



**DRAFT v8**



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Assessment and Recommendations of the 2019-2020 Project Team

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATE .....	2
Existing Strengths .....	2
Barriers to Participation .....	3
PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....	4
Value Statement.....	4
Definition.....	4
Guiding Principles.....	5
ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH.....	6
Affirmative Management Culture .....	6
Central Coordination.....	7
Ample Staffing.....	7
Thoughtful Input .....	9
Appropriate Space.....	10
Sufficient Time .....	11
STRATEGY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....	11
Intentional Delivery Methods and Structures.....	11
Individual Professional Growth Plans .....	11
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES.....	12
ANTICIPATED NEXT STEPS .....	21
APPENDIX A: Professional Development Topics from the Institutional Equity Plan .....	23
APPENDIX B: Mapping of Competencies to Strategic Goals and ISLOs .....	24
APPENDIX C: Inspiration for Collaboration Space .....	25
APPENDIX D: Focus Group Feedback .....	33



## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, American River College has been engaged in a holistic redesign intended to transform the student experience. This experience is highly dependent upon the expertise, abilities, and essential skills displayed by all employees of the college. Regardless of whether an employee is directly interacting with students (e.g., instructional faculty and front-line staff) or indirectly influencing those interactions (e.g., maintenance and back office staff), each employee contributes to the overall experience. In light of this reality, ARC Strategic Goal #3 called for “comprehensive and integrated professional development” in order to “create the best conditions for teaching and learning.” In spring 2019, the institution adopted its first Institutional Equity Plan which surfaced professional development needs in support of ARC’s commitment to social justice and equity.

A project was initiated to assess the current state of professional development and consider it as a strategic mechanism to enable the college to achieve its goals and better fulfill its commitment. The project team was charged with recommending clear priorities for professional development and creating a comprehensive strategy for how the college should approach professional development in the future.

The team met regularly throughout Fall 2019 and early Spring 2020. Building upon the insights of the Institutional Equity Plan and other resources, the group identified existing strengths and barriers. Through substantial dialogue, they developed a philosophy of professional development and the essential conditions upon which it must be founded to be effective. Competencies were drafted that represent the institutional priorities for professional development and feedback was solicited from the college community through dialogue with students and a crowdsourcing platform that was open to all employees. Listening sessions were also conducted by the CTL Advisory Committee to gather insights from various perspectives. Finally, these components were developed into the full strategy and next steps recommended in this document.

This draft was also significantly influenced by the unexpected experience of transitioning the college to fully remote operations in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This crisis provided a striking example of the need for professional development, cross-training, and retooling of practices that currently limit access. The team thoughtfully strengthened various sections of this document to ensure that the proposed professional development and training strategy has the capacity to operate remotely and to enable equitable access for remote employees.

By adopting and acting upon the proposed design, American River College can create a comprehensive and integrated program that promotes the ongoing growth of all employees so that they are well equipped to serve its students.

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the project team for their invaluable contributions that shaped the content of the plan.

Alisa Shubb (lead)  
Olga Prizhbilov (co-lead)  
Alice Dieli  
Angela Milano  
Christina Wagner  
Corinne Arrieta Katzorke  
Emilie Mitchell  
Jennifer Laflam

Kathryn Sorensen  
Pam Chao  
Yesenia Castellon  
Gary Hartley  
Nick Daily  
Beth Madigan (Note Taker)  
Cheri Jones (Consultant)

Appreciation is also expressed to the Disproportionate Impact project team for contributing insights and feedback that helped refine the plan.

Project Sponsor: Institutional Effectiveness Council

## ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATE

### Existing Strengths

American River College has a long history of professional development activities with many strengths upon which future endeavors can build. Although there are isolated programs that serve multiple constituencies (e.g., Interest Based Alliance and Common Read), most offerings identified as strengths at either the district or college levels focus on a particular constituency group.

#### Management

Professional development is currently provided through the Los Rios Management Association (LRMA) trainings, supervisor trainings, Administrative Leadership Council (ALC) trainings, and Area Dean's meetings/Student Services Administration meetings. Creating formal onboarding and structured equity training that would enable management to best support equity efforts.

#### Full-time Faculty

A wide variety of opportunities currently are or have been available to full-time faculty. Options include the Equity Action Institute; Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute; New Faculty Academy; Equitable Practitioner Development Program; Online Teaching Institute; Accessible Course Creation Academy; Type A & B Leaves; Professional Development Travel; College Hour; and offerings of the Center for Teaching and Learning. While these options are available, many activities have limited funding and requests often exceed available resources. The options also are not coordinated and some activities are not programmed through an equity lens.

#### Adjunct Faculty

Part-time faculty are invited to participate in the Equity Action Institute (Preference Level 2); Diversity in the Classroom: A Reaching and Learning Institute; Professional Development Travel; College Hour; and offerings of the Center for Teaching and Learning. However, opportunities often occur without compensation and are insufficient to meet the diverse and varied needs of adjunct faculty. There is also lack of consistent onboarding.

#### Full-time Classified

Opportunities available to classified staff include the Classified Leadership Academy; Annual Professional Development Conference; Winter Luncheon with keynote; College Hour; offerings of the Center for Teaching and Learning; as well as other professional development activities funded through LRCEA, LRSA, and the institution (coordinated via office of the Vice President of Administrative Services). As these strengths were considered, there was also a recognition that gaps exist in onboarding, customer service training, institutional equity training, and lack of an SEIU component.

#### Temporary Classified and Student Workers

College Hour and Common Read are likely the most accessible to these groups since there is no clear funding stream for their professional development. The Center for Teaching and Learning has made offerings available, but access is highly dependent on whether management invests in the development of these employees by assigning them to attend during their limited work hours.

#### Role-Based Training

When appropriate, ARC also offers focused trainings based on roles, rather than constituency groups. One example is the annual governance orientation and training series provided to those who will be serving as council chairs, project leads, and members of councils/projects.

#### Comparable Opportunity

There has also been an ongoing culture of inequity in professional development offered to faculty and non-faculty employees. For example, classified employees have not been comparably engaged in the equity conversation through comprehensive and holistic professional development.

## Barriers to Participation

The project team identified the following barriers that will need to be addressed in order to realize a new vision for professional development and training.

### Institutional Culture

- Professional development is not viewed by all employees as an essential component of the job
- Professional development is typically planned, offered, and designed from a dominant perspective
- Unconvincing messages from leaders do not reflect an expectation that everyone should participate in professional development in order to be more responsive to the students that ARC serves
- Negative messages that discourage individuals from attending due to a fear of “falling behind” while participating or a feeling that time spent must somehow be made up
- Inconsistent policy and practices manifest as a lack of support for staff participation in professional development
- Coverage issues that create a tension between serving students (Students First) and attending professional development activities
- Disincentive for staff because there is no direct benefit (e.g., progression on the salary schedule), but there is a high risk of returning to more work that piled up
- No recognition that foundational training and ongoing support is needed for those on the front line of student interaction including the temporary workforce
- Concerns that continued professional development for staff is dependent upon retaining a champion among the executive staff
- Inadequate clarity as to the compelling benefits of professional development
- Lack of trust, overly restrictive access, and/or prioritizing those with power inhibits both the provision of professional development as well as the willingness of participants to engage and collaborate

### Resources/Funding

- Lack of compensation and/or incentives for participation
- Limited funding requires individuals to choose between participating in discipline-specific training and other development activities
- Departments are not encouraged to send student workers or temporary workers to attend trainings since funding is not allocated to pay for hours spent in attendance.
- Union-funded opportunities are by invitation only and not accessible to student workers, temporary workers, or other broad participation
- Lack of funding and/or resources to enable individuals to participate in professional development remotely via technology

