Change Leadership Toolkit

Case Studies:
California State University, Monterey Bay

An Addendum to the

Change Leadership Toolkit:

A Guide for Advancing Systemic Change
in Higher Education

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CHANGE LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT
CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

These Case Studies accompany the Change Leadership Toolkit and demonstrate what it looks like in action to use Leader Moves to promote systemic institutional change. Each case highlights a few key Leader Moves and includes an overview of each institution, the leader at the forefront of the change process, and a description of the Leadership Context and Levers used to achieve the change goal. Collectively, these Case Studies showcase the combinations of Leader Moves and Levers that leaders can use to drive change across different types of institutions. It is important to note that given the lengthy time period for changes and keeping the document brief, these are just examples of Moves, Levers and context elements and are not fully inclusive of the leaders' change processes.

In any systemic change project, there are a variety of conditions that may influence the Moves leaders choose to make, the Levers they may use, and the ultimate change that is made. As a result, for these Case Studies, we chose to represent leaders in different roles, institutions with varying characteristics, and various types of change projects in order to reflect this diversity and showcase how the Toolkit is useful in a variety of situations. Visit our Change Leadership Toolkit Case Studies web page to see other examples, **https://pullias.usc.edu/clt-case-studies/**.

Leader Moves for a Co-Requisite Course Model to Support Minoritized Students

About the Institution

California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), founded in 1994, provides more than 7,500 students with an innovative educational and student experience. CSUMB offers 26 undergraduate and nine graduate majors. From its inception, CSUMB has always explored innovative ways to meet the needs of a new generation of students. With about 46% of the undergraduate student population being Hispanic/Latinx/a/o, CSUMB has been a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) since 1998. As an institution, CSUMB prides itself on providing access to higher education to traditionally underserved and low-income populations.

CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Leader Role(s) and Agency:** Andrew Lawson, Dean, College of Science

- **Goals of Change:** To effectively implement a new system-wide policy to eliminate remedial courses and better support underserved and low-income students in the Department of Math & Statistics.

- **Level/Scope of Change:** Departmental

- **Institutional Type:** State Public

- **Moves Highlighted:**
  - Create Vision, Expectations and Pacing (V)
  - Sensemaking and Learning (SL)
  - Develop Strategy and Resources (S)
  - Leading People and Teams (T)
  - Engage in Advocacy and Navigate Politics (P)
  - Communicate Effectively (C)

- **Levers:**
  - **Lever Category 1:** Campus (system) culture, norms and networks
  - **Lever Category 2:** Campus (system, state) strategic plan(s), including mission, master plan, diversity plan and other plans
  - **Lever Category 8**: Rewards, incentives, constraints and perceptions

Setting the Stage: About the Project

In 2015, CSUMB was awarded a $3 million Innovation in Higher Education Award from the State of California as part of the Governor's initiative to reward colleges and universities for creative and cost-effective approaches to getting more students to earn degrees in less time. The award specifically went to the Mathematics and Statistics Department for their innovative approach to teaching remedial math in large classes with active learning and heavy reliance on near-peer learners. These funds did not expire and could be used for any efforts to support innovation in mathematics instruction.

Then in 2017, the California State University (CSU) Chancellor Timothy P. White released Executive Order 1110 (EO 1110). This order tasked the CSU system with assessing academic preparation and placement in first-year general education for written communication and mathematics/quantitative reasoning courses, and eliminated developmental education courses, effective in Fall 2018. Of particular interest in this EO was the elimination of remedial courses identified as having inequitable outcomes for traditionally underserved and low-income students.

This undertaking to implement EO 1110 was the driving force behind the systemic change project led by Andrew Lawson, Dean of the College of Science at CSUMB. Because of CSUMB's existing commitment to innovation to support student success for traditionally-disenfranchised students, the adoption of a new system-wide policy was seen as an opportunity to once again be innovative. At the time, the College of Science represented roughly a third of the campus's student population.

