The Center for Effective Teaching and Learning at Cal State LA (CETL) was tasked to create a certificate program to address inclusive teaching that we could offer to faculty online at scale. The Inclusive Teaching Program recognizes college faculty as independent experts and self-directed learners who desire space and community to think about their roles as the single greatest influencers of student success. We ground our program design in Wlodkowski and Ginsberg’s (2017) framework of adult motivation to learn, while being cognizant that highly professional people (who include faculty) are among the most resistant to change (Argyris, 1991). The program takes an expansive view of, and broadly frames, the concept of inclusivity (Holladay et al., 2003; Rios & Wynn, 2016). The resulting seven-module course deeply engages instructors in the following areas: teaching identity, working with our diverse and unique population of students, leading difficult discussions, acknowledging implicit bias, and practicing faculty care and self-care. We share a novel infrastructure for creating educational development that tackles difficult topics while helping faculty make meaningful changes to their teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

Universities increasingly make commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as they welcome larger cohorts of first-generation students from diverse backgrounds. The need for inclusive teaching has never been greater, while the link between faculty development and teaching quality is emerging as one key to educational success (Haras et al., 2017).

Seeking to connect these two areas, the Cal State LA Center for Effective Teaching and Learning (CETL) created the Inclusive Teaching Program for faculty learners. This was the result of a 2018 directive from the campus diversity officer, under whose portfolio CETL then fell. CETL was asked to create a different type of programming. Unlike much online training on cultural competence that simply provides information, the long program uses a distributed practice model to reify good teaching and practice inclusion in classroom spaces. Faculty continuously reflect on what they do before, during, and after they teach.

THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION LANDSCAPE IN HIGHER ED

Changes to the College-Going Student Body

The makeup of the college-going student population is dramatically changing in the United States. The diversity of American students continues to increase, while a lack of diversity persists among faculty and administrators (Espinosa et al., 2019). Student diversity will likely continue to grow by the middle of this century, when white Americans no longer represent a majority in terms of population numbers and minoritized youth take their place as college students of the future (Frey, 2018; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

Currently, one-third of college-going students are also the first in their families to attend college (or first generation) (NCES, 2018). Students of parents who have attended college inherit a valuable source of cultural capital (Cataldi et al., 2018) denied to first-generation students whose parents did not. For degree completion, severe equity gaps persist.
for Latino/a/x and Black students, who currently complete degrees at lower rates than do their white and Asian counterparts; fewer than one in five African American or Latino/a/x students will go on to earn a baccalaureate (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Put simply, higher education is still less equitable or inclusive, and appears ill equipped to help students of color succeed, let alone minoritized students who will dominate future college enrollments. Moreover, universities have not done a good job of designing and modeling faculty professional development as an inclusive practice.

**Elements of Successful DEI Training**

This paper focuses on an intervention designed to tap into faculty behavior to improve the quality of college teaching by focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Faculty remain the largest influence on student success (Chetty et al., 2014; Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). They spend the most time with students, contrasted to other campus staff, and faculty influence students’ career and persistence patterns, for better or worse (Kezar & Maxey, 2014).

What would such programming look like? Unsurprisingly, there is disagreement in the literature about what constitutes an optimal approach. DEI programming typically centers on increasing awareness of differences and managing biases (Pendry et al., 2007). Within corporate settings, Dobbin and Kalev (2016) found that mandatory diversity training did more harm than good, and typically resulted in employee backlash, while studies of higher education find campus administrators remain ambivalent when asked about the success of their training (McCauley et al., 2000). On the other hand, Kulik and Robertson (2008) found that diversity training in both workplace and educational settings helped increase diversity knowledge and improve attitudes toward diversity. Nonetheless, the literature overall points to the need for sensitivity and caution when designing DEI programs for change.