### Time/Scheduling

- Time constraints are extremely problematic
- Scheduling conflicts and competing priorities exist during College hour and on Fridays
- Lack of archived or self-service materials that can be accessed as time allows
- Limited offerings for classified staff
- Limited opportunities available at satellite campuses
- Occasional pockets of office closures for professional development, but no institutionalized practice
- Access is often geographically bound

### Individual

- Lack of willingness to participate
- High cost of participation in equity-focused work can lead to further marginalization
- Inequitable access due to technological factors such as limited internet connectivity
- Personal barriers to participation

### Logistics

- Dysfunctional, disconnected, and time-consuming processes for making arrangements for rooms, technology, audio-visual support, equipment, food, and other items for professional development events
- Lack of confidence that rooms will be available, unlocked, and prepared appropriately prior to the scheduled event
- Lack of standardized equipment (e.g., wireless capability and large projection screen that works via PC or Mac) in college facilities to enable individuals to easily facilitate interactive remote participation
- Ineffective procedures and paperwork involved with compensating guest speakers in a timely manner
- Unwieldy paper forms along with process barriers to completion

---

## PHILOSOPHY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Value Statement

An educator teaches, informs, and inspires others. Throughout the remainder of this document, the term “employee educator” is used to refer to the collective employee base of American River College. Each day numerous administrators, faculty, staff, temporary workers, student workers, and other employees encounter students and have the opportunity to influence their lives. Sometimes this influence occurs through formal roles such as teaching or student service, but most often it happens through momentary exchanges such as offering campus directions, unlocking a door, sharing a kind word, answering a question, or simply smiling. Regardless of the position an employee holds, the primary impact is what a student feels during that interaction. By virtue of their employment, each ARC employee has an inherent opportunity to contribute positively to the educational experience of ARC students. Therefore, the institution has an ongoing responsibility to nurture the training and development of **every** person it employs.



***“People will forget what you said,  
people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget  
how you made them feel.”***

Maya Angelou

### Definition

We see professional development as the institution’s obligation to provide employee educators with the knowledge and skills to do their jobs. Professional development is not an event, but an ongoing journey of personal growth that represents equity in practice. Each person starts the journey at a different point and will grow at a different rate. Effectiveness of a professional development program requires both a willingness from participants to engage and an institutional commitment to create a structured environment that enables continuous growth for all employee educators.

## Guiding Principles

The following principles were established by the project team as criteria by which recommendations for institutional professional development and training can be weighed during planning processes.

- **Mission-driven:** Ensures that the approach to professional development is grounded in the college mission and explicitly supports each of ARC's strategic goals
- **Equity-minded:** Responds to the Institutional Equity Plan in an intentional manner that considers power and privilege; provides what is needed for employee educators to succeed in their jobs; serves as a means to support its implementation of a "universal foundation as well as scaffolded offerings related to equity and social justice" (p. 16)
- **Accountable:** Utilizes modern, systematic methods to present professional development opportunities and track participation across the institution to ensure equitable distribution among its employee educators
- **Actionable:** Offers a realistic strategy that can be put into practice for those working at the main campus, satellite campuses, and virtual campus so that students receive a comparable experience across all sites
- **Evolving:** Assumes that the professional development plan will be a dynamic document that can be regularly updated and informed by feedback regarding its impact
- **Inclusive:** Empowers employee educators at all levels of the institution to participate, learn, and grow while also nurturing a culture that is inclusive (e.g., newly hired employees; individuals from marginalized populations)
- **Investment:** Valued as an institution-wide priority that is actively encouraged and enabled by each administrator and supervisor in order to reap future benefits for the students with whom employee educators interact
- **Outcome-oriented:** Intentionally equips employee educators with the tools they need to become more effective and contributes to overall employee retention
- **Pervasive:** Creates an expectation that all employee educators will participate in a baseline level of general professional development and training funded by the institution
- **Recognition:** Offers mechanisms that showcase individual achievement of professional development competencies and incentivizes the pursuit of excellence by celebrating growth
- **Streamlined:** Seeks efficient and person-centric ways of offering meaningful professional development and training while also being mindful of user workload
- **Structured:** Coordinates offerings across various academies, institutes, and events in a manner that creates a cohesive and progressive flow that avoids duplicated effort
- **Tailored:** Cultivates offerings appropriate to ARC's unique culture and values while also striving to meet people where they are along a journey of personal growth
- **Thematic:** Presents professional development in thematic threads that are consistent across all constituencies and supportive of larger holistic goals
- **Trust-Oriented:** Recognizes that forming a sense of trust, connection, and community impacts how participants engage and adds intrinsic value to the professional growth experience

## ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

An effective program of professional development is contingent upon an institutional environment that supports its deployment and enables all employee educators to regularly participate. The following recommendations are intended to create a solid foundation upon which the programmatic offerings can be constructed.

### **Affirmative Management Culture**

**ARC's management team demonstrates a commitment to professional development and training by consistently encouraging and enabling the participation of administrators, faculty, staff, temporary employees, and student workers. Administrators serve as a role model by actively participating in professional development on a regular basis.**

***Why is it essential?*** Many of the barriers to participation could be overcome through a consistent and visible effort by management to affirm the importance of professional growth as a regular expectation of every job. Managers, and particularly ARC's senior leadership, have the responsibility to enable participation across the organization.

***How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?*** The plan commented that ARC should "encourage managers to recommend and provide adequate financial support to target participation in professional development by staff and faculty" as well as increasing efforts to ensure training was available to all employees regardless of role (p. 17).

Methods to explore could include:

- Planning for necessary backfill to allow not only participation, but completion of expected job duties while participating so that employees feel it is possible to attend without returning to a backlog of work
- Guiding employees towards activities that have potential to enhance individual or team performance of job duties
- Ensuring that new employees are aware of managerial support for professional development as well as the opportunities available
- Budgeting hours for participation of temporary employees and student workers in a minimum level of professional development expected of all employees (e.g., equity-focused training)



## Central Coordination

**ARC ensures comprehensive, centralized coordination of professional development and training activities through a clearly identifiable and responsive office.**

**Why is it essential?** While there have been efforts to coordinate professional development, there currently is no centralized coordination function that systematically connects and supports professional growth across all aspects of the ARC employee experience. For example, when a districtwide implementation requires ARC to conduct end user training, the burden to coordinate and resource those training opportunities typically falls to implementation leads who may not be aware of competing offerings or have access to designated training facilitators. They also may not be in a position to recognize potential training synergies across programs or events. Lack of coordination among all opportunities can frequently result in scheduling conflicts or sequencing that is burdensome to the intended clientele and trainers. Additionally, there is currently insufficient ability to capture and respond to emerging needs for professional development. Increased coordination would enable anyone across the institution to bring forward ideas or needs for professional development and connect to a system that can support and guide the delivery.

**How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?** Among the Human Resource challenges identified in the Institutional Equity Plan was a “need for universal and coordinated professional development for employees, especially on equity and social justice issues and practices” and concerns regarding inequities in availability of professional growth opportunities (p. 16). These challenges cannot be overcome without centralized coordination.

