PROJECT PLAYBOOK

Scaling Faculty-Led Innovation

UNIVERSITY INNOVATION ALLIANCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, the University Innovation Alliance (UIA) launched the Scaling Faculty-Led Innovation project with support from Axim Collaborative to strengthen institutional capacity for faculty-led teaching and learning redesign. The project focused on improving the classroom experience for all students by addressing the structural, cultural, and procedural barriers that make innovation uneven and difficult to scale across higher education.

Redefining Faculty Innovation
At many institutions, innovation in teaching depends on individual faculty initiative rather than institutional support. This project challenged the idea that innovation is isolated and dependent on individual faculty effort. By elevating faculty as the primary agents of change and aligning systems to support their work, the UIA demonstrated that inclusive, scalable innovation requires empathy for the faculty experience and deliberate redesign of the systems surrounding them.

Proven Impact Across Fourteen Institutions
The initiative engaged 14 UIA member universities and more than 50 faculty members, who led 24 courses that implemented instructional innovations, reaching over 7,200 students. Through collaborative learning communities, participants tested approaches to inclusive course design, active learning, and mastery-based pacing – resulting in more engaging and equitable classroom environments.

A Shared Framework for Scaling Innovation
Faculty-led redesign can succeed only when institutions create the right conditions for it to take root. This playbook presents a framework grounded in three components that make scaling possible:

- Preparation: Align institutional priorities, clarify goals, and define what innovation means on your campus.
- Collaboration: Build supportive structures that connect faculty across disciplines and institutions.
- Activation: Provide tools, incentives, and infrastructure to sustain innovation and ensure its impact endures.

Guided by Empathy and Evidence
The project surfaced six guiding principles that underpin this approach: faculty-led innovation matters; redesign needs structure; support must be intentional; scale starts with cohorts; sustainability depends on systems; and evaluation is essential. Together, these principles create a replicable model for aligning faculty creativity with institutional systems and strategy.

How This Playbook Can Help You

- **Transform Institutional Support:** Redefine how innovation is resourced, recognized, and sustained.
- **Empower Faculty Leadership:** Create space for faculty-driven experimentation and shared learning.
- **Strengthen Student Outcomes:** Build classrooms where all students can engage, persist, and succeed.
- **Advance Systemic Change:** Embed teaching innovation into institutional culture and practice.

This playbook provides practical guidance and frameworks drawn from the lived experiences of faculty across the UIA network. Designed for adaptation across diverse institutional contexts, it offers a pathway to make innovation not the exception — but the norm — in higher education.

PROJECT PLAYBOOK

About the Playbook

Designed with faculty, academic leaders, and student success practitioners in mind, this playbook aims to help institutions create the conditions for scalable, faculty-led innovation in teaching and learning. By providing a practical framework and actionable strategies, it addresses the common structural, cultural, and procedural barriers that often limit innovation on campus.

Recognizing differences in campus context, culture, and institutional needs, the information included here is not intended as a "one-size-fits-all" solution. Instead, it serves as a starting point and guided example for campuses seeking to align institutional priorities, empower faculty leadership, and strengthen student outcomes through evidence-based instructional improvement.

Practitioners interested in the specifics of the insights and interventions included in this resource are encouraged to connect with the University Innovation Alliance (UIA).

Building on a decade of collective learning across 19 member institutions, this playbook reflects the UIA's ongoing commitment to transforming how universities support faculty and advance student success. It offers adaptable tools, frameworks, and real-world examples that institutions can tailor to their own structures and goals — helping faculty-led innovation move from isolated experiments to sustained, systemwide change.

About the Project

The Scaling Faculty-Led Innovation project represents a pivotal evolution in the University Innovation Alliance's (UIA) decade of work advancing student success through scalable, evidence-based innovation. This project sits alongside two related UIA initiatives focused on scaling institutional change: Scaling Innovation in Higher Education, which examined how campuses assess and expand promising redesigns, and Scaling Academic Recovery, which strengthened student momentum through targeted redesigns in high-DFW courses. While each initiative addressed a different challenge, together they reflect the UIA's commitment to understanding how institutions create the conditions for effective practices to spread and improve student outcomes at scale.

Launched in January 2024 with support from the Axim Collaborative, the project brought together 14 UIA member institutions to strengthen institutional capacity for faculty-led teaching and learning redesign. For institutions seeking to create motivating and equitable learning experiences for all students, supporting faculty innovation is essential. This requires an intentional, coordinated process that aligns policy, practice, and culture around improving student learning.