Change Leader Moves

Overview of Leader Moves

Andrew first worked on establishing and communicating a vision to the impacted Mathematics and Statistics Department. This initial step was to translate EO 1110 to the ground level with faculty who would now be required to implement changes (V1, V2, V3, V4, V5). Andrew then worked with faculty in the department to examine data, which revealed the need to move away from a remedial course model and instead implement a co-requisite remediation model with an emphasis on examining equity gaps for minoritized students (SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL5). Success rates from similar institutions that had adopted a co-requisite remediation model helped build faculty support and buy-in. An important part of the change leadership strategy included creating new rewards and incentives for participating, which built further support for the change initiative in the department (S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S9). These incentives also helped build the team that developed the co-requisite courses (T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9). Additionally, having faculty lead implementation of the EO helped navigate the politics inherent in issues of curriculum shifts and creation of new incentives and rewards (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6).Finally, Andrew communicated across various levels of the organization, serving as a liaison between the department faculty, the college and the institutional administration (C1, C2, C3, C4, C9, C10).

Create Vision, Expectations and Pacing (V) — Focus on V1, V2, V3, V4 and V5

Andrew began this work by sharing what the EO entailed, reframing it in a way that made connections with the existing institutional and departmental vision that spoke to supporting students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds (V1, V2). Internally, he hosted college-wide meetings to communicate the vision of the new EO. Externally, he participated in system-wide events such as the CSU Student Success Summit to connect this system-level charge to the campus-specific history of innovation (V2). For example, the mission and vision of CSUMB allowed Andrew to frame the implementation of co-requisite remediation as an important component of students' success, "both in terms of monetary cost of tuition and the cost of time to degree." This reframing was connected to the campus norms and culture around a mission of serving students and transforming their lives through education — in particular, students from minoritized and low-income backgrounds (V2). This connection to mission and vision early on in the project was a significant Move for getting people on board. Andrew shared that framing the change goal as "helping students achieve, earn their degree faster, move toward degree completion faster, and save them money in doing so because they're avoiding four to eight units of remedial math that don't count toward their degree" was important to create a sense of urgency and even an ethical imperative (V4). Tying the change project to the student success imperative and then back to the very mission of the institution and the campus culture was a key strategy (V1, V2). Andrew was also able to share expectations for how the adoption of EO 1110 would happen, as there were clear parameters from the Chancellor's office and administration (V3). The parameters outlined in the EO were used to create urgency to implement new course sequences and move systemic change forward (V5).

Sensemaking and Learning (SL) — Focus on SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4 and SL5

Of particular interest within this Leader Move category is the role of leveraging data to communicate why the adoption of a new remedial math model would be impactful to student success. Andrew and his team of faculty went to professional development opportunities like the CSU Student Success Summit, to learn about the EO and review data from other university systems where co-requisite remediation models had been successfully implemented (SL1, SL2). The Summit provided an opportunity to bring faculty together to learn about the change and served as an ongoing touchstone for faculty at various key points of the change project. For example, at the Summit Andrew was able to learn about successful implementation from faculty at other institutions and strategize with CSUMB faculty on how to bring these lessons back to campus (SL2). Andrew shared evidence-based approaches that were highly valued in the department; thus, articulating this project within that framework was important to promote faculty support and understanding. Examples from past initiatives showcased how departments had made successful changes and provided templates for the CSUMB faculty to build on. Andrew also had Math faculty present to a campus-wide committee on institutional data that showcased how various prior change projects all supported minoritized students; this presentation helped set the direction and garner support for this specific project (SL3). This culture of engaging in evidence-based practices was then embedded throughout the change project to increase participation and buy-in. Andrew made sure that data collection was ongoing from the beginning of the project and that data were "disaggregated" in order "to be observant of [equity] gaps." Disaggregated data was a central component to how the project was communicated and aligned with DEI efforts. This use of data supported the adoption of a co-requisite program and spoke to the department's ongoing use of evidence-based practices (SL3, SL4, SL5).

Develop Strategy and Resources (S) — Focus on S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S7 and S8

As previously noted, a major strategy was alignment of the EO 1110 implementation with the campus mission (S1). However, the actual implementation process required resources. Fortunately, the CSU Chancellor's Office provided funding, along with the Governor's Innovation Award funds from 2015 which, as noted previously, did not expire and had not yet been spent (S6). These funds were largely used for professional development and technology (S2). As noted above, Andrew used various Sensemaking Moves to share out relevant data from one of the leading centers working to improve and develop mathematics pathways for student success nationally, along with CSUMB institutional research data. Data were shared early and often to inform strategy and decision-making and were communicated in college-wide and departmental meetings (S3). This strategy of sharing data provided the foundation as to why and how the team would implement the EO, specifically as an evidence-based practice in math placement and support.

