

Toolkit for

Designing Accessible and Inclusive Professional Development for NTTF



TOOLKIT

By KC Culver, Adrianna Kezar, and Jennifer Yeh

A resource created by The Delphi Project on the
Changing Faculty and Student Success

Table of Contents

- Introduction 1**
 - Terms and Acronyms Used in this Toolkit2

- Section 1: Non-Tenure Track Faculty on Your Campus.....4**
 - NTTF Roles and the Individuals Who Fill Them.....5
 - Understanding the Professional Development Needs of NTTF6

- Section 2: Environments.....8**
 - External Impacts: Understanding the Landscape9
 - Assessing Campus Inclusion of NTTF: Understanding Climate and Culture12

- Section 3: Design13**
 - Leveling Up Professional Development Design13

- Section 4: Implementation15**
 - Implementation: Boosting Equity in Practice15

Introduction

This toolkit is meant to accompany our report “[Designing Accessible and Inclusive Professional Development for NTTF](#),” which was created as part of the [Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success](#). In this report, we found that a variety of professional development opportunities are often necessary to support NTTF, given their needs, interests, and time constraints. More intensive professional development programs, including faculty learning communities, curricular redesign and departmental action teams, certificate programs, and discussion groups, offer NTTF sustained opportunities for learning and interaction with colleagues. These more intensive programs can offer a number of benefits for NTTF: instructional effectiveness, a sense of belonging, institutional integration and knowledge of resources, a professional network, career development and advancement, and opportunities for advocacy and leadership development.

Despite these potential benefits, intensive programs have traditionally been designed for tenured and tenure-track faculty, which can marginalize or exclude NTTF given their employment conditions, role, and specific needs. Therefore, in order to help campuses better support NTTF, we identified 14 campuses that have modified their professional development offerings to specifically meet the needs of NTTF and have implemented at least one more intensive program. Through our conversations with the individuals leading professional development efforts on these campuses, as well as with some administrators and NTTF, we identified a number of influences on the success of these more intensive programs.

We have designed this toolkit to inform the work of individuals who are developing new intensive professional development programs or refining existing programs. It includes a number of different strategies for better understanding your campus environment, as well as considerations for the design and implementation of programs. Some tools may be better suited for different campus contexts, different stages of planning, or for use with different designers and stakeholder groups. We hope that you will use the tools to best support your work. Additional tools and resources can be found on the [Delphi Project](#) page on the [Pullias Center's website](#).

On the next page, we begin with a summary of important terms used in this toolkit and the multilevel model we developed based on our research. This summary sets the stage for the included tools, which are organized into three sections based on our multilevel model.

Terms and Acronyms Used in this Toolkit

Non-Tenure Track Faculty (NTTF): Non-tenure track faculty include full-time and part-time contingent faculty who are not tenured or in tenured-track positions. The faculty in these roles may have various titles: lecturers, instructors, clinical faculty, professional faculty, adjuncts, term faculty, etc.

Professional Development (PD): Professional development is institutionally-provided training, programs, information, and interactions that help faculty be successful in their roles. Some examples are new faculty orientation, mentoring programs, consultations in the Teaching and Learning Center, workshops, faculty learning communities, and websites that offer faculty specific information about available resources and benefits such as parking passes, health insurance, etc.

Intensive Professional Development (IPD): Intensive professional development offers faculty repeated opportunities to engage in learning and interactions with colleagues. Faculty learning communities are one of the most common IPD formats, where a cohort of faculty meet together several times during a semester or academic year. Sometimes IPD programs are more concentrated, such as Summer Institutes, where faculty spend a few days together. Other IPD includes discussion groups such as teaching circles and book groups, certificate programs, and departmental or curricular action teams. Research suggests that faculty benefit from the sustained and intensive opportunities for learning and community that IPD offers, especially compared to one-time workshops (Cox, 2004; Glowacki-Dudka & Brown, 2007; Kezar, 2015).