The University Innovation Alliance (UIA) is a national multicampus laboratory for student success innovation. By working together, UIA institutions dramatically accelerate the implementation and scale of proven strategies that improve student outcomes and increase the number and diversity of college graduates in the United States. Over its first decade, UIA campuses have delivered 164,000 additional graduates beyond baseline projections, increasing graduation for students from low-income backgrounds by 43 percent and for students of color by 100 percent. These results were achieved not through isolated pilots, but through shared experimentation, diffusion, and accountability — demonstrating that coordinated systems change in higher education is both possible and scalable.

The *Scaling Faculty-Led Innovation* project builds on that legacy by addressing the structural and cultural barriers that make innovation uneven across higher education. Faculty were positioned as the primary agents of change, while students — particularly those historically excluded from success in foundational or high-impact courses — were the ultimate beneficiaries of more inclusive and motivating learning environments.

The project began with an in-person retreat that convened faculty, teaching and learning leaders, liaisons, and UIA Fellows to set shared goals and surface common challenges. Campuses then participated in a six-session community of practice that fostered reflection, collaboration, and shared problem-solving around inclusive pedagogy, scaling strategies, and implementation approaches.

Faculty and UIA staff co-developed an Innovation Evaluation Rubric to assess readiness for growth and an Innovation Inventory to document and share promising practices. Focus groups with participating faculty provided candid feedback that surfaced key institutional supports, barriers, and opportunities for lasting change.

Across the Alliance, 24 foundational and high-impact courses were redesigned, representing 61 course sections taught by 55 faculty, including 23 UIA Faculty Fellows. More than 7,200 students participated in these courses during the project period.

24
foundational and high-impact courses redesigned

Representing

61 **course sections**

Taught by

55 **faculty**
including 23 UIA Faculty Fellows

7,200+
students participated

Participating Institutions

Arizona State University

University of Colorado Denver

Iowa State University

University of Illinois Chicago

Michigan State University

UMBC

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Purdue University

The University of New Mexico

University at Buffalo

VCU

UC Riverside

The University of Utah

The *Scaling Faculty-Led Innovation* project marked the first time the UIA engaged faculty directly as primary partners in innovation — demonstrating that when institutions align structures to support faculty leadership, teaching innovation can become scalable, sustainable, and transformative for students.

FRAMEWORK FOR SCALING FACULTY INNOVATION

While faculty across institutions consistently engage in course design and instruction to improve student success, these efforts often operate in silos — with limited connection to institutional strategies or sustained support structures. Through this project, the UIA sought to change that by establishing a shared framework for documenting, supporting, and scaling faculty-led teaching innovations.

This framework organizes the work into three essential components — Preparation, Collaboration, and Activation — that together create the conditions for scalable, sustainable innovation. It reflects how this initiative was structured and serves as a model campuses can adapt to create conditions for scalable, sustainable innovation.

Preparation: Establishing a Common Vision for Innovation

To scale effectively, institutions must first align on what faculty innovation looks like and why it matters. This project:

- Created space for cross-campus dialogue to define core challenges and opportunities in course design and instructional improvement.
- Surfaced principles to guide innovation, including responsiveness to student needs, transparency in teaching practices, and measurable impact.
- Prioritized faculty autonomy while encouraging institutional scaffolding for sustainable change.

Collaboration: Building Structures for Shared Learning

Faculty cannot scale innovations alone. The project fostered structured collaboration by:

- Collecting real examples of course-level innovations and design changes across institutions.
- Creating a shared Innovation Inventory to surface what's being tried, what's working, and why.
- Developing an Evaluation Rubric to assess readiness and guide progress, from early experimentation to institutional integration.
- Encouraging cross-campus exchange and peer feedback to support continuous learning.

Activation: Tools to Support Implementation and Growth

To ensure long-term value, the project delivered tangible tools for campuses to use and adapt:

- An Evaluation Rubric that helps institutions assess whether innovations are ready to grow — and what supports are needed.
- A Faculty Innovation Inventory that showcases real efforts in progress and supports peer-to-peer learning.

This framework is more than a static set of tools. It offers a replicable approach for other institutions to surface what's working, build shared strategies, and ensure promising innovations don't fade once pilot funding ends. It is grounded in practical insights, built in collaboration with faculty, and designed to support long-term transformation in teaching and learning.