Another major part of the strategy was distributing resources. Andrew was able to allocate existing resources (from the CSU Chancellor's Office) as a strategy to motivate faculty to participate in the project. These existing resources and additional grant money (Governor's Innovation Award) served as an incentivizing mechanism for faculty to redesign introductory math courses. In the CSU system, "the proportion of faculty contact time or instructional time expected depends on the mode of instruction as indicated by the course classification (c-class) or supervision category (s-factor)." In this change initiative, Andrew was able to provide contact hours for faculty working on this project as a way to align the curricular design asked for by the faculty with the requirements of the EO and the system workload policy (S2). Because of the tight timeline for implementation of this work, significant faculty professional development and effort in curricular design were required during the off-contract days of the summer. Resources to pay for faculty time during the summer were critical in meeting the project timelines and moving the project forward.

Lastly, faculty felt that for the redesigned courses to be successful, class size would need to be reduced. Andrew supported this reduction in class size (and the increase in cost per FTE) as a necessary investment to gather support for the change project. Andrew shared how part of the strategy was to leverage the policies in place (i.e., contact hours) and capital resources (i.e. monies from the Chancellor's Office and existing grant money in the department) to motivate and support the participation in adopting the EO (S2, S3). Andrew shared how faculty were committed to supporting this work because of the alignment with existing goals around student success and clear guidelines around how involvement in this project would or would not impact their retention, tenure, and promotion (RTP) process. Andrew's strategy of leveraging
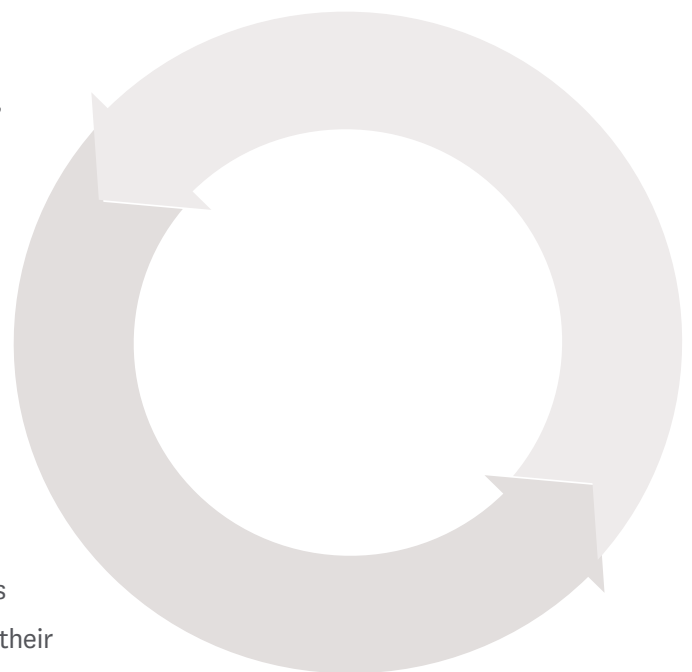
resources helped develop and maintain trust (S4, S6). He mentioned how the ability to say, "you just tell me what you need and I will come up with a plan" or "we'll try to make it happen" made it clear that he was committed to supporting faculty the best he could in this change project. Because the team had significant fiscal resources, Andrew was able to deliver on almost everything faculty asked for to ease the development of a co-requisite remediation model (S2, S6, S9). Although it originated as a system-wide charge to implement a new executive order, this initiative was met with excitement because of the resources available to support its development and implementation.

In addition to rethinking resource allocation, Andrew navigated a lot of the administrative tasks of the process, tried to anticipate some of the administrative hurdles and roadblocks, and worked to remove as many of those as possible to "let them [faculty] do their thing" (S7). He mentioned how part of engaging in the change process was knowing when to "step in and out," so Andrew did not get involved in the specifics of the course designs and instead provided more autonomy to faculty. He was more involved in overcoming challenges, barriers or bottlenecks and in looping back to evaluate and monitor progress (S8). So again, the context of having that existing Innovation Award and the CSU Chancellor's Office support were key resources for developing strategy in the development of the co-requisite remediation model at CSUMB.