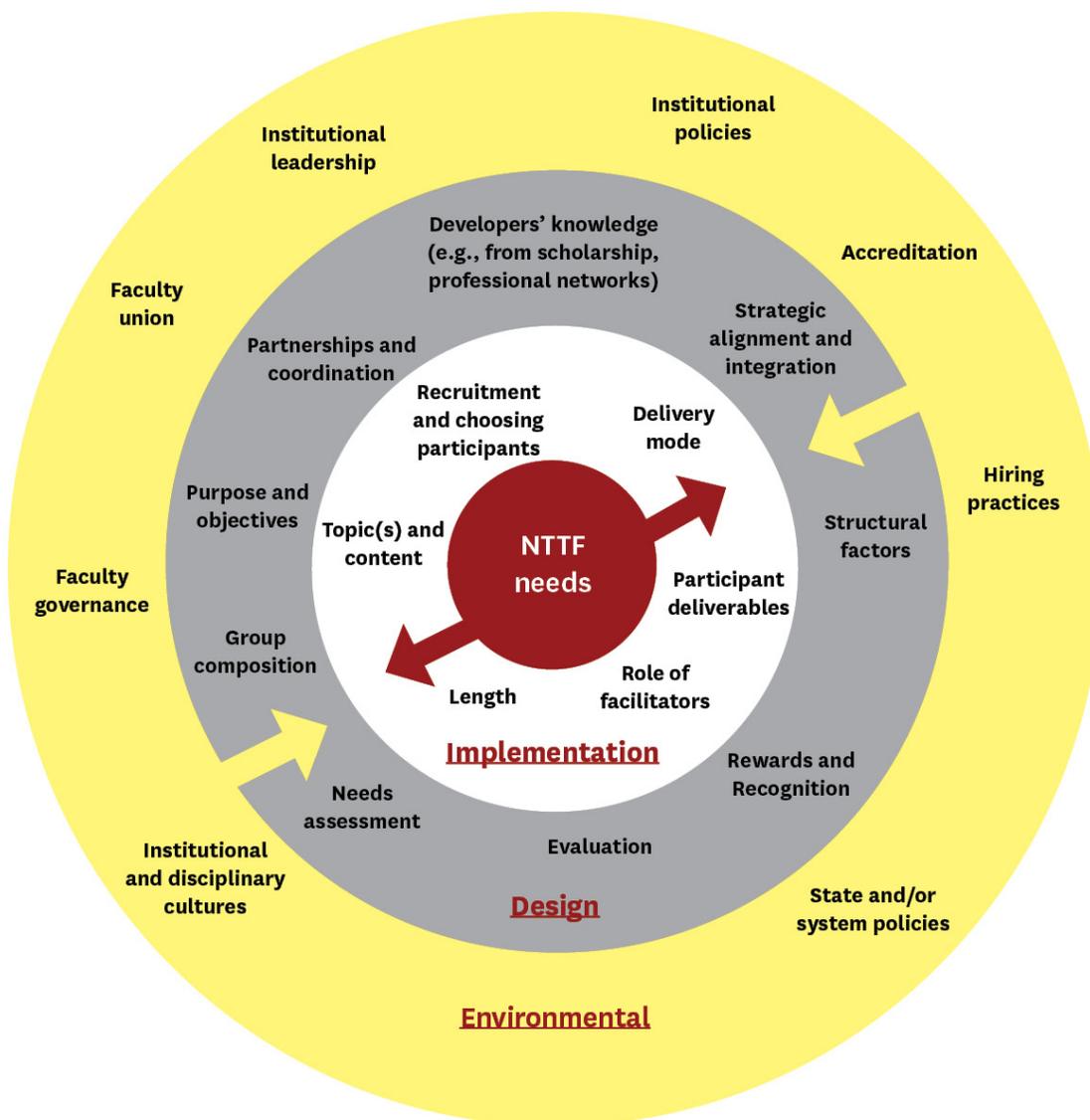
Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL): Many campuses have a centralized program or office that specializes in providing professional development for faculty, often with a focus on teaching effectiveness. At some institutions, there are also college- or department-specific offices that engage in this work. As the names of these offices are often location-specific, we use this broad term to be inclusive of all of the programs and offices where this work occurs.

Designers: We use the term designers to include all individuals who plan and develop professional development. These individuals are often educational developers and other staff in Centers for Teaching and Learning. Academic leaders such as deans and department chairs also sometimes lead this work, and sometimes professional development is created through grassroots efforts. The individuals leading these efforts might work alone or collaboratively with others. We use the term designers to emphasize that resulting programs are more effective when decision-making occurs in an intentional and informed way.

Multilevel Influences on the Success of Intensive Professional Development for NTTF

Factors that influence the success of programs occur at four levels, as shown in Figure 1. For example, the environmental level includes the impact of national, state, and institutional policies that dictate whether and how NTTF are able to engage in professional development, as well as practices related to hiring and shared governance. At the design level, the success of initiatives can depend on factors such as how programs are structurally and strategically positioned on campus, their purpose, who participates, and how they are evaluated. And choices at the implementation level such as the length and timing, content, and delivery mode of more intensive programs most directly influence the degree to which more intensive programs are accessible to and inclusive of NTTF. Additionally, the needs of the specific NTTF employed on your campus should also impact the decision-making process.

Figure 1



Section 1: Non-Tenure Track Faculty on Your Campus

The multilevel framework that resulted from our research centers the needs of NTTF. Therefore, the first step for designers interested in creating or improving professional development opportunities is to understand NTTF on your campus. The composition of the NTTF body and the policies and practices surrounding their roles are often context-specific. At some campuses, most NTTF are full time, and institutions offer some match for retirement contributions. At other campuses, NTTF are primarily in part-time roles, with policies that structurally exclude them from professional development opportunities. Because of these and many other potential differences, designers first need a comprehensive understanding of the NTTF roles on your campus and the people who fill these roles.

The first tool in this section can help develop that understanding. The second tool is focused more specifically on understanding the professional development needs of NTTF in order to help designers be intentional about the types of intensive professional development programs they create and/or modify.