The following section, *Our Approach*, illustrates how campuses moved through these stages — from shared preparation to collaborative design and sustained integration.

Approach to Scaling Faculty-Led Academic Innovation

Improving student success at scale requires more than one-off projects or isolated pilots. Institutions often face outdated instructional models, uneven student outcomes, and a gap between how faculty teach and what today's students need to thrive. Moving from isolated experimentation to sustainable, system-supported innovation means aligning efforts with institutional strategy, investing in inclusive design, and embedding change into daily practice.

The UIA's approach draws on lessons from across the network and offers a practical roadmap for institutions ready to move from idea to sustained change. This process unfolds across three interconnected phases, each with clear, actionable steps. This structure reflects the model used in this project and can be adapted by other institutions. To support this process, the work is grounded in a set of guiding principles that inform each phase of the model.

Guiding Principles for Scaling Faculty-Led Academic Innovation

These principles grounded every phase of the work and serve as touchstones for institutions seeking to foster meaningful, faculty-driven change.

Faculty-led innovation matters.

Innovation in teaching is more likely to succeed and scale when faculty are the ones leading it.

Support must be intentional.

Innovation requires more than permission. It must be actively supported with resources, incentives, infrastructure, and institutional alignment.

Redesign needs structure.

Faculty need flexible yet clear guidance, templates, and processes to redesign effectively.

Scale starts with cohorts.

Peer-based cohorts foster collaboration, momentum, and shared ownership that help innovations move beyond isolated practice.

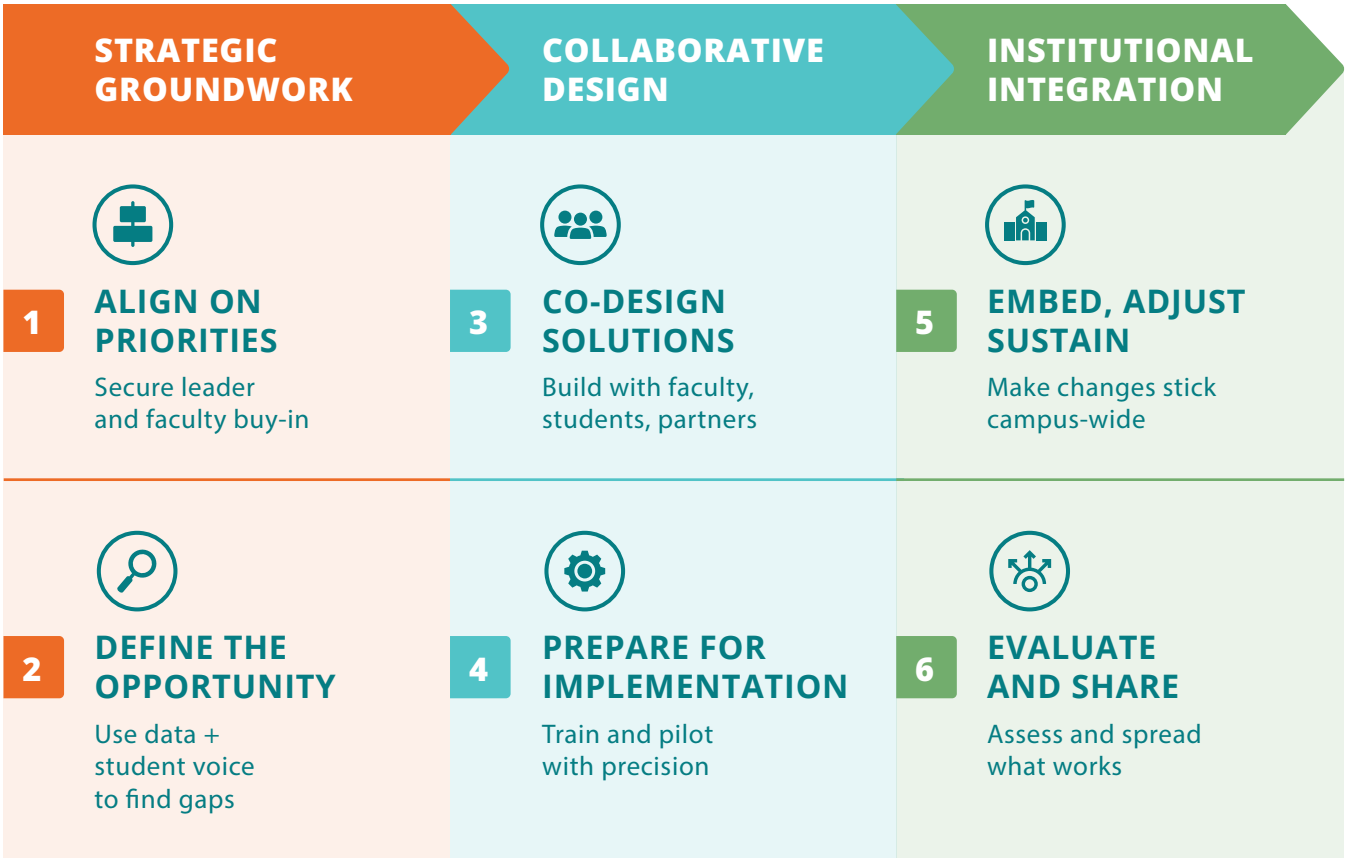
Sustainability depends on systems.