Leading People and Teams (T) — Focus on T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8 and T9

Andrew worked with department leadership to select leaders for the team developing the co-requisite remediation model (T1, T2). As shared prior, Andrew leveraged the CSU Student Success Summit to build ongoing trust and begin to form a change team. Andrew attended the Summit with the department team leaders to begin conversations around

the best way to approach the work. Also, in attendance at the Summit were four of the faculty who were going to be leading the efforts (T1, T3). The Summit led to the formation of an early leadership team and team-specific resources, such as summer salaries for work and professional development funds (T7). Andrew mentioned that the context of being away from the institution itself and "away from campus for a couple of days" at the Summit provided time to really talk through some ideas, brainstorm and have a lot of face time with the faculty. These opportunities all showcased how committed the Dean was to support the change (T5, T8).

Additionally, Andrew worked with the department chair to select one of the project faculty leads to attend a STEM leadership academy (a professional development opportunity). This faculty member's attendance helped empower them to engage in ongoing high-impact practices in classroom pedagogy and then bring that back to the department (T6, T7, T9). Andrew selected this faculty member because they had a history of good work and were looking "to do the right thing" when it came to success initiatives for students.

Part of the project's ongoing messaging was that it was ok to take risks in the new course offerings and in the co-requisite model. Andrew explicitly stated that "failure was ok," as the department was starting something new. This communication helped in creating an environment that was safe for risk-taking and giving honest feedback of the process (T5). Additionally, because most faculty were non-tenured and in the midst of their tenure and promotion process, he had to make it clear how faculty participating in this project were not going to suffer in their evaluation materials (T5). Therefore, Andrew emphasized to faculty that engagement in the EO implementation was important, and that those faculty engaging in and leading efforts would not be penalized (T5). As part of the process, refining the course model and

thus working on this development activity counted toward progress in faculty teaching portfolios (T5). Participating faculty also designed the work in a way that would produce peer-reviewed papers of the results, thus assuring that the time spent in curricular design work would not prevent progress in the research/scholarship portion of their tenure and promotion portfolios. Andrew was able to leverage his role as Dean and the funding to create new incentives and rewards and ensure an environment that was safe for risk-taking (T7). He shared that part of leading people and teams was engaging in an "iterative process" that was framed as a space to learn that fostered risk-taking to develop and grow in the project, rather than solely focusing on implementation to achieve goals.

Engage in Advocacy and Navigate Politics (P)— Focus on P1, P2, P4, P5, P6

As the Dean of the College of Science, Andrew used his political acumen to address the systemic change project in various ways. Not only was attending the CSU Student Success Summit a key move in developing the project team, but this three-day immersion with the faculty was also extremely important in building trust, a major factor that helped carry out the work at CSUMB. While at the Summit, Andrew and the faculty team had initial conversations around what implementing EO 1110 would need to look like in order to be successful. Andrew shared that attending the Summit with faculty "was very important" for the sense of commitment as it helped shape the charge and gave faculty a sense of ownership rather than feeling like the initiative had been foisted upon them by the system (P2, P5). This high visibility on Andrew's part continued throughout the project, as he was able to use his role as Dean to navigate politics at multiple levels within and across colleges. An example of this navigation of politics was Andrew's intentional communication of project updates to leaders across various departments in the college university-wide to ensure that key stakeholders felt included in the process (P1, P4). His presence at various campus and system events also showcased his commitment to the project (P1, P6).

"DEI lens and values around equity and inclusion were central to connecting to the values of the institution and the purpose of the program"

— Andrew Lawson

Any system-wide policy mandates, especially those that affect curriculum and faculty teaching modalities, can provoke suspicion or hesitation in adoption from faculty. To ease hesitation and appease skeptics, Andrew mentioned that his attendance at the Summit, going to campus-wide meetings, communicating across levels of the institution (within the College of Science and externally), and providing resources to support the project provided not just visual representation of his commitment to the faculty leading change and goals of the project, but also a way to relay his advocacy (P1). By navigating the administrative terrain, Andrew allowed the faculty to focus on their redesign to a co-requisite model as he anticipated and addressed potential roadblocks (P3, P4).

