

# Creating and Improving a Faculty Learning Community for Community-Engaged Research at a Midsized, Open-Enrollment University

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## Abstract

Community-engaged research (CEnR) occurs when university and community resources are partnered to enrich knowledge, address social issues, and contribute to the public good. The benefits of CEnR include the translation of scientific findings into public initiatives that can improve practice and provide invaluable learning experiences for students. Despite the importance of CEnR, there are barriers to this work and limited information on how to develop an academic infrastructure to support such time-intensive research at teaching-focused universities. In this article, we outline the development, implementation, and evaluation results of a pilot faculty learning community (FLC) at a midsized university, the Community-Engaged Faculty Research Fellows Program. This high-visibility program provided consultation and ongoing support for new and established faculty research projects and resulted in high program satisfaction and multiple scholarly and other published works. We provide recommendations from our lessons learned for similar programs at other institutions.

*Keywords: university-community partnership, community-engaged research, community of practice, faculty development program, evaluation*



In community-engaged research (CEnR) academic researchers involve community members as collaborators in multidisciplinary teams to conduct research on issues of concern to those communities (Isler & Corbie-Smith, 2012). This type of engaged scholarship may occur in any academic field in which university scholarly resources are partnered with community resources to enrich knowledge, address and help solve critical societal issues, and contribute to the public good (Stanton, 2008). The benefits of CEnR to faculty, students, and communities are well established in the literature (see, for example, Coffey, 2010; Schwartz, 2010; Wallerstein et al., 2020), including the translation of scientific findings into public initiatives that can improve practice and community health (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). For these reasons, faculty and students are increasingly interested in focusing their research on improving their local communities (Nyden, 2003).

Despite the importance of CEnR, barriers to conducting such research remain, especially at smaller, teaching-focused institutions. There is also limited information on how to develop an academic infrastructure that better supports such time-intensive work while increasing community-academic partnerships (D'Agostino et al., 2015). This knowledge gap is especially problematic for institutions that may not have significant research infrastructure, defined as the physical and human resources for conducting research within the business and academic environment of the university (Videka et al., 2008). To address this gap, we outline the development, implementation, results, and recommendations of a faculty learning community (FLC) at a midsized, open-enrollment university aimed at improving the

university environment to support CEnR, the Community-Engaged Research Faculty Fellows Program or the CE Research Fellows Program.

### **Community-Engaged Research in Higher Education**

Although many institutions of higher education, especially U.S. universities, prioritize and reward research productivity among their faculty, barriers exist within the academy regarding the type of research that is valued. Even at smaller or teaching-focused institutions, the research university culture dominates the construction of the faculty roles of teaching, research, and university service, which often lack the structure and support for CEnR (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). For example, CEnR requires time to build and maintain trusting relationships in the community, demanding frequent communication, negotiation, and compromise (Martinez et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2010). Such labor-intensive processes of relationship-building tend to significantly lengthen the time needed to conduct research and publish results; however, tenure and promotion timelines do not often account for these realities (Acker & Webber, 2016; Gardner & Veliz, 2014; Nicotera et al., 2011). For example, a recent study concluded that many university medical schools have only recently seen an increase in administrative support for CEnR upon receipt of a large institutional clinical and translational science award grant requiring such community-engaged work (Nokes et al., 2013).

Many universities also lack financial support for CEnR, requiring faculty to obtain external funding, which further lengthens timelines of completing projects and producing scholarly works (Stoecker et al., 2003). Because of these and other barriers, many institutions may need to redesign policies and processes to account for the realities of conducting CEnR (Sandmann, 2006); however, little published literature provides guidance for how universities can best support faculty to conduct CEnR (Seifer et al., 2012). One notable exception is Gelmon and Jordan's (2018) chapter that provides literature- and practice-based advice to academic administrators who work as service-learning and community engagement (S-LCE) professionals. However, since S-LCE professionals often hold terminal degrees with training in education or a closely related discipline and provide specific service-learning and community engagement services to faculty, not

every university has access to such highly trained professionals.