The proposed method of addressing this essential condition is to create a professional development office that is charged with coordination for the entire college community. In particular, the manager of this entity would be responsible for:

- Ensuring every unit plan request related to professional development is captured, reviewed, and considered for future professional development and training offerings
- Designating one or more points of contact who serve as a resource when ideas or needs emerge outside the unit planning process (e.g., institution-wide or district-wide training needs that are not unit-specific)
- Coordinating implementation of institutional professional development plans and strategies
- Assessing effectiveness of the coordinated programming as a whole

## Ample Staffing

**ARC allocates substantial personnel resources to cultivate the full-scale operation of a professional development and training program that serves the entire institution.**

**Why is it essential?** Effective professional development and training programs must be continuously nurtured and cultivated. Substantial ongoing effort is necessary to plan, design, and deliver a holistic program that provides growth opportunities that connect to the institution’s strategic goals while also being responsive to the needs of ARC’s large and diverse employee base. The successful model developed and used by the ITC for professional development on instructional technology illustrates the necessity of ample and expert staffing to support professional development that can help achieve institutional goals. Further, ARC lacks standardized employee onboarding practices that could be integrated within a professional development program if staffing was available to support this function.

**How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?** The plan identified “a need for universal and coordinated professional development for employees, especially on equity and social justice issues and practices” as well as “universal onboarding of employees across classifications (full- time faculty, adjunct faculty, classified staff, managers, student workers)” (p.16). Successfully implementing this approach is dependent upon having a professional development team that is large enough to support the volume of employees at ARC and facilitate their professional growth.

A full-scale operation would encompass all of the responsibilities described below. Therefore, the proposed staffing model to consider is:

- Professional development manager (12-month existing position reallocated at a minimum of 50% of job duties to allow substantial time to be invested)
  - handles the managerial aspects of running the facility, virtual presence, budgets, and other operations
  - oversees the PD team (faculty and staff)
  - develops and ensures continuity across an institution-wide, cross-constituency program of offerings
  - monitors and improves professional development programs, systems, and procedures
  - directs related items such as grant writing, negotiating external trainings and speakers, guiding professional development planning, and offering reports to governance entities
  - is closely connected to institutional equity efforts
- Staff assistant or clerk (12-month position)
  - provides clerical support to the manager with a particular emphasis on logistics of professional development (e.g., scheduling rooms and trainers)
- Student help (320 hours)
- Staff coordinator or liaison (12-month position)
  - serves as the liaison to classified staff and temporary staff who are seeking professional development; also serves as the point of contact for staff during the onboarding process
  - actively investigates, coordinates, develops, and facilitates staff-focused professional development to address the competencies
- Faculty CTL Co-directors (two permanent full-time positions)
  - actively investigates, develops, schedules, and facilitates programming that supports exemplary teaching and learning
  - serves as liaison for faculty who are seeking professional development
  - serves as point of contact for faculty during the onboarding process,
  - provides logistical support for trainers
  - collaborates with staff coordinator on programming that serves all employees, including onboarding and ongoing training that supports all of the competencies
  - coordinate efforts with the Academic Senate's Professional Development Committee to increase equity in professional development funding processes
  - maintains flexibility and innovation to meet the evolving needs of college employees
  - facilitates relationship building among all sectors of the college to create an environment for collaborative problem solving
- Two Professional Development Faculty Trainers (two reassigned full-time positions)
  - positions rotate based on the college's priorities and needs
  - plans and implements professional development
- Faculty Interns with Special Focus (four positions with .2 reassigned time or ESAs)
  - trained in facilitation with a special emphasis on equity
  - serves as on-call peer mentors for professional development (similar to QuEST model)

### Total Resources for a Full-Scale Operation

Type	Quantity	Total FTE
Faculty	8 individuals	4.8
Staff	2 individuals	2.0
Student	TBD	0.15 (320 hours)
Management	1 individual	0.50 minimum allocation of an existing position

## Thoughtful Input

ARC implements an advisory committee to continuously guide the professional development program as institutional needs evolve over time.

**Why is it essential?** Input from multiple perspectives is beneficial to develop and iterate a highly effective professional development program that regularly engages employee educators throughout all stages of their career at ARC. Guidance and insight from a group is a valuable resource to those who are operating the professional development program as well as providing greater transparency.

**How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?** At the most fundamental level, thoughtful input is necessary to actualize the ARC definition of equity which begins “equity is focused on providing educational opportunities and support that meet the needs of the community, especially those who are historically underserved, marginalized, and/or disproportionately impacted” (p. 7). Without thoughtful input, there is no mechanism for understanding the needs of the community and how to best serve those needs through professional development. Additionally, the Institutional Equity plan recommends training and professional development related to equity and social justice to develop equitable practitioners. One suggested implementation strategy is to “be inclusive of adjunct faculty and temporary staff when determining the resources and support they need to help promote equity” (p.17). An advisory committee could be utilized to intentionally draw in various perspectives (such as those from disproportionately impacted communities or marginalized employee roles) in order to inform and shape ARC’s programmatic offerings.

Two interests to consider are:

- There is a strong interest in giving this advisory committee a governance-level presence that is actively involved in steering professional development programs on a regular basis.
- The composition of the advisory committee should be reflective of the stakeholders served by professional development and inclusive of the perspectives of disproportionately impacted (DI) populations.

Placeholder for photo

## Appropriate Space

ARC creates an accessible, inclusive, and highly visible hub for professional development and training that can also serve as a college-wide resource for employee onboarding. Opportunities are also created to build community among colleagues, teams, and other groups in a manner that blends physical and virtual interaction.

**Why is it essential?** Designating a recognizable, centrally located space that is easily accessible is a key to engaging employees regularly and represents a tangible commitment on the part of the institution. It would increase integration among the many currently siloed areas of the college. It would also enable and encourage connections so that people and groups could collaboratively problem-solve around issues affecting the college and its students. Allocating appropriate space would also mitigate current barriers to professional development resulting from logistical issues and increase capacity to enable remote participation.

In addition to training rooms, appropriate space is desired to create a collaborative area where small groups and project teams could gather (physically and virtually) to co-create in a conducive environment that encourages sharing and ideation. For further details and inspiration on collaborative space, please see Appendix C.

**How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?** The plan suggested that ARC “develop a visible, accessible, user-friendly, and centralized place for equity-based professional development and employee collaboration” (p.16). Once available, the space could be branded in a way that welcomes all employees into the space and avoids the perception that the space is primarily intended for one constituency.

### Recommended Space:

- Reallocate the Instructional Technology Center (ITC) and include a re-envisioned Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) within the same location. Rebrand the facility to convey its role.
- Redesign, furnish, and equip the ITC so it provides:
  - multiple rooms that can be used for group training
  - space for informal group gathering
  - collaborative workspace
  - space for one-on-one or small group training
  - mobile computer stations or laptop computers
  - effective layout and equipment to facilitate interactive remote participation
  - sufficient office space for a professional development team
  - technology-enabled service counter for interaction with those seeking professional development and onboarding
  - an area that can be used to provide self-service materials
  - year-round access (not closed between semesters or otherwise limited in access)
  - capacity for prominent external and internal signage
  - exterior courtyard or other outdoor area nearby that can be used as an informal training area; preferably equipped with a shelter or shade structure to allow use through multiple seasons
- Create a comparable virtual hub for professional development and training including a full catalog and schedule of offerings, access to self-paced options, and online help service.

Consolidating the professional development function within the ITC would have the added benefit of creating a closer connection between professional development personnel and the ITC faculty coordinators.