Two specific approaches show promise. As reported in a meta-analysis of 40 years of DEI research (Bezrukova et al., 2016), the most effective DEI programs are longitudinal (where training takes place over an extended period as opposed to a one-week seminar). Madera et al. (2013) found that time is an important mediating factor, as time is needed to meet specific goals, if not change actual practice. Bezrukova et al. (2016) also found that successful programming focuses on skill building and self-awareness (metacognition), which includes goal setting, reflection, and perspective taking. Goal setting aids the transfer of learning to contexts outside the learning environment (Taylor et al., 2005). Perspective-taking activities, a form of self-reflection, may also lead learners to view others more positively (Lindsey et al., 2015). We designed our programming to take advantage of these two elements—time and the building of self-awareness—which are critical to seeing changes to practice.

In our center’s work with faculty over the past decade, we can confirm the following: first, established professional practice (including a teaching routine) is hard to change; next, faculty need time and space to reflect on their teaching if they can expect their practice to change. Finally, educational development must be constructed as an authentic practice if it is to resonate with instructors (Haras, 2018). This means faculty must feel safe, respected, and their prior knowledge (if not misconceptions) fully engaged for programming to be meaningful or effective.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Inclusive Teaching Program runs as a fully online course through the Canvas learning management system at Cal State LA (see Figure 1). Shown in Table 1, the course features seven modules. Faculty members complete the program over 17 weeks as a cohort. Activities feature peer-based interactions and independent assignments. Two educational developers (with college teaching backgrounds) act as facilitators offering guidance, clarification on assignments and instructions, as well as ‘grade’ the work of the faculty learners.

We created the program as a series of seven integrated online modules: Your Teaching Identity, Teaching Our First-Generation Students, Supporting Students with Disabilities, Teaching Our Student Veterans, Leading Difficult Discussions, Implicit Bias and You, and Faculty Self-Care. All modules feature inclusive teaching practices specific to college classrooms, common course materials/design, and they reflect student populations vital to Cal State LA. Modules also become progressively challenging.

Each module contains a set of practices, repeated in other modules, such as discussion fora and plans-to-implement that map to a module topic; all modules are grounded in the literature on adult motivation to learn. For example, modules and discussion platforms model respect and connectedness, especially Teaching Identity, Leading Difficult Discussions, and Faculty Self-Care.

The three modules on students as well as the module Implicit Bias and You explore and reveal existing attitudes. Faculty can make meaning as the modules progress, including coming to terms with their own biases and the need for ongoing reflection. Also, modules such as Leading Difficult Discussions, Faculty Self-Care, as well as all course deliverables build efficacy (competency). We stress community in our discussion boards, and sharing, which engenders greater connectedness and respect. Course progression reflects carefully structured deliverables that challenge, but ultimately affirm faculty experience and competence.
To preface this section on program design, we wish to highlight the multidisciplinary and diverse team of faculty and staff who created the program. A team of 13 (seven faculty subject-matter experts, two lecturers with disciplinary expertise, three instructional designers, and the CETL director) designed and developed the program under the sponsorship of the campus Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The program was developed by faculty of color for all faculty, and designed for strong faculty buy-in.

Adult Motivation to Learn as a Guiding Principle

We designed the Inclusive Teaching Program for changes to practice, elevating faculty development as an authentic professional practice of renewal and for strengthening of teaching identity. We created our program with faculty goodwill in mind: we assume participants want to improve their knowledge of cultural relevance and their teaching given time and reflection.

To do this we employed Raymond Wlodkowski and Marjory Ginsberg's framework of adult motivation to learn (2017) to structure the course. The framework specifies that four conditions must be met to motivate adults to learn and grow: (1) establishing inclusion, (2) developing a positive attitude, (3) enhancing meaning, and (4) engendering competence (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017).

Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2021) raise salient questions associated with these four conditions that we applied to our expert learners (p. 95): How would we establish inclusion to create or affirm a learning community in which faculty feel respected by and connected with one another? How would we create or affirm a favorable disposition towards DEI by making material personally and professionally relevant to the classroom? How could we design engaging and challenging experiences that leverage faculty’s perspective or values? Finally, how might we create or affirm conditions where faculty effectively learn something they value and consider authentic for application in teaching practice?

The adult motivation to learn framework was important to the design and construction of the program. For one thing, faculty, who are adult learners, are our center’s primary audience. Moreover, faculty are experts, so a faculty member participating in learning arrives with a considerable content knowledge base. Adult learners typically prefer self-direction while learning and all adult learners tend to map current experience to prior knowledge and are competency-based in orientation (Knowles, 1973). Adult learners need to apply knowledge they can use right away. Meanwhile, experts are
distinguished by their ability to notice meaningful patterns, have acquired a surfeit of content knowledge, and can transfer learning to new situations (Bransford et al., 2000). We can infer that faculties’ already-routine processes of inquiry, analysis, and decision-making become critical to engaging faculty in the work of educational development.

There are caveats. Experts can be inflexible in their approaches to new situations (Bransford et al., 2000). Successful professionals may rarely experience failure and might therefore resist new learning environments that challenge their expertise (Argyris, 1991). Domain experts may also avoid innovation, an observation made variously (Gallo et al., 2018; Katila et al., 2017).

Given significant and well-documented resistance to face-to-face DEI training, even among university professors, as well as often-disappointing results (Newkirk, 2019), program designers therefore felt compelled to ensure the topic was well structured for online success. DEI work is by nature emotionally exhausting, especially for faculty of color (Doharty et al., 2021) and facilitators (Sandhu, 2021). Online environments may be especially uncomfortable unless sensitively and expertly deployed.

Mapping to the adult motivation to learn framework, we anticipated that faculty resistance could be allayed if we respected and affirmed faculty members’ significant experience in the classroom while showing them what was possible online; cultivated and gave faculty choices in terms of practices they could employ in any classroom; challenged faculty at appropriate (scaffolded) intervals; and allowed faculty space to make authentic changes to practice. We committed to establishing clear program goals and structure, gave continuous facilitator feedback on faculty practice, and designed course activities that enlarged teaching knowledge and classroom skills (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2021). We did not want the program itself to act as a barrier to learning.

The Role of Prior Knowledge

In this program faculty connect and reflect on their prior knowledge and experience with inclusive teaching through multiple, repeated module activities and assignments. This approach soundly aligns with the concept of prior knowledge, described in Bransford, Brown, and Cocking’s seminal *How people learn* (2000). All learners arrive with prior knowledge; not engaging prior knowledge risks missing an important opportunity to help learners connect new information with existing understanding. Faculty are no different. Furthermore, prior knowledge may determine likely performance (Bransford et al., 2000). Our program surfaces vague (or sound) understandings about inclusive practice. Faculty must first reflect on their prior knowledge and relate it to current information they are engaging with, to identify teaching strengths and weaknesses (Bransford et al., 2000; Haras, 2018).

**Topic Selection as a Key Design Decision**

The selection and progression of topics are intentional (see Table 1, next page), grounded in the adult motivation to learn framework, as well as effective DEI training practices. Using a respectful tone that affirms ability and expertise (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017) we emphasize the personal learning opportunity the program affords.

As noted earlier, cultural competence begins with self-awareness (Marchesani & Adams, 1992; Sue et al., 2007; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017), which the program builds. For example, faculty learners start the course by reflecting on the formation of their teaching identity. In the first module, *Your Teaching Identity*, participants read Parker Palmer’s “The Heart of a Teacher” (1997) and consider who they are when they teach. Palmer notes the complex nature of teaching, mediated variously by the instructor’s identity, by subject matter/discipline, and by the students, each of whom comes with their own distinct backgrounds and prior knowledge.

