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OACC Partnering on Major National Study to Examine Potential Impact of Evidence-Based Teaching, Mindset, and Digital Learning on Students and Faculty in “Gateway” Courses

Made possible through a \$1.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation involving ten participating institutions, this study will expand higher education’s understanding of how Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Pell-eligible students enrolled in gateway courses can benefit.

COLUMBUS, OH – The Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) is partnering with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE), the leader in student success and equity through quality instruction, on a new national study made possible through a \$1.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Faculty from three OACC member colleges will join more than 1,500 educators nationwide in a study to examine the relationship between evidence-based teaching practices, faculty mindset and student outcomes. In addition, up to 90 Ohio community college faculty will have the opportunity to earn ACUE’s nationally recognized credential in effective teaching practices. Collectively, this will benefit more than 80,000 students.

Under this partnership, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Cuyahoga Community College, and Lorain County Community College – will join a total of ten institutions all committed to providing a quality education for all their students and to reducing barriers in gateway courses that perpetuate inequitable outcomes for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Pell-eligible students.

Jack Hershey, president and CEO of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges said, “We are thrilled to have the opportunity to build on our partnership with ACUE in Ohio and to contribute to this critical research on the impact of teaching practices on student engagement and student success.”

“The focus on gateway courses is particularly important to us as these are the courses most students take in their first semester and often serve as their first experience in higher education,” added Laura Rittner, Executive Director of OACC’s Success Center for Ohio’s Community Colleges.

Meghan Snow, ACUE’s Chief Data Officer said, “To date, our 18 studies have established an incontrovertible link between the evidence-based teaching of ACUE-credentialed faculty and improved grades, higher completion rates, and closed equity gaps by race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. With this new study, we can investigate these relationships in gateway courses—which are so consequential in a student’s academic career.”

In addition to the three Ohio community colleges, participating institutions also include:

- Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York
- California State University, Northridge
- Georgia Southern University
- University of Hawai'i at Manoa
- University of Houston
- Ivy Tech Community College
- North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

“Last summer, when the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation asked to learn more about ACUE’s impact, we took them on a deep dive,” said Scott Durand, ACUE’s Chief Executive Officer. “It was our honor to share compelling findings that ACUE-credentialed faculty close equity gaps and measurably improve student outcomes. This major national study we are thrilled to announce today was granted on that basis, to further explore the transformative impact faculty can have on student success when equipped with evidence-based teaching practices and digital tools.”

The study begins in early 2022 with preliminary findings expected in early 2023.

About ACUE:

The [Association of College and University Educators](#)’ (ACUE) mission is to ensure student success and equity through quality instruction. In partnership with colleges, universities, higher education systems and associations, ACUE prepares and credentials faculty in the evidence-based teaching practices that improve student achievement and close equity gaps. Numerous and independently validated studies confirm that students are more engaged, learn more, and complete courses in greater numbers—more equitably with their peers—when taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty. ACUE’s online, cohort-based credentialing programs are delivered through institutional partnerships and open enrollment courses endorsed by the American Council on Education.

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