## Sufficient Time

**ARC intentionally carves out time for participation through executive-level decisions.**

**Why is it essential?** While there were many barriers to participation, the most frequently mentioned concern was lack of time to participate or its corollary, workload. The programmatic elements will not be successful unless the institution commits to carve out sufficient time for individuals. Participation includes attending learning sessions as well as time to reflect on and integrate new information and practices.

**How does it align to the Institutional Equity Plan?** The plan noted that “time and space is needed for employees to be trained and engage in professional development as part of their daily work” (p. 16).

Methods to explore could include:

- Designating one week per year for a hiatus of regularly scheduled group meetings so that professional development and training could be scheduled during those time slots
  - Designating one professional development day each year during which all campus offices and operations are expected to close (with limited exceptions for safety or legal reasons)
  - Designating rotating days throughout the year when individual departments may close for training purposes
  - Automatic, required professional development as part of the structured onboarding of every employee
  - Calendaring 5% of each employee’s work week for mission-related innovation or growth. The intent of this practice is to enable employees to regularly participate in institutional professional development as well as empower them to engage in self-directed exploration, experimentation, reflection on effectiveness, and creative collaboration. For a full-time employee, this option would allocate two hours per week. This time allocation should be a named calendar item such as THRIVE (Time Held for Refresh, Innovation, and Validating Effectiveness).
  - Utilization of reassigned time, stipends, or other form of compensation for train-the-trainer programs
  - Temporary backfill for classified staff to ensure that participation in professional development does not result in lengthy workdays or other unintended consequences
- Integrating targeted training into regularly held meetings and project kickoffs to embed development as part of the work

---

## STRATEGY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Intentional Delivery Methods and Structures

A full-scale operation that is founded on all of the essential conditions would provide a comprehensive and cohesive program of professional development. A variety of delivery methods and modalities would be used to increase access and engagement. A competency framework would be combined with a level-based approach to structure the offerings in a manner that provides relevant opportunities for employee educators at varying stages of growth.

### Individual Professional Growth Plans

The idea of individual professional growth plans first surfaced in the Institutional Equity Plan as a mechanism for creating a culture of professional development. These self-directed plans hold promise as a motivational tool that would allow employee educators to visualize their own journey of growth over multiple years. The purpose would be to create a sense of motivation and ownership towards individual professional development efforts. Similar to the faculty self-study, the professional growth plan would provide a snapshot of the person’s self-assessment of their current state and goals related to professional development. It would also document completed professional development in a manner that could be easily transferred to an individual’s resume or other presentation of skill sets.

Effective professional growth plans would need to be enabled by technology that is quick and easy-to-use. Ideally, the technology would incentivize usage through multiple methods (e.g., suggested learning tracks). The technology would also allow the individual plans to be guided by the competency framework as a mechanism to chart individual growth.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES

During the process of producing the ARC Strategic Plan and Institutional Equity Plan, the college community has thoughtfully considered how to enhance ARC's culture and shift towards becoming a more equitable and just institution. It is now time to use this guiding direction to actualize a shared vision through its employee educators. Professional development is a means of ensuring that the institution is providing a structured foundation that intentionally nurtures professional growth and cultivates an equity-minded culture.

The following professional development competencies were initially crafted from an intense review of classified job descriptions to pull out common themes and were then further developed to encompass a range of outcomes that might apply across the job categories of other constituencies. Equity-minded aspects were then threaded throughout the competencies. This competency-based model is not intended to hold the employee accountable to a new performance metric, but rather to hold the institution accountable for valuing its employees and nurturing these competencies within them.

Each competency is designed to be relevant across multiple positions and job categories rather than exclusive to the technical knowledge and skills required for a single position or role. These competencies can be developed through professional growth and are intended to enable successful performance of job duties. Achievement of these competencies may also provide ongoing benefit to the employee as they include transferable skills that might contribute to future career advancement within or external to American River College.

These competencies provide a framework to guide choices about professional development and training. They are intended to be the key priorities upon which professional development will focus and the justification for specific development offerings. They can be applied to offerings that are regularly sponsored by the institution as well as those that result from specific initiatives or grassroots effort.



## 1. EQUITY-MINDED SERVICE

**ARC employee educators will connect authentically and effectively with our diverse community including students, the public, and each other. Their collective approach to providing service will be welcoming, centered in the human experience, and responsive to individual needs.**

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- understands the equity framework and lens
- is familiar with techniques and methods for tailoring service to the needs of the individual
- distinguishes culturally responsive and learner-centered andragogy/pedagogy/heutagogy
- recognizes human factors that can influence service interactions (e.g., bias, stress levels, past experiences)
- recognizes when to employ de-escalation techniques to reduce a volatile situation and when it is advisable to ask for help
- grasps concepts of trauma-informed care
- acknowledges power differentials in service interactions
- identifies effective methods for interacting and creating community within virtual environments

### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- applies the equity framework and lens
- ability to explain and apply knowledge related to closing the opportunity gap
- shows genuine interest, understanding, and empathy towards those served
- applies techniques and equitable methods that facilitate culturally responsive interaction
- tailors service to the needs of the individual in order to provide intentionally human-centered support that goes beyond a transactional experience
- responds appropriately to human factors that influence service interactions
- uses culturally responsive and learner-centered andragogy/pedagogy/heutagogy
- uses power appropriately to advocate on behalf of others and to support efforts of self-advocacy
- navigates potentially volatile situations by effectively utilizing approaches such as trauma-informed care, de-escalation techniques, and asking for help
- goes above and beyond the literal interpretation of the job description in order to actualize ARC's "student first" mission
- actively considers and reduces the impact of power differentials in service interactions
- practices effective methods for interacting and creating community within virtual environments

### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- balances the tension between procedural compliance and effective service by seeking creative solutions
- suggests changes in procedures and practices in order to meet student and employee service needs

## 2. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

**ARC employee educators will continually cultivate their communication skills as well as increase their understanding of how culture and context influences communication.**

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### **Level I: Introductory (Awareness)**

- develops familiarity with various communication tools, languages, and methods
- cultivates greater awareness of how cultural, socioeconomic, and racial/ethnic backgrounds influence communication and perceptions of meaning
- understands the interplay of communication, power, and positionality in group/team dynamics
- recognizes what it means to use culturally-responsive communication
- values a student-centered approach to communication and understands practical application
- recognizes the value of listening skills
- understands connection through community building by a variety of means

### **Level II: Action/Skill Development**

- conveys information, instructions, and ideas in a culturally-responsive manner
- regularly uses communication to encourage students in a culturally-responsive ways
- recognizes and responds equitably to verbal and non-verbal communication from others
- discerns how power, privilege, and the dominant perspective affect communication and adjusts accordingly
- enhances ability to communicate with respect, discretion, integrity, courtesy, and tact
- fosters inclusivity and a positive (equitable) atmosphere through communication
- actively creates connection through community building by a variety of means
- further develops listening skills and practices active listening to discern needs and perspectives

### **Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)**

- monitors and mitigates disproportionate impact through equity and race consciousness
- facilitates connection of others through community building by a variety of means
- uses reflective and empathic listening to build understanding and enhance relationships



### 3. TECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY

ARC employee educators will acquire a growing level of proficiency with a variety of modern technologies, digital tools, and equipment. They will appropriately utilize technology to foster institutional effectiveness and explore emerging technologies including those used by students.