Communicate Effectively (P) — Focus on C1, C2, C3, C4, C9 and C10

Andrew utilized several Communication Moves, including obtaining research on similar projects at other institutions to support the project, developing a clear message about the project, broadly communicating about the project, and leveraging data and information from the system office to ground change goals (C1, C2 ,C3). In the brainstorming stage, as shared in the Vision and Sensemaking Moves, early on Andrew brought information about how the project would be approached and why such approaches would foreground the change efforts (C1, C2). It was essential to engage in these ongoing communication opportunities regarding vision, purpose, data and progress (C9). Andrew often framed this communication through an affirming way of, "you've already done all this sort of work" and "you have already shown that you're really good at this sort of innovation and work and if anybody can do it, you guys can do it!' (C4). His use of data to communicate the efficacy of an evidence-based approach to his colleagues helped him clearly articulate motivating factors, persuade and educate stakeholders on the EO adoption (C3, C9). For example, he would co-present with faculty directly to the Mathematics and Statistics department during departmental meetings around current completion and success outcomes for minoritized students and other universities' strategies to support innovation in course offerings (C9). Other ongoing efforts were regular meetings with the Mathematics and Statistics department coordinator and chair to discuss the status of the initiative (C9). This project and emerging results were also on the agenda at each semester's college-wide meeting (C9).