Much of the related research literature focuses instead on specific practices for improving teaching, such as how faculty can create service-learning courses and community-engaged partnerships for their students in the classroom. Sometimes, faculty also conduct investigations on their service-learning and community-engaged teaching efforts, with projects tending to fall under the scholarship of teaching and learning. Although Boyer (1990) has argued that the boundaries between research and teaching have been overblown in academia, junior faculty may struggle with how to utilize the scholarship of teaching and learning literature when seeking guidance for conducting their original CEnR projects.

Boyer argued that the work of the scholar is not only to conduct original research, but also to step back from the investigation in order to find connections, build bridges between theory and practice, and communicate new knowledge to students. His work (1990, 1996) provided a framework for thinking about scholarship as four different, but overlapping, functions: (a) the scholarship of discovery, (b) the scholarship of integration, (c) the scholarship of application, and (d) the scholarship of teaching. Although scholarship of discovery might constitute activities traditionally seen as conducting an "original research" project, Boyer's framework indicates that faculty should also integrate this new knowledge by putting it into perspective and connecting it to larger contexts. The third function of scholarship moves beyond synthesizing and toward engagement, where the academic should determine how the application of knowledge can solve problems. The last function of academic work is to translate such scholarship to teaching. Although Boyer's scholarship has been around for decades, researchers point out that faculty continue to struggle with how to fit the complications of conducting CEnR into their professional roles and promotion/tenure policies (Jacquez, 2014; Janke et al., 2023). In this article, we explore the conception, implementation, and pilot of an FLC among faculty interested in increasing their research productivity in CEnR.

### **Communities of Practice and Faculty Learning Communities**

The concept of a community of practice

(CoP) has been around for 30 years. It represents a process in which social learning is prioritized over individual learning in the research and theory of practice-based studies (Gherardi, 2009). Wenger and colleagues solidified the concept of CoP and argued that learning, understanding, and remembering are best developed in social situations where participants share information and experiences, resulting in personal and professional development through colearning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Similarly, Pharo et al. (2014) described how a CoP helps members pursue a shared interest through joint activities, discussion, problem-solving, and relationship-building. The CoP model contains three main components: a domain of knowledge to create a sense of common identity, a community of people who care about the domain and create the social learning environment, and a shared practice that the community develops to be effective in its domain.

CoP in higher education tends to gather scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to learn how to better perform in that domain, usually teaching (Blanton & Stylianou, 2009; Laksov et al., 2008; McDonald & Star, 2008) or mentoring (Calderwood & Klaf, 2015; Smith et al., 2016), by interacting regularly and sharing what has worked. A specific type of CoP often used in academia is the faculty learning community (FLC). According to Plaxton-Moore et al. (2018), an FLC is distinguished from a CoP by the small-group learning structure that includes a well-articulated facilitation structure that enables participants to discuss and suggest solutions for problems that arise in the scholarship of teaching and learning. The authors indicated that FLCs often contain faculty from different disciplines, which allows for greater exploration of the dimensions of community-engaged research and practice, which may increase FLCs' potential to influence broader institutional culture and policies around community engagement. However, the published literature contains little regarding the use of CoP or FLC models in higher education for increasing scholarly productivity in CEnR among faculty in teaching-focused institutions. In this article, we address these gaps in the literature by providing details of our program for creating an FLC focused on supporting faculty through their CEnR projects at a midsized, teaching-focused U.S. university.

## The Program

The University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) is a public, midsized, open-enrollment institution that administers four community campuses across the southern half of the state. UAA is the largest university in the state, with an annual enrollment of approximately 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Although research grants and funding among faculty have been increasing in recent years, UAA is not considered a Research University by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Instead, UAA is a teaching-focused institution that has received the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (American Council on Education, n.d.). In addition to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), UAA has the Center for Community Engagement and Learning (CCEL), which provides support for faculty involved in service-learning teaching and/or community-engaged research. In an effort to strengthen the university environment for CEnR, the CE Research Fellows Program was piloted in academic year 2020–2021.

### Program Purpose

The focus of the CE Research Fellows Program is to support CEnR efforts by supporting faculty in the exchange of ideas and knowledge around CEnR methodologies, partnership development, and research dissemination. Peer support was conceptualized as a vital component of the program from its initial stage. Anticipated program outcomes were that Fellows (a) would engage with each other as active members of the FLC during the program and (b) would demonstrate progress in their community-engaged research agenda through forward movement from (at minimum) one stage of the research process to another, as measured by scholarly output. This goal was to assist faculty who might be struggling with moving past the project design phase to other stages of the research process, such as submitting funding applications, project implementation, data analysis, and/or scholarly publications.