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

#### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- learns newly adopted districtwide or college platforms or tools as appropriate to the position
- seeks regular opportunities to upgrade technology skills and maintain currency in technology knowledge (particularly as systems and versions change over time)
- develops digital literacy to identify, retrieve, interpret, create, and communicate information via technology
- maintains awareness of student-facing technologies in order to better understand and support the student experience
- understands concepts of accessibility and is aware of accessibility tools
- attains greater understanding of information security and similar topics that have technology use implications

#### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- adapts work practices to take advantage of new technological tools or features
- continuously increases proficiency in use of existing college technologies and equipment
- uses technology to communicate in culturally responsive ways
- utilizes knowledge of accessibility tools and concepts
- applies concepts of information security and other technology-related topics to the job function

#### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- thinks creatively about how existing functionality might be applied to solve problems or increase effectiveness
- considers and strives for accessible and equitable technology
- explores emerging technologies and considers how they might be applied at the college

#### 4. ORGANIZATIONAL ADEPTNESS

**ARC employee educators will develop greater capacity to navigate organizational structures; improve processes; and work efficiently in order to meet timelines and juggle competing responsibilities. They will understand and appropriately interpret policies and procedures in order to apply them thoughtfully in specific situations while being mindful of equity and transparency.**

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

##### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- knows how to navigate and influence institutional systems and processes
- recognizes various organizational structures such as college governance and understands how they operate in a shared leadership environment
- develops awareness of college services that can support employee effectiveness in performing individual job functions
- knows how to seek assistance through established college channels in order to acquire help for oneself or to provide accurate referrals
- understands the context and purpose of organizational events (e.g., Convocation)

##### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- grasps the practical application of procedures, regulations, and policies as well as the underlying rationale (“why”) that should guide usage and exceptions
- uses critical thinking, inquiry, equity consciousness, and organizational skills to prioritize work, make decisions, and determine the best method to achieve a quality work product
- manages time well and utilizes assigned resources effectively
- utilizes college services that can support employee effectiveness in performing individual job functions
- considers how processes might be streamlined, improved, and/or automated with the goal of improving the way the college meets student and employee needs
- applies safety standards appropriate to the position and maintains awareness of college protocols for emergency situations
- cross-trains with others to increase knowledge and ease personnel transitions while also expanding potential for individuals to participate in professional development
- engages in hiring committee trainings and applies equity-minded hiring practices

##### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- builds an inclusive professional network
- uses equity principles to streamline, improve, and/or automate processes
- plans and designs with a mindfulness to transparency, equity, and racial consciousness
- influences college protocols to increase the capacity to address diverse needs in emergency situations
- displays initiative, good judgment, resourcefulness, empathy and culturally-responsive methods when presented with challenging circumstances

## 5. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

ARC employee educators will build leadership skills in order to strengthen their capacity to serve from their current positions. Additionally, those expressing interest in preparing for future leadership roles will progressively nurture a depth of leadership knowledge, theory, and practice. Through this preparation, they will expand their capacity to serve and enact social justice.

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- increases understanding of leadership styles, methods, principles, and challenges
- gains self-awareness of individual purpose, talents, presence, commitment, and social power
- ascertains individual place within ARC's equity frame as related to personal, professional, and institutional equity (see Institutional Equity Plan)
- becomes increasingly mindful of power dynamics and the influence of leadership roles
- recognizes the importance of trust, transparency, authenticity, and resilience

### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- develops related skills that enable leaders such as cultural competency, group facilitation, project management, conflict resolution, trauma-informed and/or restorative justice approaches
- seeks representative and minoritized voices and includes them in the decision-making process in a meaningful way
- consistently uses the ARC equity framework and lens to guide actions
- nurtures the essential conditions to hire and retain people of color
- considers and applies appropriate techniques to diminish the opportunity gap
- actively participates in structured leadership academies, mentoring opportunities, reading groups, inquiry groups, and similar mechanisms to develop leadership potential

### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- grows in capacity to contend with ambiguity, complexity, and change
- actively and authentically creates inclusion and builds community
- utilizes culturally-responsive instructional and/or training techniques in order to share knowledge and coach the development of individuals or groups
- prepares for and explores leadership opportunities both within and outside of the college environment

## 6. COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION

**ARC employee educators will co-create solutions and collaboratively innovate to transform the future of all students and our community through inclusive, equitable education. They will strategically take risks, challenge assumptions, and explore new ideas in pursuit of this vision.**

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- understands what collaborative co-creation is and how it differs from gaining buy-in
- recognizes why experimentation and risk-taking are necessary components of positive change
- gains awareness of how collaborative design can support equity and inclusion
- knows the expectations for how to engage effectively as a member of an ARC collaborative group
- builds awareness of how trust and power impact risk taking

### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- participates and contributes collaboratively when part of a group
- serves as a member of project teams that are charged with collaborative co-creation of deliverables
- engages in inquiry groups that offer a safe environment for strategically taking risks in pursuit of college goals and ongoing improvement
- explores methods and approaches for collaborative co-creation (e.g., human-centered design)
- challenges assumptions and experiments to test new ideas
- seeks connection, understanding, and innovation with other areas of the college (i.e., cross-functional or interdepartmental interaction)
- demonstrates transparency and engages in processes of inclusivity

### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- facilitates inquiry groups and/or project teams by coaching others through a collaborative and inclusive process
- celebrates lessons learned from failed attempts as well as successes
- helps build a sense of community among the collaborative group
- promotes inclusive engagement with identified stakeholders and communities that may be impacted
- mitigates the effects of unequal power dynamics within a team
- experiments with and assesses effectiveness of methods for collaborative co-creation
- applies the equity lens to adapt typical methods and approaches for collaborative co-creation to the ARC culture



## 7. DATA LITERACY

**ARC employee educators will use data and analytics to better understand the student experience, increase effectiveness, enhance teaching, refine services, and improve outcomes. They will use data responsibly and strive for transparency.**

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- understands where to locate and how to access institutional data
- describes how to responsibly use and interpret data
- recognizes what disproportionate impact is and ways it is currently displayed at ARC
- has familiarity with basic institutional metrics and strategic plan indicators (e.g., course success rates)
- builds awareness of how factors such as professional judgment should be combined with data analysis in the decision-making process

### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- applies critical thinking skills to evaluate the credibility of data that is being presented
- examines disaggregated institutional data at the department and course level
- makes data-informed decisions and adjustments as equitable practitioners
- seeks out data to guide equity-minded innovation and process improvement
- actively participates in program review, institutional self-evaluation, and other ARC-sponsored methods of data-informed self-reflection
- uses data effectively to tell a compelling, equitable, and accurate story
- develops skill in working with quantitative data, qualitative data, and various research methods

### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- models and advocates for transparency in data usage
- conducts in-depth exploration of data and/or research to inform efforts to close the opportunity gap
- continually assesses effectiveness and adapts practice in an effort to improve outcomes
- works with peers to unpack data related to disproportionate impact and share the insights gleaned

## 8. SPECIALIZED EXPERTISE

ARC employee educators will continuously build the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to remain current in their chosen field. They will cultivate a growing level of expertise with the concepts, theories, techniques, practices, equipment, and regulations that are relevant to their discipline, function, or service area.

