty adoption and implementation of evidence-based high impact practices (HIPs) for teaching, intentional course design and delivery, and the application of student learning in the world. Department chairs and program directors should actively encourage faculty experimentation and adoption of HIPs in course development and revision. Assistance and support with this theme may come from the academic department, faculty colleagues, industry partners, and the Center for Academic Innovation.

Goals

- Support faculty in the intentional and effective use of high impact practices (HIPs).
- Engage and support faculty in intentional course design.
- Increase collaborative and interdisciplinary student learning experiences, including co-curricular, to expand learning beyond the classroom.

See Appendix B for research.

Recommendations

Goal #1: Support faculty in the intentional and effective use of high impact practices (HIPs).
Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Develop ongoing programming around HIPs.
 - a. Develop a process for peer-to-peer course review and observation (beyond New Faculty Institute).
 - b. Offer faculty coaching/teaching practice sessions.
 - c. Promote the sharing of faculty practices and examples both informally and at a formal day/time (to include an assessment of student learning component).
 - d. Provide programming around HIPs.

Goal #2: Engage and support faculty in intentional course design.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Map course objectives and activities in 25% of courses by the end of the 2024-2025, 50% of courses by the end of 2025-2026, and 80% of courses by the end of 2026-2027 academic year.
2. Include active student learning, interdisciplinary opportunities, and course activities that include multiple perspectives and emulate real-world practices.
3. Provide students with a variety of ways to practice and demonstrate learning.
4. Balance and align formative and summative assessments.

Goal #3: Promote/increase collaborative and interdisciplinary learning experiences, including co-curricular, to expand learning beyond the classroom.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Develop additional service learning and internship opportunities for students.
2. Identify and promote events to support and expand co-curricular opportunities.
3. Support learning activities outside of the classroom, including student showcases, field trips, travel opportunities, and participation in professional organizations, conferences, and competitions.

Theme Three: Intentional Engagement and Interaction of Students and Faculty

Goals include strategies for faculty to leverage student engagement and interaction to promote learning, success, and retention. Strategies may vary by discipline, course, or learning objective and may involve departmental collaboration and oversight to maximize outcomes. Faculty should engage with department chairs, program directors, and/or academic deans in the effective implementation and continuous improvement of these strategies. Institutional Research may provide data analytics to measure learning and success, and the Center for Academic Innovation may be utilized to support experimentation, course development, and professional growth.

Goals

- Increase intentional engagement and interaction of students and faculty.
- Encourage student-to-student and student-to-college interaction and engagement.

See Appendix C for research.

Recommendations

Goal #1: Facilitate intentional engagement and interaction of students and faculty.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Emphasize the learning process, student learning progress, and the applicability of course content to real world experiences.
2. Ensure faculty provide timely responses and meaningful feedback to students, with an emphasis on online courses.
3. Take steps across the college to effectively measure and ensure course quality across all modalities.
4. Maximize faculty use of evidence-based HIPs in all courses, as outlined in Theme Two.
5. Provide students opportunities to provide course input, make decisions about learning activities, and create information.
6. Embed intentional community building practices that promote inclusivity and belonging.
7. Provide opportunities for student-to-student collaboration beyond and between classrooms.
8. Encourage faculty to minimize the amount of lecture time, create their own content rather than solely relying on publisher materials, record instructional videos no longer than seven minutes, and incorporate other evidence-based HIPs.

Goal #2: Encourage student-to-student and student-to-college interaction and engagement throughout the college.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Increase peer-peer student learning opportunities, including working with other students on projects during class.
2. Encourage group study sessions outside of class with optional facilitation from Academic Support.
3. Promote and facilitate students working with each other outside of class to prepare class assignments.
4. Increase just-in-time student use of academic support resources.

Theme Four: Academic Support for Students and Faculty

Goals include examining how the college can strategically provide effective, efficient, and holistic academic support to both students and faculty to further support student learning. The college should specifically address the unique needs and barriers of adjunct faculty. These include access to resources, support, and professional development. Supervisors should be proactive in creating a sense of belonging for new adjunct faculty.