### Program Planning

The planning team consisted of the CCEL director and social work faculty member (Aguiniga) and two faculty coleads: one junior faculty member (Howell) in the

Division of Population Health Sciences and one associate professor (Harvey) in psychology. This interdisciplinary team codeveloped, implemented, and evaluated this pilot of the CE Research Fellows Program following Wenger et al.'s (2002) seven recommended principles to enhance FLC success:

1. Design the community to evolve naturally.
2. Create opportunities for open dialogue within and with outside perspectives.
3. Welcome and allow different levels of participation.
4. Develop both public and private community spaces.
5. Focus on the value of the community.
6. Combine familiarity and excitement.
7. Find and nurture a regular rhythm for the community.

### **Program Participants**

The CE Research Fellows Program was initially composed of 14 faculty Fellows, who represented a variety of disciplines, including social work, communication, psychology, languages, human services, history, humanities, philosophy, sociology, civil engineering, and physical education. Faculty positions included adjunct faculty ( $n = 2$ ), postdoctoral researchers ( $n = 3$ ), term assistant professors ( $n = 2$ ), tenure-track assistant professors ( $n = 2$ ), tenured associate professors ( $n = 4$ ), and full professors ( $n = 2$ ). During the course of the program, one Fellow (a postdoc) left the university before the start of the 2020–2021 academic year, and two (non-tenure-track faculty) were unable to continue due to conflicts created by the pandemic, reducing the number of faculty participants to 11.

### **Program Components**

Program components were designed to foster sustained connection and learning between the Fellows, incorporating both an intensive initial experience and then regularly scheduled meetings (which address Wenger et al.'s Principles 1, 2, and 7, above). The COVID-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the program, as university faculty were required to work at home during the entirety of the pilot year, from application in April 2020 to final public recognition

of the members' accomplishments in April 2021 (Principles 4–6). The online nature of the program resulted in modifications to the original schedule of events, described below, and also ensured we incorporated Wenger et al.'s Principle 3.

### **Two-Day Kick-off Training Event**

The 2020 May Intensive was originally scheduled to be an in-person 2-day intensive; however, it was determined that a one-day event would better suit the online format. During the May Intensive, Fellows were introduced to their faculty coleads (Harvey and Howell) and each other, creating a sense of familiarity and excitement among faculty (Principle 6). The purpose of the program and the plan for the upcoming academic year (2020–2021) were reviewed, setting a regular rhythm for the community and their time together (Principle 7). Three one-hour sessions were led by the planning team during the May Intensive: Creating Community Partnerships, Partnership to Publication, and Design Clinics for Community Engagement. In these sessions, Fellows were introduced to a variety of CEnR methodologies, and they received tips for developing and sustaining community partnerships, hands-on tools for navigating the complicated process to publication of CEnR projects (including a list of possible journals), and an overview of the benefits and logistics of the design clinics for the program that outlined the value of the community (Principle 5).

### **Brown Bag Sessions**

To develop CEnR skills and help Fellows make progress in their research agenda, four brown bag sessions were held during the academic year. Developed from the Fellows' needs and interests expressed during the May Intensive, the first brown bag session focused on IRB policies and practices. This session was led by the chair of the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and emphasized the conduct and processes typical of CEnR. The remaining brown bag sessions capitalized on the Fellows' areas of expertise, with each brown bag being developed and led by a Fellow. These sessions included Strategies and Considerations for Incorporating Research Into the Classroom, Public Humanities and Community Engagement, and Qualitative Research Methods for Community-Engaged Research. In addition, Fellows led two workshops open to the wider community at the

university's annual community engagement conference, ensuring the program contained both public and private community spaces (Principle 4). These sessions, *Community-Engaged Research During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities and Strategies for Transitioning Research Interviews to Online Technology*, provided an opportunity for in-depth exploration of CEnR topics and fostered increased awareness of Fellows' interests, skills, and knowledge, strengthening the potential for cross-disciplinary research partnerships.