Learning and growth in this competency may be demonstrated by these qualities:

### Level I: Introductory (Awareness)

- learns about new concepts, theories, requirements, equipment, and other emerging aspects that are influencing the chosen field
- seeks opportunities to upgrade skills and maintain currency in subject-matter knowledge (particularly as the area of expertise changes over time)
- develops professional networks or other mechanisms to identify, retrieve, interpret, and communicate subject-specific information
- recognizes concepts of universal design as appropriate to the employee educator's role

### Level II: Action/Skill Development

- progresses beyond minimum qualifications to attain a depth of knowledge in the subject matter and responsibilities of the chosen field
- continuously increases proficiency in the application of subject matter knowledge and content expertise
- adapts work practices to take advantage of newly acquired information, skills, and tools
- utilizes knowledge of universal design
- interacts with practitioners from outside the college to gain an expanded perspective
- actively participates and serves in professional organizations

### Level III: Inquiry, Outcome, and Assessment (Adult Self-Directed Learning)

- utilizes specialized expertise to reflect on individual and departmental effectiveness
- explores emerging concepts, tools, and practices relevant to the chosen field to consider how they might be applied at the college
- advances in the field through formal education, research, or other activities
- challenges the continued use of antiquated or ineffective practices, methods, and materials
- shares professional expertise with others through activities such as written publications, conference presentations, and mentoring

## ANTICIPATED NEXT STEPS

The Professional Development and Training project team is proposing significant structural changes in how professional development is designed, managed, and resourced at American River College. Full implementation of this proposal will likely require a multi-year effort, but progress can begin as soon as the plan is adopted.

The following recommendations are intended to meet the needs of ARC's employee educators during the current critical stage when a concentrated and focused professional development effort for different populations needs to be established in order to further the culture of education and build a culture of equity at our college. These recommendations will enable ARC to provide professional development that enables employees to develop the skills they need to become equitable practitioners. The level of staffing and program organization in these recommendations is modeled after the college's very successful ITC model as well as the project team's research and college outreach.

### Immediate Recommendations for Spring 2020:

- Consider the resources that may be needed for implementation as part of the budgeting process for 2020-21
- Allocate personnel for the 2020-2021 academic year [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]
  - Since permanent faculty positions cannot be created by Fall 2020, phase in the CTL Co-director positions by beginning with two 1.0 Co-directors on reassigned time.
  - Create two full-time Professional Development Faculty Trainer positions on reassigned time.
  - Create a staff coordinator or liaison position (12-month position)
  - Other identified personnel (dean, staff assistant/clerk, and student help)
- Have a dialogue in Administrative Leadership Council (ALC) about how the management team can foster an affirmative management culture that better enables and encourages employees to participate in professional development as part of their expected job duties [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]
- Ask PES to consider how to address the essential condition of Ample Time for the 2020-2021 academic year [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]

### Short-Term Recommendations for 2020-2021

- Share the general vision for professional development and orient college employees to the new competency-based model
- Redesign and furnish the ITC as an accessible, innovative, well-known space for informal gathering, formal learning, just-in-time learning, large group learning, small group learning, and one-on-one learning [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]
- Move the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to the ITC
- Host a naming contest to rebrand the CTL and ITC into a new professional development entity that reflects the future vision
- Form an advisory committee for Professional Development to provide input and guidance [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]
- Continue the listening sessions begun in Spring 2020 to further inform the advisory committee
- Create and hire the permanent CTL Co-Director positions [see [Essential Conditions for Professional Growth](#)]
- Over a two-year period, implement the first phase of professional development focused on the competencies of Equity-Minded Service, Effective Communication, and Organizational Adeptness. Three components are proposed to address foundational knowledge, practical knowledge, and inquiry levels:
  - An equity-focused institute co-facilitated by classified employees for classified employees to develop skills for equity work. Institute participants would be those who are interested in seeding the equity cultural shift from within the classified employee group. This includes training presented in multiple languages. The Equity Action Institute for faculty has shown the importance of developing early adopters as a core group to engage in the work of shifting institutional culture.

- Long- and short-term educator training (i.e. institutes, internships, and workshops) on topics including how to communicate, the student service culture, equity, how to use and read data, and teaching.
  - Coordinated work with those who are responsible for creating policy, procedures, and forms to streamline and make operations work more transparent and equitable.
- Modify the flex reporting system to incorporate the new competency-based model
- Work with the existing professional development committees to incorporate the competencies into their processes (e.g., consideration of requests for funding)
- Develop a standardized employee onboarding curriculum that would be relevant and immediately beneficial to all new employees regardless of role
- Develop portfolio of regularly scheduled Level I trainings including online, self-paced modules
- Prompt further dialogue once the full analysis of the Institutional Campus Climate Survey is complete; in particular, consider the disaggregated results of the questions in the professional development section of the employee survey
- Budget \$26,000 annually for professional development of the Co-directors, Faculty Coordinators, and Staff Liaison. It is critical that the facilitator expertise and skills be supported and maintained. Facilitators should have the capacity to approach all professional development through an equity lens and through the principles outlined in ARC's Commitment to Social Justice and Equity; Institutional Equity Plan; and the Educational Master Plan.
- Create a system to ensure stakeholders provide regular input and feedback because it is critical that those who are served by professional development have a voice in its development and delivery.
- Incorporate foundation-level training into department and committee work
- Grant access to connect professional development personnel to Annual Unit Plan reporting of professional development requests
- Assess the college's professional development needs through existing structures like Annual Unit Plans and connect departments' needs to the competencies.

### Long-term Implementation

- Implement individual professional growth plans supported by technology that fosters use (e.g., badging or gamification)
- Reassess the competencies and update if needed during the next scheduled planning cycle identified in the ARC Integrated Planning Guide (currently scheduled for 2027)

## APPENDIX A: Professional Development Topics from the Institutional Equity Plan

The following requests and suggestions emerged from the college community during town halls and listening sessions for the Institutional Equity Plan.

### Specific Training for Administration:

- Use of pronouns and gender identity
- Using terms related to equity
- How can mid-level managers advocate for equity with different constituencies up and down the chain?
- How do you talk about race sensitively?

### Trainings needed for all employees:

- Having difficult conversations, conflict resolution, non-violent communication, and interpersonal Communication
- Addressing/speaking to controversial issues; equity & social justice
- Cultural competence and cultural humility
- Microaggressions
- How students can be triggered and how to work with that in the classroom
- Complex identities and intersectionalities
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Learning Styles and modalities
- Implicit bias
- Consequences of treating students like they are second class citizens from a structural perspective
- Stereotype threat
- Gender identity and pronouns
- Issues and resources for UndocuScholars
- Demographics and identities of ARC students
- Faculty training for how to support ALL students particularly disproportionately impacted and marginalized students—adjunct and full-time faculty
- Streamlined onboarding training and customer service training so classified staff clearly know how to help students
- Strength based rather than deficit model perspectives on students
- Transparent and simple document training and processes
- Holistic student and holistic practitioner
- Privilege, power, and social justice theory
- Racial Consciousness including a clearly articulated spectrum of racial consciousness
- Academic freedom parameters—what are they?
- Guidelines to Student Privacy Rights
- How to help students w/out crossing privacy lines
- How to engage students who have limited time on campus
- Free speech versus hate speech and how to address it
- Better equity training for hiring
- How to Supervise
- Social justice, inclusivity, and equity
- Training for able-bodied people not to use disabled restroom stalls
- The effects of W/I/F on student's experiences
- Allyship training
- Whiteness and racial Consciousness
- Interfaith Dialogues
- You Tube Series "Out of Context"
- Training to move us from a culture of gatekeeping to a culture of empowerment
- Best practices for working with marginalized students, such as the importance of demonstrating *authentic care* as well as the following research informed practices: providing proactive academic progress monitoring, publicly praising students, having high expectations for them, expressing belief in their ability to succeed, and avoiding the cultural deficit perspective where students are blamed for their lack of success (Wood, Harris, & White).
- Teaching academies for adjuncts and full-time faculty that address effective methods for community colleges



## APPENDIX B: Mapping of Competencies to Strategic Goals and ISLOs

The existing flex reporting system is used to map events to Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLO). With the introduction of competencies, this connection could potentially be standardized at the competency level allowing it to be derived as shown in the mapping below.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

#	Competency	STUDENTS FIRST	CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE PATHS	EXEMPLARY TEACHING, LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT	VIBRANCY AND RESILIENCY
1	Equity-Minded Service	X	X	X	X
2	Effective Communication	X	X	X	X
3	Technology Proficiency	X	X	X	
4	Organizational Adeptness	X			X
5	Leadership Development		X	X	
6	Collaborative Innovation	X	X	X	X
7	Data Literacy		X	X	X

### INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**ISLO 1:** Demonstrate and employ marketable skills and personal qualities for professional growth and career advancement.