Goals

- Value and prioritize a college-wide culture of continuous improvement for faculty, courses, programs, and academic processes and support.
- Provide adequate staffing and effective, timely support for instruction (instructional and technical) for both students and faculty.
- Increase awareness and use of available resources and academic support by faculty and students.
- Identify and address faculty restrictions and barriers with a focus on adjunct faculty.

See Appendix D for research.

Recommendations

Goal #1: Value and prioritize a college-wide culture of continuous improvement for faculty, courses, programs, and academic processes and support.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Encourage, promote, and support faculty professional learning and development.
2. Provide faculty adequate and sufficient time for professional learning.
3. Increase utilization of the Center for Academic Innovation.
4. Provide adequate resources for internal and external professional development.
5. Encourage inter-departmental academic collaboration and networking.
6. Encourage all programs, as part of their periodic review process, to analyze their course alignment through curriculum mapping and intentional course design.

Goal #2: Provide adequate staffing and effective support for instruction (instructional and technical) for both students and faculty.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Provide effective and sufficient instructional, technical, and classroom teaching and learning support for courses in all modalities and at all locations. This includes IT and the Center for Academic Innovation staffing, support response times, trainings, and resources to ensure that neither faculty nor students experience accessibility disruptions or course quality degradation.
2. Provide adequate services and support at times they are needed (e.g., after hours).

Goal #3: Increase awareness and use of available resources and academic support by faculty and students.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Market and communicate resources and academic support so faculty can connect students to resources at the right time, including Academic Early Alert and other OTC Cares reporting.
2. Increase faculty/staff communication, opportunities, and relationship building around collaborative efforts to promote student success.
3. Embed resources related to learning readiness and student barriers to success for each modality into student onboarding and advising.

Goal #4: Identify and address faculty restrictions and process barriers.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Examine and identify possible solutions to adjunct faculty hourly restrictions and benefits.
2. Ensure adjunct faculty connection and engagement with their academic department and division.
3. Provide more intentional hiring and effective onboarding practices for all faculty.
 - a. Review processes around employment timing, payroll, communication of new hires (internal and external) for efficiency and effectiveness with an emphasis on the employee experience.
 - b. Improve communication and awareness of faculty expectations at the college, Academic Affairs, and departmental levels.

Theme Five: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Goals include items for future examination by the college. These include a review of processes to ensure they meet the current needs and demands for providing an optimal student learning experience. College administration should consider these goals in strategic planning and resource allocation.

Goals

- Examine faculty workload expectations, management, and scheduling.
- Enhance the quality and effectiveness of faculty performance evaluations.
- Reduce barriers and provide increased faculty access to professional learning/development opportunities.
- Ensure holistic assessment and delivery of high-quality courses and programs across all modalities.
- Adapt and align the college's academic offerings and delivery to meet student, workforce, and community needs.

See Appendix E for research.

Recommendations

Goal #1: Examine faculty workload expectations, management, and scheduling.

Recommendations to achieve this goal include:

1. Review faculty teaching loads and overload policy for effectiveness.
2. Examine faculty salaries, equity, and explore alternative options (e.g., faculty salary tiers).
3. Clarify and ensure that teaching loads include adequate and ongoing time for reflective practice.

4. Examine and clarify college development days, faculty development days, and adjunct educator conference goals and timing; establish a dedicated, alternate day dedicated to sharing, celebrating, and advancing teaching and learning excellence.
5. Consider adjusting course schedules to create common meeting times when classes are not in session (some OTC locations already do this).
6. Consider the development of an adjunct faculty pool to help proactively staff courses and reduce faculty overloads as needed.
7. Provide ongoing monitoring and assessment of competing faculty work demands, work environment (both inside and outside of the classroom), and changes in the higher education landscape and corresponding impacts on the student learning experience and workforce.

Goal #2: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of faculty performance evaluations.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Review and assess the timing and process of all faculty performance evaluations.
2. Review and assess Policy 3.13 - Professional Development Plan to better align and integrate professional development meaningfully into faculty performance evaluations.
3. Promote the intentional faculty use of data to refine and improve instructional content and practice.