### *Design Clinics*

Three design clinics were offered during the CE Research Fellows Program, allowing a space for open dialogue where Fellows could ask a CEnR question about their work and gain feedback (Principle 2). Based on the design clinic format taught by the Community Engagement Fellows Program at Western Washington University (Tennessee, 2020), the design clinics encouraged members to share their experiences and insights relevant to a Fellow's identified research question. The structured nature of the design clinics provided for an engaging and quick activity, taking only 22 minutes, which served to increase the value of the program (Principle 5) for Fellows who were able to solve research problems with the aid of other FLC members. This fast format allowed Fellows to pose questions during each one-hour meeting and worked well to engage the group to speak during the Zoom session while respecting different levels of participation from faculty (Principle 3).

### *Ongoing Peer Support and Consultation*

The faculty coleads of the program provided consultation for Fellows through one-on-one meetings, email communications, and opportunities for feedback and questions during brown bag and design clinic sessions. Consultation with the faculty coleads was provided on an as-needed basis, allowing the community to evolve naturally (Principle 1) while also welcoming different levels of participation from the Fellows (Principle 3). In addition, Fellows offered support to each other through an unstructured format in which peers with specific expertise offered their consultation and advice in each session. De Santis (2020) found that such mentoring can improve the level of competency and readiness of faculty and researchers practicing CEnR.

## **Evaluating the Pilot Fellows Program**

Following a description of program participants, a number of outcomes from the CE Research Fellows Program are described here: (a) program survey design and results, (b) Fellows' dissemination of products and publications, and (c) Fellows' participation in university-sponsored community engagement events.

### **Survey Design**

Approval for human subjects research for this evaluation was granted by the UAA Institutional Review Board (IRB #1743041). Following completion of the CE Research Fellows Program, a survey was electronically distributed to Fellows to obtain their feedback. The survey was codeveloped by the two faculty leads using guidance from Guskey's (2000) evaluation of professional learning to examine beliefs and knowledge in relation to changes in participants' application of content. The survey consisted of eight closed-ended questions, which utilized a 5-point Likert rating scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*, and six open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions asked about program outcomes (e.g., "I was an active and engaged participant"; "During the fellows program I made progress on my community-engaged research agenda") and program purpose (e.g., "I gained ideas and knowledge about partnership development in community-engaged research"; "I gained ideas and knowledge about community-engaged research methodologies"). The open-ended questions asked about obstacles to participation (if applicable), progress on the Fellow's research agenda, the usefulness of design clinics for those who posed a question or for those who participated, and the most useful and least useful aspects of the CE Research Fellows Program.

### **Survey Results**

Of the 11 Fellows who completed the program, 10 completed the survey, with eight responding to all questions. When asked questions about the program outcomes, the majority of the participants (88%,  $n = 7$ ) either strongly agreed or mostly agreed that they "regularly attended the monthly meetings and events," with one neutral response. Similarly, most (88%,  $n = 7$ ) either strongly agreed or mostly agreed that they were "an active and engaged participant" and that they "made progress on their community-engaged research agenda." One Fellow re-

sponded neutrally to both questions. No one reported barriers to participation. Fellows described a range of progress on their research, including starting a new program evaluation for a local agency, modifying data collection via Zoom, or dissemination of process data in the form of writing a book chapter. One Fellow stated,

The fellows program really inspired me to think about how to utilize process data. I learned that I do not have to wait until I have completed my project or until I have outcome data to think about dissemination and publishing. This lesson was so useful that I began to think differently about what I have done so far. . . . I'm in the process of authoring a paper which utilizes information I would not have, otherwise, thought of as data.

Six fellows responded to questions about the program's purpose. All six either strongly agreed or mostly agreed that they "gained ideas and knowledge about partnership development in community-engaged research" and "gained ideas and knowledge about community-engaged research methodologies." Similarly, five either strongly agreed or mostly agreed that they "gained knowledge about dissemination of community-engaged research," with one who reported neutral. One Fellow reported receiving an article from another Fellow that helped them to clarify their methodology.