**ISLO 2:** Demonstrate skills and behaviors which contribute to open and respectful communication of diverse ideas and beliefs.

**ISLO 3:** Utilize a variety of methods to communicate effectively.

**ISLO 4:** Employ strategies to work cooperatively and effectively with others.

**ISLO 5:** Locate and critically evaluate information from a variety of sources, including those accessed through technology, to create informed responses to issues, problems, and challenges.

**ISLO 6:** Recognize the responsibility to behave as an ethical citizen, contributing personal knowledge, resources, and skills for the benefit of the local and larger communities.

**ISLO 7:** For students earning degrees, demonstrate an understanding of the basic content and methodology for the major areas of knowledge, including the arts and humanities, quantitative reasoning, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

#	Competency	ISLO 1	ISLO 2	ISLO 3	ISLO 4	ISLO 5	ISLO 6	ISLO 7
1	Equity-Minded Service	X	X	X				X
2	Effective Communication	X	X	X			X	X
3	Technology Proficiency	X		X		X		X
4	Organizational Adeptness	X		X	X		X	X
5	Leadership Development	X	X		X	X		X
6	Collaborative Innovation	X			X		X	X
7	Data Literacy	X				X		X

\*ISLO 1 and 7 are listed for all competencies because of the broad nature of the ISLO.

## APPENDIX C: Inspiration for Collaboration Space

Ideas suggested in this document under “Appropriate Space” were inspired by intentionally designed facilities at other educational institutions. A group from Los Rios visited one of these facilities, the West Houston Institute at Houston Community College, and could see the potential value of collaboration space of this type at American River College.

### West Houston Institute at Houston Community College

<https://hccs.edu/whi>

This community college innovation center uses uniquely redefined spaces to promote collaboration and co-creation. According to its website, “The Institute effectively harnesses the power of diverse perspectives to achieve innovative learning solutions. It takes a quantum leap forward to impact how teachers educate, becoming the incubator for changing the future.”

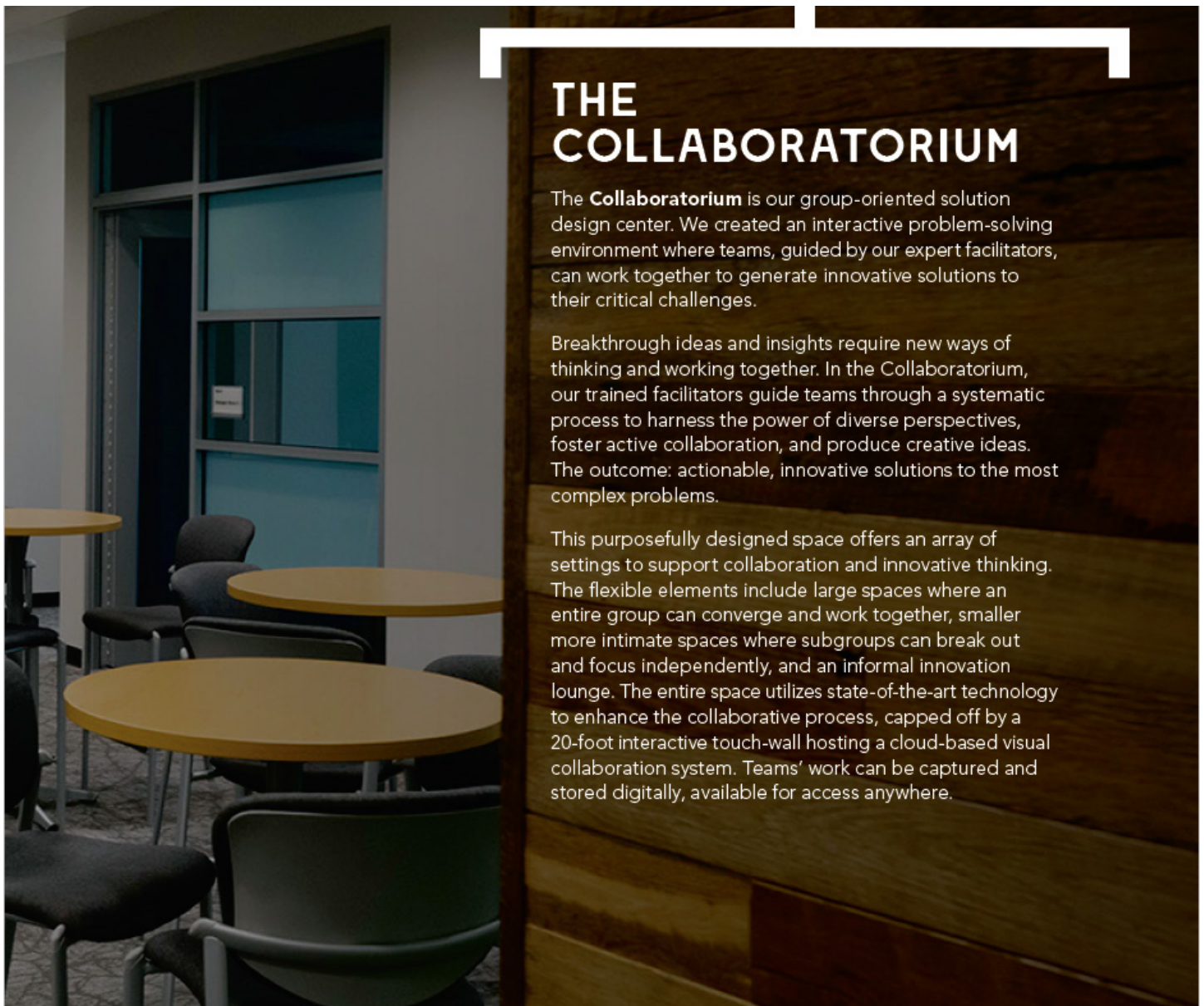


Image Source: [HCC Innovation at the Intersections brochure](#) (February 2018), West Houston Institute.

# Collaboratorium

The Solution Design Center at West Houston Institute

The Collaboratorium opens the door to innovation, breakthrough ideas and new ways of problem solving. We offer a unique collaborative space with expert facilitators to encourage a diversity of perspectives, engagement, and creative thinking. The result: actionable, innovation solutions to your biggest challenges.

