

## Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology

Academic Programs and Planning

### International Faculty Adapting with Today's Cal Poly Student

*Academic Year 2019-2020*

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#### **Overview**

CTLT is offering this learning community for international faculty during the academic year 2019-2020 to support them in their distinctive role working at Cal Poly as they pursue excellence in their teaching. If you regard yourself as international faculty, whether for the reason that you were born outside the US, you speak a second language, or for some other reason, then you are invited to participate in our year-long international faculty community. Based on prior Cal Poly International Faculty Learning Communities, we understand that international faculty members bring special benefits to the university but encounter additional challenges that are both common and individually unique: a) Many students, for example, are culturally different in their lack of formality or some may have had the experience of being fully scheduled by their parents or perhaps some believe they have entitlement and some are outspoken; b) Classroom dynamics may be different and students may be challenged with accents; or c) University requirements and the tenure and promotion process may be different, and/or the process for professional development may have different requirements than elsewhere. The path taken by this community will address these challenges and be based on the backgrounds and needs of the members and will include, as appropriate, the use of scholarly literature, classroom observations by the community facilitator, individual discussions with each participant, and actions taken by the participants. This community will be valuable for new or veteran faculty members, and participants will find valuable support from other participants.

Students are learners who have unique characteristics for learning partially based on their experience prior to entering your class and are continually evolving and adapting. Today's college student may fit in one of several categories. For example, some students believe that the professor has all the answers and will deliver them. Also, today's college student will have characteristics that will influence their learning. If you believe that some of your students may be capable of a more successful learning experience and you find some challenges in accomplishing this perhaps for the reason that you were a different type of student, know that the culture of today's youth is different than when you were a student. Or there may be some other reason. Whatever it might be, you are invited to participate in our year-long community.

The focus will be on teaching but other elements such as scholarly research, service efforts, and life in the community will be addressed if appropriate for this particular group. It will be important to consider all factors that will enhance your future professional experience. That is the plan for this community.

#### **Purpose**

The participants will have an opportunity to work and share with others, opportunities to accelerate their efforts for achieving their professional goals, and/or to modify their goals in a community of colleagues with similar goals and dedication.

#### **Objectives**

We have general, ambitious, and realistic objectives and will establish detailed objectives during the fall quarter based on input and discussions of participants. All goals will be aimed at boosting your ability to achieve ongoing growth and success as a Cal Poly educator:

1. Establish a plan and commitment for change based on unique characteristics of students that will include what will be reasonable to achieve and will result in future improvements and recognition of changes that would not be reasonable.
2. Develop a core set of informed educational principles based on literature and discussions that may be used to achieve the plan that is established.
3. Faculty may have distinctive backgrounds because of their personal experience in becoming educated or in teaching students of a different society. The objective here will be to become aware and make decisions about how to deal with and adapt to any important situations.
4. Set the situation and viewpoint important for your future plan that identifies your direction and your journey as an educator.

### **Outcomes**

The substantial outcomes of this Learning Community are not only useful for accomplishing desirable professional improvements, they are also conveniently and intentionally appropriate for future reports as evidence for your professional growth. They include:

1. Statement by You Regarding Your Teaching: Written summarization that is reflective of your teaching.
2. Plan for Professional Improvement: This statement will be your plan for professional improvement in the future. This plan should focus on teaching including adaptation plans but may also include scholarly work and service assignments.

The less precisely recognizable outcome of this Learning Community includes:

3. Membership in a Community of Colleagues: Members will be able to develop a professional relationship with other colleagues with similar interests. This community will provide an opportunity to eliminate any isolation in seeking guidance in a safe environment for improvement. Each of you will gain the benefits of mutual support and intellectual diversity.

### **Stipend Eligibility**

Community members who are able to meet a minimum threshold level of engagement in this Learning Community experience will receive a \$500 stipend in recognition of the investment of time and effort. Providing stipends also reflects Cal Poly's encouragement of faculty to engage in sustained professional growth opportunities. The "minimum threshold level of engagement" will be established during the fall quarter. The following are minimal requirements for receipt of the stipend:

1. The community will meet for two hours in 9 to 10 community discussions, and stipend recipients should attend all but 1 meeting.
2. Regular contribution to the community's exchanges (discussions, contributing resources and work products) is expected.