When asked about design clinics ( $N = 7$ ), 70% ( $n = 5$ ) either strongly agreed or mostly agreed that "[the design clinics] were helpful for thinking through their own research," one was neutral, and one mostly disagreed. Four Fellows posed a question for a design clinic, and all reported it was beneficial for them. For example, "I found the reflections very helpful. They helped me think about things I would not have otherwise thought of . . . it really helped to clarify my methodology." Another Fellow wrote, "It was a useful way to hear from other disciplines and to think through what has worked for other [community-engaged] researchers. It made me articulate aloud the questions I had been wrestling with regarding my research." Only one Fellow reported a barrier to posing a design clinic question, and that was "shyness—I might have done it in a smaller breakout."

Information gathered from the open-ended questions about most useful and least useful aspects of the CE Research Fellows Program revealed a common theme of benefiting from the interdisciplinary nature of the program. As one Fellow stated, "It opened my eyes to how the various disciplines engaged in community research." Others spoke to the ways the program incorporated Wenger et al.'s principles, such as the importance of connecting with other community-engaged researchers, building relationships with colleagues, "meeting like-minded others," and feeling valued for the work they were engaging in. Two Fellows directly spoke to the FLC model as a useful aspect of the program to offer support and accountability.

### Dissemination of Products and Publications

During the CE Research Fellows Program, the faculty coleads and Fellows disseminated over 26 products and publications related to their community-engaged research and activity. Products were disseminated through a variety of outlets, including peer-reviewed journals such as the *American Journal of Community Psychology* (Buckingham & Brodsky, 2020; Buckingham et al., 2021), *Ageing and Society* (Howell et al., 2020), *International Journal of Children's Rights* (Mbise, 2020), *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* (Brocius et al., 2020), and *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* (Harvey & Wennerstrom, 2021), to name a few. Other outlets for dissemination included institutional reports highlighting Fellows' work, such as the Harvard Kennedy School for Science and International Affairs report (Balton et al., 2020), articles in popular publications such as *Newsweek* (Olmos, 2020), an art exhibition about Black experiences in Alaska at a local museum (Hartman, 2021), and community partner publications involving Fellows' work (e.g., Cook Inlet Tribal Council, 2021). An additional seven articles from Fellows are under review, and one book from a Fellow's project is in press. The dissemination of these products and publications provides evidence for the CE Research Fellows Program's purpose of supporting Fellows' ideas and knowledge about CEnR methodologies and dissemination as well as for the CE Research Fellows Program outcome of demonstrating progress in one's CEnR agenda (Program Outcome b).

### **Fellows' Participation in University-Sponsored Events and Awards**

Fellows also participated in a variety of university-sponsored events or received awards during the CE Research Fellows Program related to their CEnR. As examples, three Fellows presented at the university's Annual Urban and Rural in Alaska: Community Engagement Conference, three Fellows participated on the university's CCEL Community Engagement Council, two fellows received university CCEL faculty mini-grants, two Fellows were highlighted in the CCEL Spotlight, one Fellow received the University Selkregg Community Engagement and Service-Learning Award, a faculty colead received the Community Engaged Writing Award, and the other faculty colead received the Community Builder Award. These outcomes are highlighted here to evidence CEnR involvement of the Fellows as a result of their participation in the CE Research Fellows Program.

### **Limitations**

This study is limited by the small sample size of our pilot group of Fellows and the limited scope of the evaluation. Although the results may not be generalizable, these findings provide guidance and strategies for engaging and supporting faculty with their CEnR and directions for additional research. We included program satisfaction as well as more objective measures of success (e.g., scholarly products); however, this study evaluation does not yet measure long-term impact of the CE Research Fellows Program. Below we provide our plans to follow up with the Fellows and improve our next FLC evaluation. This project was also limited by several aforementioned COVID-19 pandemic challenges that required us to conduct the program online (via Zoom), which occasionally resulted in technology and bandwidth problems. However, the online nature of this program actually increased participation from faculty working in our community campuses and other remote locations.

### **Recommendations and Next Steps**

The CE Research Fellows Program appears to be initially successful at UAA for several reasons. Most notably, the university supported the efforts to increase faculty research mentorship. However, we suggest that even faculty-led initiatives without financial or other support from the university may succeed if the program is thoughtfully

planned out. For others at teaching-focused institutions, we offer the following recommendations.