Goal #3: Reduce barriers and provide increased faculty access to professional learning/development opportunities.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Prioritize opportunities that allow faculty to innovate and collaborate with colleagues, develop, and practice new teaching strategies.
2. Understand faculty motivation to reinforce and emphasize the priority of faculty professional learning.
3. Align professional development to meet the needs of faculty, courses, and programs.
4. Assess professional development for effectiveness.

Goal #4: Ensure holistic assessment and delivery of high-quality courses across all modalities.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Examine the effectiveness of college policies and processes regarding course quality.
2. Develop and implement a standard course review process to ensure high course quality and delivery, across all modalities.
3. Ensure that academic administrators understand and have tools to review and evaluate course quality and delivery.
4. Revise academic supervisor evaluations to ensure that there is accountability for academic quality.

Goal #5: Adapt and align the college's academic offerings and delivery to meet student, workforce, and community needs.

Recommendations to achieve this goal:

1. Explore college options for competency-based education and credit for prior learning.
2. Expand short-term training offerings.
3. Promote and increase the use of tools and data to improve and align programs, instructional content, and practice.

Summary

While the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is ultimately responsible for teaching and learning success, the implementation of these recommendations will require collaboration and support from stakeholders across the college. Even small steps toward a commitment to teaching and learning excellence can make a large impact on a student's learning experience.

This document solidifies the linkages between academic success in the classroom and the college's mission and strategic plan. Through these recommendations, we can promote greater integration, prioritizing, valuing, and support of teaching and learning excellence.

Commitment to Success

OTC's commitment to providing optimal student learning experiences hinges on its vision for excellence in teaching and learning. That vision is what unifies our efforts, and must be embraced by not only the faculty, but the entire college. As such, this shared vision must also align with the college's strategic plan. Successful implementation will also require administrative buy-in and support.

Furthermore, this work cannot be done in isolation or by any one individual. Teaching and learning components and support are embedded in multiple areas of the college. Institutional, divisional, programmatic, and individual approaches should align and work together to ensure implementation success.

Leadership and Evaluation

Leadership and accountability may need to be assigned to an existing or new governance group to ensure that actions are carried out, evaluated, and revised accordingly for continuous improvement. It will be imperative to maintain a holistic and college-wide approach to excellence in teaching and learning, with an emphasis on the design and delivery of the student learning experience. Possible existing partners include Academic Council, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, the Center for Academic Innovation Advisory Committee, Academic Support, and the Center for Academic Innovation. Another avenue would be to create a committee or sub-committee around teaching and learning excellence.

This report should be considered a living document that serves as an accurate and timely foundation for excellence in teaching and learning. Review should be an ongoing component for maintaining its adaptability and success as the college continues to evolve. Maintaining and keeping this document relevant and front-of-mind will help ensure OTC delivers an optimal student learning experience.

Appendix A

Theme One: Effective Learning Environments

External Supporting Statements

“...learning environments may be one of the easiest and highest-reward decisions an institution can make, and it may produce the biggest returns in improved student experience and learning.” -- (2022 *Educause Horizon Report: Teaching and learning edition*. EDUCAUSE Library. (2022, May). (p. 33). <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2022/4/2022-educause-horizon-report-teaching-and-learning-edition>)

“...working conditions shape the ways that faculty do their work, which in turn affects student experiences.” -- (Pullias Center for Higher Education (2020) as cited in The Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities. (2022). *Boyer 2030 Commission report*. UERU. (p. 26). <https://ueru.org/boyer2030>)

OTC Findings

Classroom Design:

1. 53% of faculty responded that classrooms need better or different equipment: “more whiteboards (the glass boards are not a favored item)” and “mobile/modular podiums, desks, and chairs. Updated audio-visual equipment in the classrooms, such as cameras that better follow the instructor, were also requested.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 20)
2. 26% of faculty said physical space needs should be considered: “lighting, especially dimmer switches, was mentioned, as well as requests for windows that open...It was also mentioned that the classroom should match the class – if computers are not needed, the class shouldn’t be in a computer classroom.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 20)
3. 7% of faculty stated that the classrooms do not support active learning. They would like mobile seating and whiteboards. Faculty also mentioned “reasonable course caps.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 16)
4. Faculty prefer either seated or online classes, but not a mixture of the two. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 20)