Following this exploration of teaching identity, course participants next explore three student populations vital to Cal State LA: first-generation (Latino) students, student veterans, and students with disabilities. The categories represent diverse, often minoritized groups, not solely defined by race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. The U.S. Department of Education also enforces federal laws that protect or mandate specific services to these populations. We share a lot of data on our students, and we portray students using asset-based language. These early modules are front loaded with abundant, positive information highlighting students’ cultural capital and resilience, which helps ward off deficit-minded thinking. Importantly, prejudice is malleable, so providing “counter-stereotypic information” can reduce bias (Samuels, 2014). Subsequent modules ask faculty to create classroom community agreements, facilitate difficult class discussions, gauge their own implicit bias, and reflect on self-care practices.

Assessing and acknowledging bias, perhaps the most sobering topic in the series, is reserved for the near end-of-program. This is an atypical approach, as much DEI training focuses on addressing prejudice head-on, e.g., doing so before exploring practices to decrease or avoid it (Pendry et al., 2007; Samuels, 2014). As discussed earlier, common responses to DEI training may range from indifference to outright resistance, which can undermine the entire effort. By framing inclusive teaching as an ideal worth striving for, we take advantage of the “duality in motivational orientations” that stresses moral ideal over moral obligation (Does et al., 2011). By establishing diversity as a moral ideal instead of a requirement, Does et al. (2011) found individuals to be more positively inclined towards diversity and more motivated to “prioritize equality and fair treatment of disadvantaged group members” (p. 569).
Although we frame the Inclusive Teaching Program constructively, we cannot control negative connotations that usually surround discussions of bias and prejudice. Knowing that negative messaging does not work (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016), we sought to place the discussion of implicit bias toward the end of the Inclusive Teaching program. Rios and Wynn (2016) found Americans were more receptive to concepts of multiculturalism when training was designed as a “concrete learning opportunity” as opposed to abstract concepts (p. 854).

We designed the program for the positive, seeking to establish meaning and relevance first before challenging attitudes (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017). We anticipate and temper any negative feelings on the part of faculty by carefully sequencing reflections and feedback. As with most curricular approaches, we introduce difficult material progressively and place the most challenging material later in the course.

**Module Design to Support Distributed Practice**

All modules feature a consistent design and a common set of repeating activities. This distributed practice model helps faculty establish a routine for progressing through the program (see Figure 2) and hopefully adjusting practice, since short-term training does not tend to change practice (Beer et al., 2016; Bezrukova et al., 2016). Activities include an

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**TABLE 1.** The Seven Modules of the Inclusive Teaching Program and Connections to the Wlodkowski & Ginsberg Motivational Framework.

Note: The program runs 17 weeks, 13 weeks of content plus four makeup weeks. The Supporting Students with Disabilities module was previously named Universal Design for Learning. The name and module focus were changed in January 2020.
intake survey, discussion boards, a planning assignment, and reflections.

Knowledge Surveys

The faculty learner’s first exposure to inclusive teaching comes through an initial knowledge survey at the beginning of each module. In this metacognitive activity, faculty members reflect on their use of specific teaching practices, perhaps for the first time. Evaluating each of the specific inclusive teaching practices featured in the module, they indicate how frequently they use each practice, marking always, sometimes, or never (see Figure 3). Facilitators collect responses anonymously using an online survey tool to gauge the cohort’s level of current practice.

We find that faculty members report using many of the practices already, although we suspect instructors may be overconfident in their reported frequency of use. In a subsequent assignment, facilitators can check for understanding, asking for additional details and context to verify the practice. In fact, several of the practices are repeated (with slight variations) in subsequent modules. It is then we start to see faculty learners exhibit greater resistance to the practice or start to express more uncertainty for how well they perform the practice. This recursive pattern of distributed practice, which surfaces misconceptions—if not resistance—seeks to challenge yet engage faculty. Faculty practice and repeat activities at intervals to internalize behavior (Carpenter et al., 2012). The goal is to help participants increase their competence (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 2017).