In his communication efforts, Andrew developed a compelling and coherent message about the initiative (C1, C3). He clearly articulated the connection this project had to department, college and institutional values of equity and evidence-based practices and framed his messaging to align with these connections. For example, he communicated, "there is good data to suggest that this really works, this will be good for our students and that's why we want to do it" rather than a framing of "this is an executive order from the Chancellor's Office and that's why we have to do it" (C3, C4, C9). Because the executive order was as a system mandate, such communication strategies were vital to help with transparency in the process and keep faculty in the loop of the change project (C2).
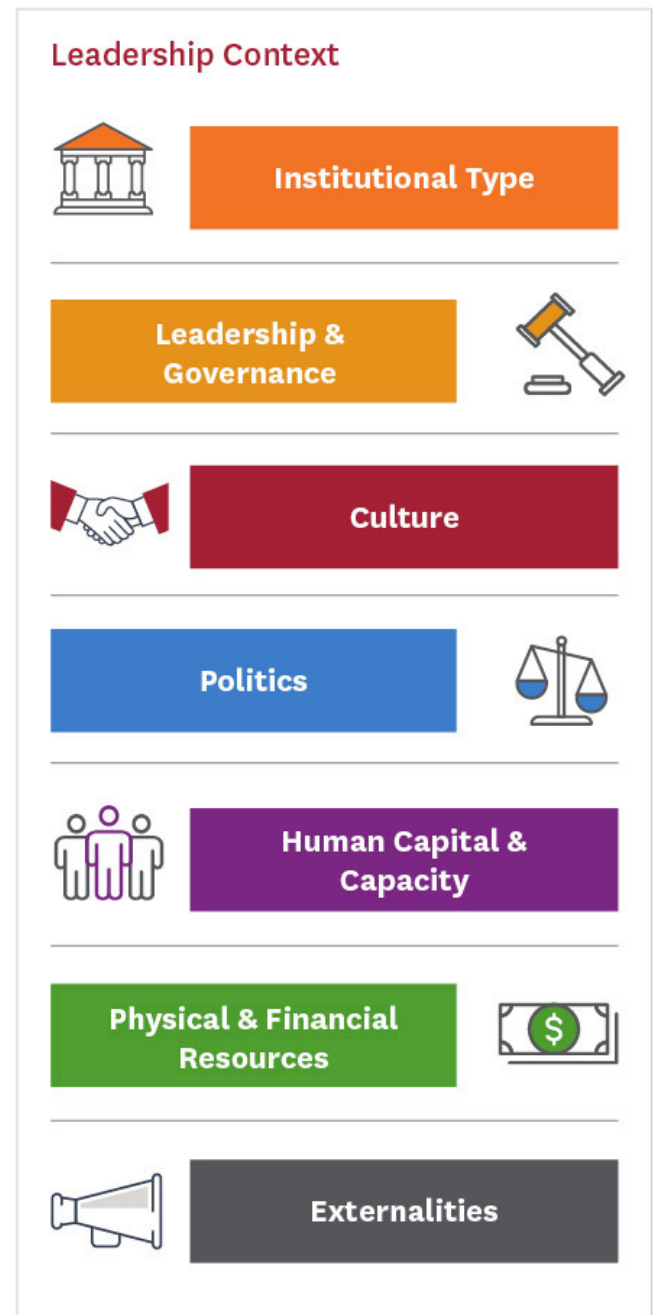
Andrew also created clear avenues for feedback and celebration to ensure that faculty doing this work were recognized for their ongoing commitments (C4, C10). Andrew noted the value of sharing not just the data but also the story of change, by saying, "look you've been working with evidence-based teaching practices for a long time, this is what has made you successful and here's some really good data that shows that this will help students" (C3, C9). Andrew often used Communication Moves in partnership with other Moves to share internally and externally about the change initiative. Whether it was through formal structures or through storytelling, he made sure to celebrate wins and faculty commitments as part of the communication process.
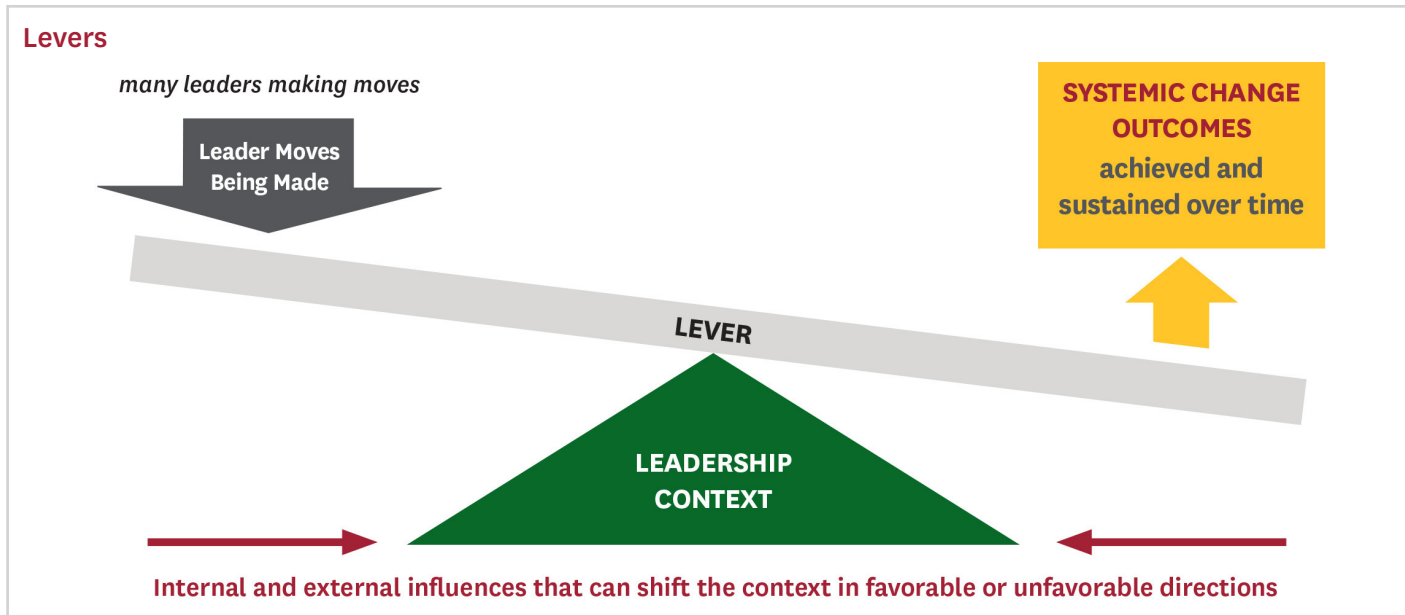
Focus On: Leadership Context

Leadership Context involves the set of internal and external influences that shape a leader's change landscape, influence the Moves made, and provide opportunities or challenges to consider when developing a change strategy. At CSUMB, one significant contextual factor was Human Capital and Capacity. Specifically, there were many junior faculty in the Mathematics and Statistics department who were not yet tenured. As Andrew considered which Moves to make around Leading People and Teams (T), he made sure that junior faculty would be adequately rewarded for participating in the project in a way that would not harm their promotion and tenure processes. Additionally, Externalities played a major role in this project, as the impetus for the project itself came from a systemwide executive order. This context— the fact that changes to introductory and remedial math curricula were being mandated at the system level — provided both opportunities and challenges for the CSUMB team. The policy mandate and accompanying funding from the CSU Chancellor's office were an opportunity for the project team; it gave the change 'teeth,' but also provided adequate resources to accomplish the change. However, the fact that the change was mandated from the CSU system level also posed a potential challenge, as faculty can be skeptical of — or outright resistant to — externally mandated changes to curriculum and teaching. Andrew's Moves around Navigating Politics (N) and Communication (C) helped him manage potential skepticism and resistance and generate authentic buy-in from faculty in the department.