Technology, LMS, Online-Related Items:

1. Difficulty with finding/accessing course materials, problems with eBook integrations, lack of course navigation continuity, outdated courses (e.g., broken links, missing items, old dates), proctored events. (Sources: Fall 2021 Clearing Canvas Confusion; Fall 2022 Academic Support Division Feedback; Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and

Other Administrators, p. 2)

2. Students want to learn through multiple modalities, including online, in-person, and virtual, and desire meaningful engagement with their peers, faculty, and staff. Students struggle with learning technologies and encounter barriers such as unexpected outages with publisher tools and technical glitches with proctoring software. There is a need to critically evaluate/re-evaluate publisher tools and content. There is also a need to reassess the proctoring policy or consider alternatives to verify student identity. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 3)
3. 17% of faculty would like easy technology and easier contact with IT when things go awry. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 20)

Appendix B

Theme Two: Evidence-Based High Impact Practices (HIPs) for Teaching

External Supporting Statements

“Research shows that students learn more and are more likely to succeed when research-proven pedagogical techniques are used...” -- (Student Experience Project (2022), Freeman et al. (2014), and Singer et al. (2012) as cited in The Association for Undergraduate Education at Research Universities. (2022). *Boyer 2030 Commission report*. UERU. (p. 26). <https://ueru.org/boyer2030>)

“...achieving the highest quality undergraduate course work and cocurricular learning should be—must be—equal if not superior to any competing or complementary institutional priority.” -- (*Boyer 2030 Commission report*. UERU. (2022). (p. 25). <https://ueru.org/boyer2030>)

“CTLs (Center for Teaching and Learning) (Centers for Teaching and Learning) are the principal institutional repository for pedagogical expertise and the principal institutional repository for professional development opportunities designed to disseminate research-based inclusive pedagogies.” -- (*Boyer 2030 Commission report*. UERU. (2022). (p. 26). <https://ueru.org/boyer2030>)

OTC Data

Active and Applied Learning

1. Nearly all faculty reported use of at least one form of “active learning instruction.” However, when asked about active learning by modality, the use of active learning instruction was significantly less common in online and hybrid/LVL modalities. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 9-10)
2. When asked what they would change about their classroom experience (seated or online), 22% of students “indicated that they would like more active learning experiences in the classroom or time in class to apply what they are learning.” When asked about in-class only interaction, 23% of students “crave group work and the interactions and collaborations that come from working with others.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)
3. When asked about the least successful classes, 8% noted “lack of applicability: they often correlated their least successful courses with those they felt didn’t apply to their long-term goals.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)
4. “48% of students talked about an example highlighting great practice or something that made the information more meaningful for them.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)
5. “12% of students found applicability to be a characteristic that made an assignment memorable. They talked about clinical experiences, making ‘connections to the real

world,' and opportunities to apply what they had learned. 11% reported a lack of apparent relevance in their learning.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)

Variety of Ways to Practice and Demonstrate Learning

1. OTC students scored their “academic challenges” over the course of an academic year lower than the CCSSEE survey’s cohort. The following items can be found under “Academic Challenges”:
 - **Analyze** (analyzing basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory): 38.1% said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 25.7%)
 - **New Ideas** (forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information): 39% said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 28.1%)
 - **Evaluate** (making judgements about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods): 53.5% said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 40.1%)
 - **Apply** (applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations): 43.7% said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 33.5%)
 - **Perform** (using information to perform a new skill): 37.4% said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 30.4%)

(Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)

2. 39.6% of students responded “never” for “made a class presentation” [over the past academic year], and 14.1% of students said they had “never worked with other students on projects during class” [over the past academic year]. (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)
3. 54.9% of students said “never or some” (compared to cohort’s 43.2%) when asked about working hard to meet instructor’s standards/expectations. (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)
4. 43.2% of students said they spent less than five hours/week studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, etc. for their combined courses over an academic year. (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)

Appendix C

Theme Three: Intentional Engagement and Interaction of Students and Faculty

External Supporting Statements

“...student engagement promotes learning quality and performance.” -- (Li, J., & Xue, E. (2023). Dynamic Interaction between Student Learning Behaviour and Learning Environment: Meta-Analysis of Student Engagement and Its Influencing Factors. *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(1), 59. MDPI AG. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/bs13010059>)