3. Complete the requirements needed to achieve outcomes 1) and 2) above.

Those who are eligible for stipends will also have the opportunity to apply for up to \$250 in support for presenting a scholarly paper relevant to the learning community experience and outcomes at a relevant conference (disciplinary or education-focused). This is intended to prompt and support individuals who are interested in producing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), a major dimension of Cal Poly's emphasis on the Teacher/Scholar Model.

Please note that your participation is welcome even at levels that are not stipend eligible. This is in recognition of the many demands that faculty have on their work schedules. Join us when you can for as long as you can as your schedule and real-world demands allow. You are always welcome!

### **Community Logistics**

Although all faculty are very busy, participation in the community is not a huge investment of your time. We will have a total of 9 - 10 two-hour sessions that will be based on the faculty schedules through Fall, Winter and Spring quarters. Our first meeting will be early in the fall of 2019.

Community members should feel free to discuss their successes, errors, and developing plans with confidence that these discussions will not be shared with others outside the community.

A significant element of this community will be addressing how to provide students with equal opportunity for learning success. It will provide guidance for how Inclusivity and Elements of Learning may be combined in an innovative manner to design and implement classes that will provide all students with the opportunity for learning success and as a result, for you to succeed as a teacher. How course improvements may be made will be addressed.

If it is found to be appropriate, there will be an online component to the Learning Community in which we can ask each other questions (and answer them for each other), share ideas and relevant materials, and coordinate activities between and in preparation for meetings.

As a community we will develop themes and practices that meet your needs and expand the utility of the community to your growth.

### **Meeting Schedule**

The following is a tentative community meeting schedule that may be modified to accommodate the members. Each meeting is planned to last two hours.

Week 1: As time permits discuss: a) Members introduce themselves; b) Discuss privileges and challenges of International faculty; c) Introduction to characteristics of our students; and c) Survey participant Interests; d) Include consideration of student characteristics in all of our discussions; e) Start development of participant strategy for the future (Establish a plan and commitment for change); and f) Strategize on agenda for this community and the syllabus; and g) Discuss possibility of midterm chat and/or classroom visit for your class.

Week 2: a) What are the most important characteristics of Cal Poly students for discussion based on your experience? How are Cal Poly students different from some you have encountered or been peers with in the past?; b) Introduction to integrated course design; b) Privileges and challenges of international faculty discussion continued; and c) Backgrounds of Students;

Week 3: a) Continued discussion of characteristics of our students and privileges and challenges of international faculty; b) Discuss first day of class; c) Slang; d) University terms; e) Top fifty most popular text terms (Abbreviations); and f) Team based learning.

Week 4: a) Continued discussion of characteristics of our students; b) Discussion of a current or prior course of participants; c) Discussion of possible course changes for future; d) Discuss course integration concerns; and e) Remedy of problematic areas of a course.

Week 5: a) Continued discussion of course integration concerns and remedy of problematic areas of a course; and b) Presentation by Participant(s) (15-minute snippet of a course topic with evaluation by other participants and facilitator).

Week 6: a) Discussion of midterm chats with students; b) Update factors in Integrated course design; and c) Presentation by participants (15-minute snippet of a course topic with evaluation by other community members and facilitator).

Week 7: a) Introduction of formative and summative assessment; b) Discussion of midterm chats with students; and c) Presentation by participants (15-minute snippet of a course topic with evaluation by other community members) and discussion of observed and videotaped class of the same participants.

Week 8: a) Presentation by remaining participants (15-minute snippet of a course topic with evaluation by other community members) and discussion of observed and videotaped class of the same participants; b) Development of participant strategy for the future (Establish a plan and commitment for change); and c) Other topic(s) as appropriate.

Week 9: Agenda items as appropriate.

Week 10: a) Finalize participant strategy for future; b) Other topic(s) as appropriate and c) Evaluation of learning community.