Online Discussions

Within each module, faculty reflect on their past learning and teaching experiences through online discussions (see Figure 4). Recalling their past learning experiences as students, faculty consider if they themselves are first-generation and how this affected their college experience. Discussing this experience within their faculty cohort, even if they are not first-generation, an individual faculty can still hear the experiences of their colleagues. Later in the program, they answer a prompt (group discussion) on whether they have experienced bias in the classroom as a student. Additional discussions feature prompts on experiences teaching students, including whether instructors have had veterans or students with disabilities, or what difficult or controversial discussions faculty have faced in the classroom. These discussions and the community they create further the connectedness among faculty learners, between faculty and
their students, while helping faculty discover their “position-
ality” in the classroom (Gay, 2018, p. 225).

Plans to Implement

Each module concludes with a common signature assign-
ment, the Plan to Implement (see Figure 5). In this assign-
ment, faculty revisit each of the inclusive teaching practices
covered in the module. In part one of the assignment,
instructors re-inventory their frequency of use, now knowing
a little more about the practice than they did at the onset of
the module.

In part two, faculty consider any common themes among
the practices not used or potential barriers that prevent
them from implementing them. Often the practices listed
in this portion become the ones faculty commit to imple-
menting in the future. Last, faculty commit by choosing
three practices to implement that they do not already use or
choose three practices to implement more fully.

The Plan to Implement assignments are graded by a facilita-
tor at the end of each module every two weeks. Feedback is
an important interaction between the facilitator and the fac-
ulty member and provides motivation to learn (Ginsberg &
Wlodkowski, 2021). The facilitator can check the faculty learner’s understanding of each practice, reading the descriptive
information on the faculty’s use of the practice. The facilitator
gives customized feedback if the faculty learner misunder-
stands or is confused about a practice. Facilitators will also
confirm the faculty learner is on the right track. Often, faculty
will respond to the facilitator’s comments creating a small,
yet important dialogue.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Managing Four Faculty Subject-Matter Experts

The lead designer and CETL director (co-authors) kick-started
development by creating the module sequence by topic
and challenge. The lead designer simultaneously worked
with four faculty subject-matter experts (SMEs) to develop
Modules 4, 5, 6, and 7. Modules 1 and 2 were slated for
later development by the CETL director and lead designer.
Module 3 development was delayed until a new designer
could be hired with disability and accessibility expertise.

Module Objectives and Pacing Plan Document

The lead designer anticipated the need for a scalable design
and development process for use with all SMEs. To ensure
an organized design process and consistent development
across all modules, a Module Objectives and Pacing Plan
document (see Figure 6) was used when collaborating with
the SMEs. Given the unique topic areas for each of the seven
modules, without such structure, several unique (possibly
inconsistent) approaches would likely have resulted.

With the Module Objectives and Pacing Plan, subject matter
could change, specific parameters for activities and assign-
ments could vary based on the topic, but the pace and
routine across modules would be preserved. This ultimately
struck a balance between uniformity and creativity.

Faculty subject-matter experts directly used the Module
Objectives and Pacing Plan (Word processing document) to
contribute to the module design. This helped to structure
and to facilitate independent SME design work. The lead
designer did not need to be present for all module planning.

The lead initially introduced the design document, explained
its purpose, and asked SMEs to outline several sections
independently before reconvening to review the plan. In
this way, SMEs could better help the designer translate
content into the module design experience. This structured
the process for the SME, as opposed to the designer being
provided with a mass of subject matter, left to wade through
it, and then organize it into a cohesive learning experience.

Part one of the design document provided several options
for leveraging prior knowledge and kicking off the module’s
activities. Two different options were listed, depending on
the nature of the content being reviewed by faculty learners,
whether it be conceptual, or data driven.
One faculty SME completed their Module Objectives and Pacing Plan sooner than the others. This draft plan was shared with the other SMEs to help model the level of detail needed and to provide added encouragement to finish (see figure 7).