“Instructors should set clear expectations in classes, and their presence and ongoing high participation was indicated multiple times by the panel of experts as being highly influential on student retention. Ongoing monitoring and professional development for instructors may be necessary to help ensure these actions and activities are taking place in individual online courses.” -- (Heyman, E. (2010). Overcoming student retention issues in higher education online programs: A Delphi study (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest LLC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED520316>)

OTC Data

Engagement and Interaction: Classroom Connection

1. When asked about their successful classes, 9% described successful classes as “ambition, structured, clear expectations, collaborating, work, and tough love.” 10% “described being able to use their knowledge. They used words such as applying, opportunities, accounting, resources, useful.” 29% of students used words like “fun, enjoyable, easy, excited, happy, and laid back” to describe successful classes. (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)
2. 35% of student responses “related to interest, such as ‘boredom’ or ‘unpleasant.’” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices)
3. 22% of students defined their experience as inclusive, interactive, engaging, active, motivating, resourceful, and interesting. Students who made positive comments about their overall experience talked about their interactions, relationships, and experiences at OTC in a positive way. Students talked about instructors who were “supportive,” had a “calming presence,” or took time to build a relationship with their students. (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices, pp. 4 & 8)
4. Academic support staff were asked what they hear from students regarding their learning experience. The positive themes included small classes and instructors who were perceived as helpful, kind, and attentive. (Source: FA22 Academic Support Division Feedback)

5. 36% of faculty listed “engaged” as one of the words for describing “your most successful class.” Other words included active learning, hard-working, participation, prepared, and student community. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 5)
6. 25% of students had negative perceptions about their instructor. One student wrote, “it’s hard to kind of connect with the teacher and get help with any questions you have.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices, p. 5)
7. 29% of students “are disappointed with the lack of communication from some instructors, in both online and seated venues. Monotone voices, boring lectures, and non-specific assignment instructions were also mentioned multiple times. 26% of students “had comments/concerns about... the difficulty of trying to ask questions in an online class.” (Source: Spring 2022 Student Voices, p. 7)
8. 15% of faculty said “student disengagement” to describe their “least successful class.” Words used in this category included absent, apathy, disinterest, inattention, indifference, not engaged, and preoccupied. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 7)
9. When asked what they hear from faculty about their teaching experiences and classrooms, administrators responded that many faculty members express concerns about student engagement, particularly in online courses. Based on other data, we infer this concern extends to live online courses. They report that students sometimes appear disinterested in learning and may be more prone to cheating. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 2)
10. Students want interaction and engagement, especially in online courses. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 2-3)

Engagement and Interaction: Meaningful Feedback

1. 9.8% of students said they had “never” discussed grades or assignments with an instructor, 41.7% said “sometimes,” and 48.5% said “often or very often.” (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)
2. 6.9% of students said they “never” received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on their performance, 26.8% said “sometimes,” and 66.3% said “often or very often.” (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)
3. Administrators stated that students expressed “confusion about assignments, unresponsive instructors, not enough (or any) instructor feedback.” (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators)
4. Academic support staff were asked what they hear from students regarding their learning experience. The negative themes included lack of feedback from faculty and lack of clear direction in online courses (Source: FA22 Academic Support Division Feedback)

Student-to-Student and Student-to-College Interaction and Engagement

1. Several respondents mentioned the need for increased support for students in areas such as student life, scholarships, and targeted support for underserved minority groups. They also emphasized the importance of removing barriers and providing a positive learning environment that supports student success. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)
2. Students are looking for a sense of belonging with peers, faculty, and staff. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 3)

Appendix D

Theme Four: Academic Support for Students and Faculty

External Supporting Statements

“Research evidence...indicates that coordinated, systemic professional development efforts at postsecondary levels are related to improved student outcomes, including higher retention and graduation rates as well as greater faculty satisfaction, engagement, and sense of belonging (Condon et al., 2016).” -- (Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). (2016, November). Why Colleges and Universities Need to Invest in Quality Teaching More Than Ever. (p. 7). <https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ACUE-White-Paper1.pdf>)