### **Creating the Faculty Learning Community**

The program followed Wenger et al.'s (2002) principles for best practices, including focusing on the value of the community and providing opportunities for various levels of engagement, such as through the built-in consultation and collaboration between Fellows. The two faculty coleads who provided consultation were at different points in their career trajectories, as were the various Fellows. Having an FLC inclusive of the variety of roles at the university (including adjuncts, tenure-track, non-tenure-track, junior, and full professors) created an internal system by which faculty were able to assist and provide advice and guidance to others across the range of experiences (Freel et al., 2017; Morrison-Beedy et al., 2001). We found that sometimes newer faculty had excellent advice and experiences with setting up a new research lab to share with faculty who had been in a teaching role for a long period of time. Likewise, we also saw that longer term faculty proffered great advice about integrating research into the classroom and contributing to the scholarship of teaching and learning. Similarly, having Fellows at different points in their careers allowed the program to capitalize on Fellows with CEnR expertise who could lead brown bag sessions, thus benefiting the whole group and increasing the opportunities for peer collaboration. We were also surprised by the number of applicants who did not have a required research component in their workload, but wanted to be more engaged with their students and community through research. Accepting such faculty into the Fellows program may enhance the breadth of knowledge and experiences that can be shared among the members in the FLC.

### **Encourage Reflection**

In the future, we plan to incorporate more time for reflection from the Fellows. In our first year, we spent time planning brown bag sessions, design clinics, and other academic opportunities but found that the FLC could have benefited from more regular reflection on their experiences with the program. More structured reflection would have solidified some of their learning into action planning as well as given Fellows a more accurate perspective as to the value of the program (Rice, 2018). To this end, we will use a

common classroom tool at the end of every session with our Fellows moving forward: the one-minute essay. Each session will end with a brief summary of key takeaways and provide the group time to reflect on how the session may prove useful to their personal research program. The specific reflection method chosen matters less than providing Fellows the space to reflect on their time within the FLC.

### **Provide Writing Support**

Survey results and anecdotal evidence from our first FLC suggested that some Fellows thought that a writing group would have been helpful. Many faculty struggle to find the time to write new grant proposals or journal articles and benefit from having peer writing support (Badenhorst, 2013), especially women faculty (Penney et al., 2015). Therefore, we recommend including a writing support component of a Fellows program. However, if this is not feasible due to lack of resources, it may be possible to connect the FLC to other existing writing support on campus. Our second FLC included the opportunity to attend a weekly writing group in the fall, and Fellows were also encouraged to join the larger university-wide writing support group the following semester, reducing duplication of efforts while still providing continuous faculty support.

### **Consider a Hybrid Delivery Format**

Since our first FLC launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were required to shift the program online. This was a tough pivot for many faculty, but it ended up being a blessing in disguise for our FLC. We were able to include more faculty from across our campus locations to participate, greatly increasing collaboration opportunities for some of our most isolated faculty. With campuses spread across large distances of the state, our online delivery format allowed some Fellows to make connections that they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to make. An online or hybrid format (in-person with an online option) is recommended to help foster connections among

Fellows. Our latest FLC is moving forward in a hybrid format, so those on campus can attend in person, if they wish, but Fellows located at other campuses in the state (or those that now prefer to work from home) can all participate.

### **Include Robust Evaluation Measures**

Lastly, we recommend incorporating both short- and long-term outcomes as well as self-report and objective measures into the program evaluation design. We collected self-report as well as some objective measures of program success, but we focused on short-term outcomes. In the coming year, we plan to follow up with past Fellows to determine whether they are continuing to use program learnings or peer support in their CEnR. We also recommend including formative evaluation measures, so processes are documented throughout the program planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. Such formative measures may include determining feasibility, acceptability, and sustainability of the program during planning and implementation. Research shows that formative evaluations can help continuously improve the program during implementation, which can strengthen knowledge gained, outcomes, and program impacts (Brown & Kiernan, 2001).

### **Conclusion**

A faculty-led community of practice can benefit the research productivity of faculty, even at smaller and/or teaching-focused universities. Due to the rising popularity of CEnR, more faculty are looking for connections and support to get their CEnR program off the ground. Relatively few university resources are needed to support an FLC of faculty who meet regularly to learn about CEnR best practices and opportunities that can improve community outreach while providing invaluable learning experiences for students. A formal or informal FLC that provides consultation and ongoing support for new and established faculty research projects can result in productive collaborations and increase scholarly publications.



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