**Rapid Prototyping and Midstream Changes**

Ultimately, the Module Objectives and Pacing Plan preserved the distributed practice model and ensured a consistent learning experience across modules. With detailed plans, development commenced via rapid prototyping.

Work occurred in the Canvas LMS, with the designers and SMEs working to write content and build activities directly in the system later used by faculty learners. This resulted in several key changes in mid-development. The Module Objectives and Pacing Plan originally referred to major sections of content as modules. At one point, it was unclear whether a single course in the LMS would be used or multiple courses, one for each topic area. A decision was made to consolidate all topics areas into a single Canvas course, making for a seamless and user-centered learning experience. The center had previously received negative faculty feedback when multiple courses were used. Users disliked having to

**FIGURE 5.** Plan to Implement Assignment. At the end of each module, faculty reexamine their teaching and make plans to implement new inclusive teaching practices.

**FIGURE 6.** Module Objectives and Pacing Plan. Faculty subject-matter experts used this document to plan their modules.
jump into a new course after finishing a major section of programming.

The "reflect on current ability to implement teaching practices" became the module knowledge survey, and was moved to the beginning of the module, just after the module welcome and overview. The original plan for pace and progression was largely realized in the final program because of this design document.

Growing Design Team

With a fall 2019 launch date looming, the lead designer requested help on Modules 1, 2, and 3. Two additional instructional designers joined the project. Project management then became more complex. The two instructional designers received direction from their direct supervisor, with the lead designer managing faculty SME's work on Modules 4, 5, 6, and 7. At this point, two design teams worked to complete the program development.

Questions about Program Modality

Inevitably, forming an additional design team this late in development resulted in some disagreements. The second design team took a different approach to the program's modality. The team developed the modules as self-paced, independent learning experiences (no community discussions or faculty-to-faculty interaction).

The lead designer stepped in to clarify the original vision for the design of the program. The designers working on Modules 1, 2, and 3 adjusted accordingly.

This was an important course correction in the development process, as the original intent of the program was to help foster faculty community. Further, development of Modules 4, 5, 6, 7 was well underway. Modules 1, 2, and 3 needed to conform to the original design.

However, many of the self-paced activities were preserved and further strengthened with community discussions. Because of rapid prototyping, not much was lost in development time. In the end, a richer learning experience came to be. The first cohort participated in the program in September 2019.

IDs as Quasi-Educational Developers

In addition to the challenges described above, the instructional design team navigated a newly expanded role, that of quasi-educational developer (faculty developer). The design team, more accustomed to working with faculty to design and build online matriculated courses, were now designing a learning experience for faculty learners in sensitive subject-matter areas. The instructional designers were no longer simply consultants to faculty; they were now responsible for teaching faculty (by way of program design) inclusive teaching practices. Further, the very act of inclusively teaching, a new area of practice for the designers, needed modeling within the program itself.

We were able to achieve this level of program coherence by cross-training instructional designers as de facto educational developers. On our campus, academic technology, including the learning management system and the instructional designers, is collocated with the center for teaching and learning; the center is a single point of service for instructors who may not distinguish technology from pedagogical concerns. Because of our comparatively large campus size (27,000 FTEs) the center maintains a DIY approach to instructional design workflows. IDs usually do not do the building for faculty but assist in the development and facilitation of these skills.

PROGRAM SUCCESS MEASURES

As of this writing, five faculty cohorts have completed the Inclusive Teaching Program, with the largest cohort
numbering 64 and the smallest 21. The program continues to be offered each term.

**Applicants and Program Completers**

Instructors voluntarily apply to the program in the weeks before the start of a term, with invitations to join sent week three of the semester. The program typically starts in the fifth week of the term.

Since the onset of the program, virtually anyone who applied has been invited to participate (N = 183). The only requirement to participate in the course is that faculty must currently be teaching (with some exceptions made for department chairs).