“Given the overwhelming body of evidence that establishes links between quality faculty professional development, effective teaching, and higher student retention rates, it is clear that higher education institutions working to improve student outcomes must invest in the professional development of their faculty as a fundamental part of their overall strategic plan for student success.” -- (Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). (2016, November). Why Colleges and Universities Need to Invest in Quality Teaching More Than Ever. (p. 16). <https://acue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ACUE-White-Paper1.pdf>)

OTC Findings

Adequate Staffing and Effective Support for Instruction: Students

1. 73% of faculty expressed concern with the lack of “studenting” skills, including attending class, how to take notes, organizational skills, being prepared for class, utilizing resources, submitting assignments, and being an advocate for themselves. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 21)
2. 18% of faculty expressed concern about the incoming “academic knowledge” students have (or are lacking). They are concerned with how prepared students are coming out of high school. Students should have a foundational knowledge from the pre-requisite courses, but many do not. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 21)
3. When asked what should be examined related to the student learning experience, academic support staff highlighted the need for more resources for academic early alert, helping students be more aware of academic tools, and helping online students be more aware of resources and how to access them. (Source: FA22 Academic Support Division Feedback)

Available Resources and Academic Support: External Student Factors

1. “Four out of the top five stressors students struggle to cope with most relate to academics in some capacity: Students identified keeping up with coursework as the highest ranked stressor 57%. This was followed by pressure to do well at college (47%), concerns about

money (46%) and balancing school and work obligations (41%).” (Source: OTC Strategic Planning Comprehensive Scan 2022 qtd from *Inside Higher Ed*)

2. When asked about what keeps them from succeeding in the classroom (either online or seated), 31% of students listed “attention span, lack of time management skills, distractions, and trying to balance home/work/school.” (Source: SP22 Student Interviews)
3. 30.1% of students said they felt that OTC helped them “very little” with non-academic responsibilities such as work, family, etc. (Source: CCSSE 2022 Executive Summary of Results)
4. While students generally have positive learning experiences and feel cared for by the faculty and staff, external factors such as work and financial challenges can negatively affect their experience and academic success. Students are also dealing with barriers in their lives such as personal relationships, family, health, work, etc. that make it challenging for them to attend class, be prepared, or be interested. The college provides holistic support services to address food, transportation, and housing insecurities, but students also express a need for expanded mental health services. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 1-3)

Adequate Staffing and Effective Support for Instruction: Faculty

1. 14% of faculty turn to the Center for Academic Innovation for teaching advice (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 11)
2. 7% of faculty requested additional support resources for adjuncts, including professional development. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 16)
3. When asked what resources would be helpful for instructors, the majority of faculty responses named the following as the top five responses: collaboration time with department/program colleagues, access to research-based teaching supports, resources for alleviating faculty burn-out, collaboration time with OTC colleagues, and additional faculty development opportunities. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 13)
4. Faculty members have observed that students are increasingly underprepared, resulting in lower performance and retention rates. This lack of preparedness is attributed to changes in the college environment, including the impact of the pandemic on learning. Some faculty members also note that the general attitude and engagement of college students have changed and express frustration with students' lack of engagement in both in-person and online courses. They are seeking strategies to increase student engagement. Additionally, there is concern about the societal trend of political polarization, which can lead to tension in the classroom. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 2-3)

Appendix E

Theme Five: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

External Supporting Statements

“Evidence-based practices cannot be brought to scale if they are limited to full-time faculty.” -- *Teaching & learning toolkit: A research-based guide to building a culture of teaching & learning excellence*. Achieving the Dream. (2019). (p. 140).
<https://achievingthedream.org/teaching-learning-toolkit/>

“Transforming teaching evaluation can be a powerful mechanism for increasing teaching and learning quality.” -- *Boyer 2030 Commission report*. UERU. (2022). (p. 28).
<https://ueru.org/boyer2030>