For innovations to last and grow, they must be embedded into institutional systems, policies, and culture.

Evaluation is essential.

Continuous improvement relies on assessing what works, for whom, and under what conditions.

These principles come to life through a three-phase process — Strategic Groundwork, Collaborative Design, and Institutional Integration — that campuses can adapt to their context.



These phases build on the Preparation / Collaboration / Activation framework by offering more detailed steps that campuses can follow as they apply the model.

Phase 1: Strategic Groundwork

Establish the foundation for innovation by building shared insight, aligning priorities, and organizing for action. Institutions scan the landscape of current faculty-led innovation, understand existing supports, and identify persistent teaching challenges. This creates a baseline for coordination and ensures the work addresses real gaps and institutional goals.

STEP 1 – ALIGN ON PRIORITIES

Clarify why this work matters. Secure agreement from leaders, faculty champions, and stakeholders on the challenge to address and how it connects to broader goals. Define what success looks like and how it will be measured.

STEP 2 – DEFINE THE OPPORTUNITY

Use data, research, and input from students, faculty, and staff to identify where innovation can have the greatest impact. Avoid assumptions by digging into student experiences, barriers, and needs. Surface shared goals and constraints.

Phase 2: Collaborative Design

Move from understanding to action by bringing faculty together in supportive learning communities. These cohorts foster collaboration, cross-discipline sharing, and shared ownership of redesign goals. Faculty develop and test new approaches with templates, clear design principles, and peer feedback.

STEP 3 – CO-DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Engage faculty, students, staff, and leaders to generate and prototype solutions. Keep the process visible and participatory. Focus on ideas that are feasible, meaningful, and aligned with institutional priorities.

STEP 4 – PREPARE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Test ideas in a small setting (e.g., one course section or department). Gather feedback and adapt the design. Build an implementation plan with clear roles, timelines, and supports. Invest early in training, communication, and evaluation planning.

Phase 3: Sustained Integration

Move from understanding to action by bringing faculty together in supportive learning communities. These cohorts scale and embed successful innovations into institutional practice. Align policies, recognition structures, and resource flows to sustain redesigned teaching approaches, ensuring they become part of the campus culture.

STEP 5 – EMBED, ADJUST, SUSTAIN

Launch at scale with infrastructure and leadership support. Ensure faculty have the resources to maintain quality. Monitor outcomes and fidelity, making adjustments as needed to keep the work relevant and effective.

STEP 6 – EVALUATE AND SHARE

Conduct meaningful evaluation to understand impact and capture learning. Share results internally and externally, highlighting faculty and student perspectives. Use insights to strengthen the current initiative and inform the next cycle of innovation.

Scaling faculty-led innovation is a continuous process, not a checklist. Institutions may revisit earlier phases as new insights emerge, ensuring that innovations remain relevant, equitable, and deeply embedded in practice over time.

What We Heard from Faculty

Four UIA campuses conducted focus groups with STEM faculty who had implemented technology-enabled instructional innovations. Across ten sessions, twenty-five instructors described clear patterns in how technology influences learning, where barriers persist, and what conditions make innovation sustainable. Their experiences highlight the practical realities faculty navigate and the institutional supports required for meaningful, scalable instructional changes.

Technology Strengthens Teaching When Aligned to Student Learning

Faculty shared that digital tools can improve engagement, clarity, and early course correction when they fit naturally into how students already learn. Polling tools, rapid-feedback systems, and integrated LMS resources helped students stay on track and made large classes feel more interactive.