Because community is central to the program, active engagement is required. The end of the first two weeks of the program marks the census date, like the add/drop period at the beginning of a term. Faculty learners remain in the course past the census so long as they have contributed to a discussion in Modules 1 or 2 within the first two weeks of the program. Faculty learners who do not participate in that time or request to withdraw have their accounts deactivated in the course (an average of 17% across five cohorts).

Faculty learners who remain past the census date are considered enrolled in the program (N = 152) and included when calculating the program completion rate. Faculty must earn a score of at least 85% on their assignments to receive the program completion certificate. Overall, across the five cohorts, 66% of faculty completed the program.

**Evaluation Survey Results**

Faculty completed an evaluation survey at the end of the program (n = 47). The survey was administered to the five cohorts and available to anyone enrolled in the course, not just those who completed the program.

Most respondents indicated they would recommend the program to a colleague and would make the same decision to participate in the program (see Tables 2 and 3).

**Relaying Their Experience to Colleagues.**

The evaluation survey asked faculty learners to respond to the prompt, “Thinking about the entire program, what would you tell your colleagues about your experience?”

Many faculty agreed to share their testimonials, several included below.

“As academics, we can become a bit ivory tower-ish, so remembering that our students have very different lived experiences, even if they’re similar to our own, helps us become more mindful about their struggles.”
—Faculty, fall 2019 cohort

“Many of the assignments were emotionally ‘tough,’ but they were well worth the effort. I’m glad I took and completed the course.”
—Faculty, fall 2019 cohort

“I would highly recommend that my colleagues complete this program because it definitely helps you assess your own personal teaching style and it encourages you to develop a concrete plan to make improvements in your teaching.”
—Faculty, spring 2020 cohort

“I would tell my colleagues that although the modules are very informative, my colleagues’ experiences are unique and when shared, become shared knowledge. I have learned so much from the experiences of my colleagues.”
—Faculty, spring 2021 cohort

**Feedback on Program Elements to Continue or Discontinue/Modify**

Finally, the survey asked faculty for feedback on program elements they felt worked well, and elements they would discontinue or modify. Two major themes emerged from this feedback: (1) the program design and structure were positively received, while (2) the workload and emotional labor made for a challenging experience.
Faculty reported that they appreciated the structure and scaffolding of the course, the opportunity to engage with colleagues to build community, and the variety of activities, assignments, and instructional materials, as well as feedback. Faculty also expressed concerns about course workload. Many said they felt drained by the end of the program. Faculty reported challenging topics, as we anticipated. A few had negative reactions to some of the assignments in Modules 5 and 6. These faculty members were likely to question the purpose of the assignments and whether these applied to respective disciplines.

This perception of workload warrants further evaluation. Are faculty uncomfortable with the workload—or the emotional labor associated with this work? Is the required work too much or are later topics more emotionally challenging for some? In future evaluation surveys, faculty will be asked questions probing their comfort/safety. While additional data are gathered, several program revisions (discussed below) aim to address faculty feedback. Feedback confirmed that placement of the most challenging topics later in the program was correct.

**PROGRAM REVISIONS**

With overall feedback on the program largely positive, the design team addressed some of the program workload issues, clarity, and purpose of assignments.

**Annotating the Practices and Redesigning the Plan to Implement Assignments**

In January 2020, the center appointed a new Faculty Fellow for Accessibility. Shortly after the first faculty cohort completed the program, the lead designer and faculty fellow made several modest changes before the start of the spring 2020 program.

**Annotations to Guide Faculty Use of Practices**

After the first cohort in fall 2019, it became clear that some faculty were misinterpreting some content (inclusive teaching practices). In part one of the Plan to Implement assignment, faculty would explain why they did not currently perform a specific practice. In reading these explanations, the lead designer and faculty fellow realized the short statements for each practice provided inadequate detail on implementation.