OTC Data

Faculty Workload and Resources

1. Faculty frequently mentioned needing “more time” and “resources on managing time and workload” when asked about “resources that would be helpful to you as an instructor.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 14)
2. When asked what one resource would be most helpful to enhance students’ learning, 20% of faculty mentioned needing more time for planning and developing courses and problem-solving. They also want more faculty development. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 15)
3. When asked if they had extra time at OTC, how they would use it, 42% of faculty said they would participate in more professional development. 21% said they would update their courses and lesson preparation for online classes. 13% said they would use the extra time to establish relationships with students, especially those who are struggling or need help. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 24)
4. 8% of faculty commented on teacher burnout/fatigue and being overwhelmed by “compassion fatigue and initiative change.” One comment was “While I love that I work for a nimble institution, I have initiative burnout.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 16)
5. When asked what resources would be helpful as an instructor, faculty responded that additional resources (such as professional development, time to collaborate/problem-solve with colleagues, etc.) are needed for helping specific student populations, such as first-generation, working, parenting, veterans, low-income, unhoused, learning disabilities, and other at-risk populations. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 14)

Teaching and Learning

1. 14% of faculty mentioned that the art and skill of teaching should be valued: “There are faculty who aren’t teaching and it’s discouraging that they are treated the same as good teachers.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 16)
2. Responses highlight the need for established course quality standards and faculty incentives for improving teaching and course design and delivery, as well as the need for more full-time, well-supported faculty and staff to meet student needs. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 3)
3. The importance of effective teaching practices and balancing quantity and quality of work to achieve learning objectives; the importance of providing rigorous coursework to prepare students for upper-division coursework and the workforce. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 4)
4. “Teaching online seems to isolate us. When I taught seated courses, I found that talking with other instructors – in the same department and outside of the department, was very helpful.” and “I used to observe colleagues’ classes (in and out of my department). I haven’t done it for a while, and it would be good to go back to it.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 14)

Culture and Communication

1. 31% of faculty feel they have not been consulted about changes at the college. They feel that there is a lack of communication when it comes to changes affecting them. Of note, “the division and department level communication is sometimes not-so-great.” (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 22)
2. 12% of faculty would like Faculty Senate to be more advisory while also recognizing that there are communication issues with Faculty Senate as well. Many wanted to know how to share information from Faculty Senate and/or councils and committees. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 22)
3. 8% of faculty said they don’t feel heard and are afraid to communicate opinions. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 22)
4. Adjunct faculty would like better communication from their departments and different areas of the college. Some faculty members also feel boxed in by the parameters of teaching laid out by organizations external to the college.” (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 3)

Aligning Academic Offerings to Workforce and Community Needs:

1. Respondents emphasized the need for more cohesive and flexible educational programs that meet the needs and motivations of both credit and workforce students. This includes rethinking how different programs are delivered and adapting to changing workforce demands. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)
2. Respondents pointed out the need to explore the effectiveness of short-term training and 4-week courses. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)
3. Students want career mobility. They are socially engaged citizens who care deeply about fiscal responsibility while also valuing not letting their job define them. They are skeptical that higher education can provide the ROI they want. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 3)

Processes, Administrative Support, and Infrastructure:

1. The need to build a culture of continuous improvement among employees; the need to continually evaluate and improve processes, tools, and programs to better serve students and improve outcomes. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)
2. Respondents also highlighted the need for improved administrative support, including better customer service from the business office and more full-time staff. They also suggested increasing infrastructure for student engagement and activities, improving scheduling and course information, and providing flexibility in how and what is delivered to students. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)
3. One-third of the comments from faculty mentioned the time-consuming tasks that take away from teaching, including monitoring attendance, managing Proctorio, setting up alternative modalities, and meetings that could have been emails. The bureaucracy and paperwork is hard. (Source: Fall 2022 Faculty Voices, p. 26)
4. The need to evaluate the usefulness and effectiveness of proctored events. (Source: Spring 2023 Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators, p. 5)

Appendix F

OTC Data Summaries & Reports

Full summaries/reports available upon request.

- **Fall 2021: Clearing Canvas Confusion Report**
- **Spring 2022: Student Voices**
- **Fall 2022: Faculty Voices**
- **Fall 2022: OTC Academic Support Discussion and Feedback**
- **Fall 2022: Survey for Deans, Directors, and Other Administrators**
- **2022 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)**