## THE SPACE

## THE APPROACH

## ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Large-group "theater" room with visual collaboration system
- Large-group roundtable room
- Six intimate break-out rooms
- Informal lounge area
- 4500+ square feet

## THE SPACE

## THE APPROACH

## ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Collaboration
- Engagement
- Creativity and innovation
- Design Thinking/User-Centered Design principles
- Actionable solutions
- Custom-designed sessions

## THE SPACE

## THE APPROACH

## ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Facilitated session
- Rental of space (under special conditions)
- Discounted rates for non-profits and educational partners
- No charge for HCC users
- Contact us for more information

Image Source: [Houston Community College website](#)



## Collaborative Design Center at Valencia College



Image source: [Valencia College Website](#)

Valencia College opened a collaborative design center in 2013 and has also developed a cohort-based training program called Prototype that engages participants in collaborative problem solving as well as methods such as design thinking and systems thinking. A recent [League for Innovation article](#) described the program as “designed for participants not only to explore new ideas, but also to reflect on their own preferences, examine their blind spots, build empathy for the experiences of others, and deliberately stretch beyond their comfort zones in order to authentically collaborate toward innovative solutions. Cohorts meet on a monthly basis throughout the academic year and begin applying what they learn in the first session. Much of the program includes sharing lessons learned, successes, and opportunities for growth with colleagues.”

The facility sets the stage for creative thinking and collaborative activities. It sparks imagination while also providing spaces to gather, ideate, and discover new approaches crafted from the collective wisdom of those involved.

## CoLab at Johnson County Community College

According to the college website, “The CoLab is a hi-tech and flexible space created to encourage students, faculty, staff and community members to innovate, share their knowledge, team and dream.” The CoLab spaces are structured to nurture interdisciplinary collaboration in an environment that is often project-based. Some of the spaces include:



CoLab Commons (OCB 100)

- The common area is filled with moveable tables, large desks, individual seating and a large couch for flexible meeting arrangements
- High definition monitors can be wirelessly connected to your laptop or other devices
- Outlets are built in to desks and seating to provide easy device charging
- Cell phone charging station is centrally located, equipped with popular phone charging cables



Learning Studio (OCB 107)

- Active learning space that accommodates up to 24 people comfortably
- Multiple easily-moveable tables for large group collaboration
- Large whiteboards around the room, including hand-held whiteboards for group activities
- High definition touchscreen monitor
- Projector with connected PC
- In-room telephone



Image Source: [Johnson County Community College Website](#)





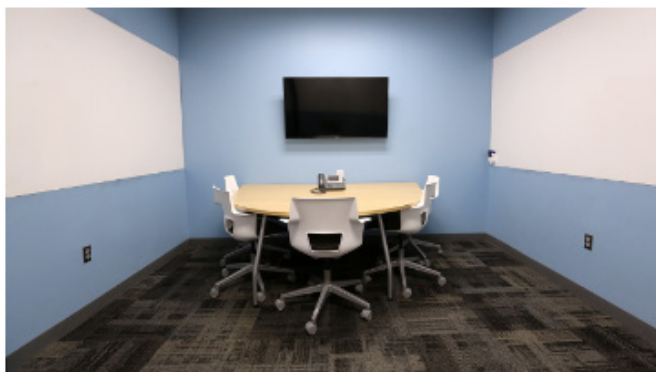
CoLab Corner

- Sizeable corner of the CoLab that accommodates up to 50 people
- Equipped with high definition touchscreen monitor, with connected computer
- Flexible seating arrangements



CoLab Couch (CLC)

- U-shaped Couch with additional seating behind
- Accommodates up to 12 people comfortably
- High definition monitor can be wirelessly connected to your laptop or other devices



Little 5 Small Conference Room (OCB 104)

- Accommodates up to 5 people comfortably
- Half table for small group collaboration
- Multiple whiteboards for easy communication
- High definition monitor with connected PC
- In-room telephone



Big 10 Conference Room (OCB 102)

- Accommodates up to 10 people comfortably
- Conference table for medium group collaboration
- Two large whiteboards
- High definition monitor with connected PC
- In-room telephone

Image Source: [Johnson County Community College Website](http://www.jccc.edu/)

## Claremont Hive

<https://creativity.claremont.edu/resources-landing/>

According to the website, “we believe that each individual learning experience is an opportunity to re-imagine the learning environment. To meet the specific needs of these experiences, the spaces at the Hive are varied, specific, and flexible! Almost everything is on wheels, so each space can be designed to accommodate any experience you want to create.”

### The Commons (flexible space)



Image Source: [The Hive Website](#)



## the d.School, Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford

“The scale and complexity of the challenges facing the world today are unprecedented. Solutions won’t come from any single field, but from collaboration between innovators who can see beyond the way the world is to the way it could be.... d.school courses and curriculum are based on the design thinking process. It draws on methods from engineering and design, and combines them with ideas from the arts, tools from the social sciences, and insights from the business world. The process provides a glue that brings teammates together around a common goal: make the lives of the people they’re designing for better.” [[d.School Factsheet](#)]



Image source: [d.School website](#)

## Food for Thought

Many of the spaces depicted were thoughtfully crafted as a venue for collaborative techniques such as human-centered design. These methods also hold promise as a means to create a professional development space at ARC that is tailored to the people it is intended to serve. The following resources provide an introduction to these methods and are offered as resources to those who may eventually be involved in implementing the project team's recommendations.

### What is Human Centered Design? (IDEO.org)

<https://www.designkit.org/human-centered-design>

### Methods of Human Centered Design (IDEO.org)

<https://www.designkit.org/methods>

### Introduction to Human-Centered Design (IDEO.ORG and Acumen)

Free, nine-week course that teaches small teams (2-8 people) the methods of Human-Centered Design as the team works through a chosen design challenge

<https://www.plusacumen.org/courses/introduction-human-centered-design>

### d.School Design Thinking Bootleg (Stanford)

Card deck that introduces design thinking along with its tools and methods.

<https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/design-thinking-bootleg>

### d.School Resources (Stanford)

A curated collection of resources that give insight into the principles, methods, and furnishings used at the d.School

<https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources>

### Prototype: An Exploration of Collaboration by Design (article about Valencia's program)

<https://www.league.org/leadership-abstracts/prototype-enhancing-creative-and-collaborative-leadership>

Once designed, a similar area at ARC could offer a menu of services that support collaboration and innovation. Among the services that might be considered are the following:

- **Facilitation Expertise:** Facilitator-led interactive collaboration sessions using techniques drawn from human-centered design and similar methodologies
- **Insight Synthesis:** Support to capture and synthesize insights in written or visual form
- **Iteration Assistance:** Support in creating and refining iterative versions of solutions under consideration
- **Crowdsourcing Tools:** Technology platform supported by trained personnel to glean Los Rios collective intelligence to quickly inform thinking and surface a wealth of ideas
- **Enabling Supplies:** Technology-enabled rooms and creative supplies available for project teams and events
- **Exposure and Training:** Program of internal and external offerings to build institutional capacity in collaborative design methods; may include virtual engagements, self-service options, on-site speakers, and experiential learning/field trips
- **Innovation Challenges:** Incentivized challenges with prizes and/or seed money go to those who propose the most attractive or inventive ideas
- **Resource Library:** Books on design thinking, collaboration, innovation, and other related topics
- **Tablet/Laptop Cart:** Set of tablets or laptops in a charging cart that are available for group use in the collaboration space(s)
- **Toolkits:** Development and distribution of toolkits that encourage design thinking and creative problem-solving that can be used by groups or departments anywhere on campus

## APPENDIX D: Focus Group Feedback

Focus groups were conducted in March and April 2020 to share the work of the project team and vet the comprehensiveness of the draft document through dialogue with various ARC communities. Particular emphasis was given to whether the draft competencies resonated and were well crafted to enable the professional growth of these populations. Open-ended questions were also used to invite input from more voices to discern whether any key aspects had been missed during the development process.

[Placeholder for additional content to be added in April]