Leadership Context

- Institutional Type
- Leadership & Governance
- Culture
- Politics
- Human Capital & Capacity
- Physical & Financial Resources
- Externalities

Focus On: Levers

When leaders engage in systemic change efforts, they are faced with many opportunities to amplify change. In the Toolkit, these opportunities are referred to as Levers. A Change Lever is an opportunity that can be leveraged or that can be "pulled upon" or manipulated to advance or accelerate the desired change. Noah and his team identified several aspects of their Leadership Context that could be leveraged to maximize change. In this section, we describe the most prominent examples of Change Levers from Andrew's project.

Levers

many leaders making moves

Leader Moves Being Made

LEVER

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT

SYSTEMIC CHANGE OUTCOMES
achieved and sustained over time

Internal and external influences that can shift the context in favorable or unfavorable directions

1. **Lever Category 1: Campus (system) culture, norms and networks:** CSUMB's mission seeks to advance access and opportunity for minoritized and low-income students to succeed through innovation. According to Andrew, this mission is not just something in writing, but a real driving force behind how change happens at CSUMB. This mission was really important in their project to adopt a new co-requisite model. Andrew shared that the "DEI lens and values around equity and inclusion were central to connecting to the values of the institution and the purpose of the program." Within this charge to leverage DEI efforts, ensuring the efforts were supported by data was significant for the faculty in the Math and Statistics department. Aligning change efforts with the department's cultural values around evidence and data also provided momentum for the change goals. Connecting this work to campus and department cultural norms "was a huge motivator for the faculty to take on the work" and engage in the project.

2. **Lever Category 2: Campus (system, state) strategic plan(s), including mission, master plan, diversity plan, and other plans:** Because this systemic change project was ignited by a system-wide requirement, there was an opportunity to leverage this requirement as well as institutional mission and vision to generate buy-in. Andrew mentioned how the team was "very conscious that part of the student success initiative in the CSU is closing the [equity] gaps." Thus, the opportunity to align the EO 1110 project with ongoing equity work on campus and systemwide was a major lever. Faculty could see a direct relationship between the co-requisite model they were developing as an avenue to close equity gaps for minoritized students.

3. **Lever Category 8: Rewards, incentives, constraints, perceptions:** Andrew leveraged resources such as grant monies to incentivize engagement. His ability to guarantee resources to innovate was an important strategy for all faculty, but especially for junior faculty in their tenure and promotion processes. Andrew's ability to share early on how this work would be compensated was central in getting junior faculty on board and providing a safe environment for risk-taking. The ability to allocate resources from an existing Governor's Innovation Award and money provided from the CSU Chancellor's office for EO implementation were vital levers in the change project.

Key Takeaways

For Andrew, the systemic change at CSUMB was not a major challenge as much as the concern and need for transparency of how EO 1110 would change the curriculum in the Math and Statistics department. His role as a leader revolved around sharing about this new initiative and communicating in a way that aligned clearly with CSUMB's mission and vision and connected with the department's commitment to student success. He generated excitement around this new initiative and supported faculty through learning opportunities, providing resources, and managing any insecurity or concerns about impact on their trajectories. Arriving at the co-requisite model was a process that involved pulling from campus data, system-wide data, and referencing other institutions and systems who also adopted similar policies to advance minoritized students' progression through and out of remedial math courses.

Reflections to Help You Ignite Change

This Case Study provides an example of how Andrew used the Moves outlined in the Change Leadership Toolkit to enact systemic change at his institution. We offer the following questions to get you thinking more deeply about Leadership Context, Leader Moves, and Levers:

→ How did Leadership Context shape Leader Moves in this case?

→ How did this Case Study help you to better understand Levers and how they can help motivate or amplify change?

→ What stands out for you in terms of significant Leader Moves that were made?

→ What influence did the leader role and/or agency have on the project?

→ What did you learn that you can apply to your campus change initiative? How might you use the Toolkit to advance change leadership on your campus?