> "So I use the polling tools in class... They all get interested. They're going to play with their phones. I see a lot of interest when I say, okay, here's an online poll, right? They all get their phones and they engage... I get their attention."
>
> *— Harish, Computer Science*

Technology Is Only Effective with Adequate Human Support

Faculty emphasized that technology does not reduce instructional labor. Implementing and sustaining innovations requires time, troubleshooting, monitoring, and ongoing human support. When people capacity decreases — such as reductions in teaching assistants — faculty often must scale back approaches that were otherwise successful.

> "As much as we've utilized technology, the people part of teaching still matters so much. And we've tried to leverage technology to support the students where they are, but as the people resources decrease, we're really feeling it. And that sort of highlights the value of people in the teaching work that we're doing... I will say, next semester, I am teaching the 2019 version of my course, because of the [reduction in number of teaching assistants per course]. I'm going back to 2019 because I don't have the support to do what I've innovated in the last 5 years. Do I love that? No. I'm very much grieving it. But I need to live in the reality of the support that I have."
>
> *— Susan, Chemistry*

Infrastructure Sets the Boundaries for Instructional Innovation

Both digital and physical infrastructure shape what instructors can realistically do in the classroom. LMS inconsistencies, unsupported tools, and classroom setups that limit charging, writing, or projection create friction for faculty and add cognitive load for students.

> "I want to write on the board and have my thing projected. And there's so many times that the screen is covering the entire whiteboard and you have no room to annotate or write or solve a problem… there's so many times that I will get up on the desk and change the thing so that it projects literally just on the whiteboard… because otherwise there's nowhere to write."
>
> ***— Nancy, Chemistry***

Access and Usability Determine Who Can Fully Participate

Students cannot benefit from redesigned instruction if they lack devices, software, broadband, or accessible formats. Faculty noted that uneven access directly affects persistence, workload, and course completion.

> "Having computer access is its own challenge because we can provide licenses to students for software onto their own computers either through a virtual desktop type connection or they can log in directly. However, some of my students just don't own a computer and it means that they go to [Campus Library]… They don't have the six to eight hours a day that you could spend at night with your own laptop working on a software project. They need to get it done during the opening hours… I find that some of those students are the ones who end up dropping out of our programs and I don't know what to do about that."
>
> ***— Nisha, Civil Engineering***

Together, these insights underscore the importance of aligning tools, people, infrastructure, and access to create the conditions where instructional innovation can take root and endure.

The following section highlights the instructional practices faculty piloted across campuses and the early patterns that emerged from their work.

PILOTED INNOVATIONS

Faculty across participating campuses implemented instructional innovations in foundational and high-impact courses to strengthen learning, reduce unnecessary barriers, and support progress toward undifferentiated outcomes. Although campuses implemented different strategies based on their context, clear patterns emerged across the pilots. The sections below summarize what was piloted, why it mattered, and what early outcomes were observed across these innovations.

What Faculty Piloted

Faculty implemented evidence-based practices aligned with the project's goals. Across courses and disciplines, these innovations commonly included:

- Active learning routines and structured in-class problem solving
- Flipped or partially flipped models with pre-class learning
- Note-taking workbooks and structured worksheets to support deeper processing
- Mastery learning approaches, including retesting opportunities
- Flexible deadlines and more transparent grading
- Alternative grading structures, including 4-point scales
- Accessibility improvements to course materials and assessments
- Student metacognition strategies and reflective learning
- Peer collaboration, peer coaching, or embedded recitation support
- Targeted use of digital tools and AI-supported learning resources

These changes were not uniform. Each faculty member selected design elements that aligned with their specific teaching challenge and their students' needs. This variation is a strength of faculty-led innovation: the strategies were intentional, feasible, and locally driven.

What Challenges They Addressed

Although courses spanned STEM, social sciences, and gateway subjects, instructors described strikingly similar challenges:

- Large foundational courses where students entered with uneven preparation
- High levels of student anxiety around assessments
- Limited engagement in traditional lecture formats
- Students struggling to connect class time with what was expected on exams
- Low help-seeking behavior, even when support was available
- First-year students overwhelmed by pace, structure, or unclear expectations
- High D/F patterns or withdrawal spikes at predictable points in the term

Many also noted that traditional grading practices and rigid course structures unintentionally widened gaps between student groups. These changes attempted to address those barriers with practices that encouraged persistence, confidence, and consistent learning.