To address this issue, the lead designer and faculty fellow wrote annotations for each practice. The annotations provided a rationale and a few ways to implement the practice. The annotations were displayed next to each practice in the Plan to Implement assignment (see Figure 8).

**Redesigning the Plan to Implement Assignment**

More recently, in early spring 2021, the lead designer and a new curriculum specialist further improved the Plan to Implement assignments.

Responding to faculty feedback concerning program workload and the perception that some activities were “busy work,” the major Plan to Implement assignment was divided into two distinct assignments. Doing so more evenly distributed the work across the length of the whole module. *Part 1 - Examine Your Practice*, was moved to the very beginning of the modules, replacing the knowledge survey. *Part 2 - Implementation* remains the culminating assignment, given at the end of modules.

This change helped to streamline the faculty learner’s critical examination of their teaching practice. The knowledge survey and the *Examine Your Practice* section of the assignment were virtually the same task. Further, the knowledge survey was anonymous, making it impossible to connect faculty responses to their implementation plans developed later in the module. The new annotations for each practice also ensured a more accurate faculty self-assessment. In the previous knowledge survey, there were no annotations to the practice.

**Returning Focus to Students**

The name and topic of Module 3 was actively debated during development. Originally, it was called *Teaching Students with Disabilities*, but the name and module topic were changed to *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL). Module development was completed with a focus on UDL principles and used for the initial pilot cohort in fall 2019. However, the Faculty Fellow for Accessibility noted an important difference between the UDL module and Module 2 (first-generation) and Module 4 (veterans). Modules 2 and 4 focused on students as people, whereas the UDL module focused on strategies and methods of teaching. In spring 2020, the module was renamed and refocused on students with disabilities.

The newly renamed module, *Supporting Students with Disabilities* was further developed with content exploring the medical model of disability versus the social model. The module was expanded to cover neurodiversity. This change ensured more consistency and parity between the three student-focused modules at the beginning of the program.

**Monitoring and Managing Emotional Labor**

**Mid-Program Survey**

To better gauge faculty experience throughout the program, the lead designer and curriculum specialist implemented a new pulse survey in the spring 2021 cohort. Facilitators administer the survey twice, once after Module 3, and again just before the start of Module 6. Survey questions ask
faculty learners to rate their current level of engagement, workload, and to share any concerns. Facilitators then use the survey results to provide added guidance or encouragement to the cohort.

Self-Affirmation Activity
To re-energize faculty before they embark on the major activities, we added a new self-affirmation exercise to Module 6. The activity asks them to acknowledge and critically examine any negative feelings they have experienced so far. Then in writing a series of self-affirming statements, they re-establish and reaffirm their commitment to inclusive teaching.

Changes to Facilitation Practice
Facilitators continue to calibrate their approach to leading the faculty cohorts. Facilitators now provide more guidance, via weekly announcements and private messages, on how faculty should review course content. Some faculty had been under the impression they needed to review every single piece of content. Facilitators now clarify that the content be treated as a reference to return to later as the need arises.

Since for many faculty, the program is their first use of the Canvas LMS in a student role, facilitators now include more tips and strategies for tracking module progress.

When faculty fall behind in completing their work, facilitators now give more pointed advice for getting through the program. This includes the strategic suggestion to focus on the signature assignments first before community discussions.

CONCLUSION
This online course in inclusive teaching uniquely fosters expert adult motivation to learn. Going beyond merely talking about diversity, the program itself provides a sustained, robust model for inclusive practice. It does not avoid challenging topics but does afford faculty the respect due them professionally and connects them as a bona fide learning community, which fosters inclusion and self-awareness.

Faculty can exercise choice and personalize a range of practices. These contribute to a positive attitude and likelihood that faculty learners will adopt inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms.

Ultimately, we believe the course is the right mix of challenge and engagement, which makes the experience profoundly meaningful.
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REFERENCES