What Changed for Students

Students reported meaningful changes in their experience. Across pilots, faculty observed the following shifts in student behavior and experience:

- Higher attendance and greater consistency in completing pre-class work
- More students attending office hours, recitations, and review sessions
- Increased willingness to ask questions and seek clarification
- Reduced stress and stronger confidence when approaching exams
- More students using in-class materials (whiteboards, worksheets, notebooks) effectively
- Stronger engagement from students who previously held back in large courses

Students also reported that courses felt more organized, fair, and achievable. Many explicitly shared that design elements helped them understand material they had struggled with in previous attempts or in earlier preparation.

What Changed in Learning Outcomes

Early evidence across the pilots showed positive academic shifts:

- Pass rates improved in multiple courses implementing these innovations
- D/F patterns stabilized or reduced compared to previous terms
- Retesting opportunities led to score gains for most students
- Learning gains increased in courses using structured active learning
- Students who would have failed under traditional grading passed under new structures
- Improvements in midterm and final exam averages in several sections

Importantly, innovations did not reduce rigor. Faculty reported that students met course expectations more consistently because the changes created clearer pathways to success, not because expectations were lowered.

What Faculty Learned

Faculty reflections revealed several shared insights about why innovations worked:

- Small changes can influence learning culture without overhauling an entire course
- Course structure matters as much as pedagogy
- Flexible policies support persistence without lowering standards
- Students benefit from clarity, repeated practice, and timely feedback
- Peer-based collaboration strengthens engagement for many students
- Accessible materials allow more students to participate fully
- Innovation is more sustainable when faculty can test and refine without pressure

Many also named the cohort model as a source of motivation, accountability, and inspiration. Learning alongside colleagues across institutions helped faculty move from isolated efforts to a more connected approach to redesign.

Why These Pilots Matter

Piloted innovations demonstrated that faculty-led redesign can improve learning environments at scale when supported with the right structures. Taken together, the pilot patterns above highlight that:

- Evidence-based teaching practices are adaptable across disciplines
- Instructional changes strengthened student confidence and helped reduce preventable withdrawals
- Equity-minded practices support undifferentiated outcomes across student groups
- Early academic improvements can shape long-term momentum
- Faculty are eager to innovate when the process is clear, protected, and practical

These insights set the foundation for broader institutional adoption and position campuses to embed effective teaching strategies into systems, policies, and program culture.

COURSES

	CHEMISTRY		
	General Chemistry I	General Chemistry II	General Chemistry (Matter and Energy)
	BIOLOGY AND LIFE SCIENCES		
	Agricultural Genetics	Cell and Molecular Biology	Cell Biology
	PHYSICS		
	Introduction to Classical Physics	General Physics I	General Physics II
	MATHEMATICS (FOUNDATIONAL)		
	Algebra, Analytic Geometry, and Trigonometry	College Algebra	Survey of Mathematics
	MATHEMATICS (CALCULUS PATHWAY)		
	Calculus I	Calculus II	Brief Calculus
	COMPUTER SCIENCE		
	Data Organization		
	SOCIAL SCIENCES		
	Introduction to Psychology		
	STUDENT SUCCESS / UNIVERSITY FOUNDATIONS		
	Introduction to the University for Transfer Students		

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Resources created through this project to support institutions in documenting, assessing, and scaling faculty-led innovation.

Innovation Evaluation Rubric

This rubric helps teams assess the strength, fit, and scalability readiness of an instructional innovation.

HOW THIS TOOL IS USED

Use this rubric when your campus is deciding whether to invest in, adopt, or adapt a strategy (regardless of where that strategy originated). It is designed to support team discussion, surface assumptions, and build clarity on next steps.

The Rubric Evaluates Innovations Across Six Dimensions:

Student-Centered Problem Alignment
Is it solving a real, documented student challenge?

Evidence-Informed Design
Is it grounded in data, research, or promising practice?

Responsiveness to Differentiated Student Needs
Does it work across varied student populations?

Faculty Leadership & Usability
Is it practical, usable, and led by instructors?

Scalability Potential
Can it transfer to other contexts with minimal rework?

Institutional Fit & Integration
Does it align with campus priorities and infrastructure?

The goal is not to generate a score. The goal is to determine which ideas are ready for scale, which require refinement, and where targeted support will have the highest return.

Access the full rubric in the Toolkit.

Learning Innovation Inventory

This inventory highlights tested instructional strategies identified across participating UIA institutions to improve outcomes in foundational courses.

HOW THIS TOOL IS USED

Use this inventory to explore promising approaches already in use across peer campuses. The inventory is designed to support discovery, comparison, and hypothesis building about possible solutions to local teaching and learning challenges.

Innovations Are Organized into Four Practical Categories:

AI & Digital Learning Tools
technology-powered tools that support instruction and engagement

Immersive & Active Learning
approaches that enhance learning through application and interaction

Flexible & Adaptive Course Design
structures that respond to diverse learning needs and pace

Peer & Human-Centered Support
models that center people and relationships as core to learning

Each Entry Answers:

- What is the innovation?
- What challenge does it address?
- What is required to implement it?
- What is the intended impact?
- Where can I learn more?

This inventory serves as both inspiration and a starting point. While not exhaustive, it reflects the growing body of work across the UIA to improve learning environments and student outcomes in measurable, scalable ways.

Access the full Inventory in the Toolkit.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1 Faculty are willing to innovate when the work is concrete and manageable.

Small, evidence-informed adjustments felt doable and led to early improvements in student engagement and performance. Clear, practical entry points make faculty innovation more sustainable.

2 Clear structure and transparency make an immediate difference for students.

Changes that simplified course navigation, clarified expectations, or standardized feedback reduced stress and helped students stay on track. Course organization is often the most powerful — and most overlooked — lever for improving learning.

3 Flexibility is essential for lasting instructional change.

Faculty emphasized that these strategies must be adaptable across teaching formats, instructional styles, and student needs. Approaches that allow tailoring without increasing complexity are the most likely to persist.

4 Supportive conditions fuel innovation.

Time, reasonable workloads, and a low-stakes space to test ideas made experimentation possible. When these conditions exist, faculty feel more confident making changes and assessing their impact.

5 Department leadership shapes what is possible.

Chairs and deans influence how innovation is prioritized, supported, and sustained. Their expectations, messaging, and resource alignment set the conditions under which faculty can redesign courses effectively.

6 Shared tools accelerate progress.

The innovation inventory and evaluation rubric provided clarity and consistency across campuses. Common tools helped faculty identify challenges, choose strategies, and document outcomes in a structured way.

7 Cross-campus learning strengthens the quality of instructional change.

Seeing peer approaches allowed faculty to refine ideas, troubleshoot barriers, and feel connected to a larger improvement effort. Exchanging concrete examples elevated the overall quality of innovation work across the initiative.

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

This project demonstrated that faculty-led redesign is a powerful entry point for strengthening learning environments and advancing undifferentiated outcomes in foundational and high-impact courses. With clear tools, protected space to experiment, and a network for shared learning, campuses moved from individual ideas to coordinated instructional improvement that benefited both students and instructors.

Faculty reported greater confidence, stronger community, and early gains in student engagement, course completion, and overall clarity for learners. The work also surfaced critical institutional needs: clearer role alignment for chairs and deans, consistent support for instructional redesign, and mechanisms for connecting course-level innovation to broader curricular goals. Together, these insights create a strong foundation for long-term improvement beyond the life of this grant.

As campuses continue this work, the following next steps can help extend early progress into sustained impact:

Embed The Tools Locally.

Adopt the evaluation rubric and innovation inventory as shared resources across departments to guide ongoing improvement and support faculty through each redesign cycle.

Strengthen Departmental Conditions for Innovation.

Equip chairs and deans with expectations, language, and processes that normalize continuous course improvement and recognize instructional innovation as core academic work.

Expand Faculty Communities of Practice.

Build structures that allow faculty to exchange examples, compare approaches, and learn from peers both within and across institutions.

Integrate Insights From This Instructional Work into Curricular Reform.

Use course-level learning to inform larger general education conversations, course alignment decisions, and institution-wide strategies for student readiness.

Deepen the Understanding of Impact.

Track courses implementing these innovations over time to understand effects on engagement, completion, and progression, ensuring redesign efforts support undifferentiated outcomes.

Connect Instructional Innovation to Career Readiness.

Leverage the tools and structures developed in this project to embed career-aligned competencies into general education and gateway courses, aligning with broader UIA goals for student mobility.

This initiative showed that when faculty have the right supports, instructional innovation becomes both attainable and impactful. The momentum generated through this work provides a strong foundation for future efforts that will continue strengthening learning environments and expanding opportunity for students across the Alliance.