The two tools included in this section focus on the use of existing data on your campus. To gain a holistic understanding of the needs of NTTF, designers should also engage NTTF directly. Ideally, designers can conduct a needs assessment survey of NTTF to learn more about their interests and needs, the opportunities they have, and the challenges they face. If a needs assessment survey is not possible, designers can host focus groups with NTTF in different disciplines and roles. At the very least, designers should engage individual NTTF for informal conversations about their experiences, needs, and interests. Incorporating the voices of NTTF themselves is one way that designers can be more intentional and equity-centered in planning.



NTTF Roles and the Individuals Who Fill Them

These questions are intended to help you gain a more robust understanding of who NTTF are and how their roles might shape their needs related to intensive professional development. To answer the questions, you may need to reach out to the office of institutional research, the provost's office, the faculty senate, and/or other administrative programs that collect data on faculty.



How many part-time and full-time NTTF are on your campus?



What percentage of NTTF are part time as a choice? What percentage would prefer a full-time position if it was available?



How many NTTF have full-time jobs elsewhere? How many teach at multiple institutions?



What are their identity characteristics (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity) and backgrounds (e.g. graduate degrees, professional expertise)?



What titles are associated with their roles? Are research scientists considered NTTF? Are librarians considered NTTF?



What job responsibilities are included in their roles? What is the teaching load for instructors? Do researchers mentor graduate or undergraduate students? Are NTTF expected to contribute to institutional service?



Regardless of stated responsibilities, what contributions do NTTF make to the institution? What percentage of undergraduate and graduate courses are taught by NTTF in various disciplines? Do NTTF forge community partnerships? Do NTTF bring in grant money? Are NTTF actively involved in professional disciplinary associations? Do they publish scholarship?



How many years do NTTF tend to spend in this role on your campus?



What professional goals do NTTF have? Do they view their role as short-term solution or as a carer path?



What other data is available related to NTTF on your campus? Has anyone conducted a needs assessment of NTTF or of faculty more broadly?

Understanding the Professional Development Needs of NTTF

To create specific intensive professional development (IPD) programs, designers can first consider the answers to the questions posed about the role of NTTF and the people who are in these roles. For instance, if the majority of NTTF have been employed on your campus for more than five years, these faculty may benefit from IPD that is focused on leadership development. If most NTTF are part-time faculty who have careers outside of education, then scheduling IPD may require flexibility for very early mornings and/or Saturdays.

The following tools offers broad questions along with a variety of potential answers that are representative of the many types of IPD we uncovered in our reports. These are not intended to be exhaustive, and your answers to these questions may be different from what we found. Even if the answers are different on your campus, this tool can help you understand the specific professional development needs and interests of NTTF on your campus.



What existing professional development opportunities do NTTF participate in?

- o Using resources available on the internet (handouts, videos, white papers, etc.)
- o One-to-one consultations about teaching with staff from the Teaching and Learning Center
- o One-to-one career coaching and/or peer mentoring
- o Lunch and learns (informal meeting and short workshop or presentation)
- o Workshop(s)
- o Discussion groups (book club, interest group)
- o Certificate or badge programs
- o Institutes or similar intensive meetings
- o Teaching circles
- o Action teams (curricular action team, departmental action team, etc.)
- o Faculty learning communities



In what areas do NTTF seek professional growth?

- o Instructional practices: using student-centered teaching techniques in class; understanding different instructional tools and resources
- o Supporting diverse students: creating an inclusive classroom community; supporting students' wellbeing and persistence
- o Professional networks: developing a network of colleagues with peers involved in professional development; developing and/or strengthening a network of colleagues within their department
- o Having a professional sense of identity: feeling confident about their ongoing growth and development as a faculty member; having a sense of belonging to the institution
- o Being a leader: developing leadership skills; helping NTTF advocate for themselves within their departments and colleges
- o Understanding the institution: knowing about institutional resources available to NTTF; being able to connect students with support offices and enrichment opportunities



Which aspects of IPD do previous NTTF participants report are the most helpful?

- o Discussions with IPD peers about teaching during meetings
- o Discussions with IPD peers about work experiences during meetings
- o Discussions with IPD peers about career development during meetings
- o Conversations and/or collaborations with IPD peers that occur outside of meetings
- o Lectures and information provided by IPD facilitator(s) and partners
- o Presentations by IPD peers
- o Workshops on topics related to teaching
- o Readings selected and done by everyone in the IPD
- o Readings selected and done individually
- o Final project (e.g., presentation, paper, reflection)



Which factors are most important for NTTF when deciding to participate in IPD?

- o Format (online, hybrid, face to face)
- o Scheduling (Synchronous meetings or asynchronous work)
- o Length (Semester-long, yearlong, intensive one or a few days)
- o Expectations for completion (Deliverables)
- o Content (Topics being covered are appropriate for my needs)
- o Participant group (NTTF, department-specific, all faculty)
- o Content (Pre-established content or emergent)
- o Facilitation (someone guiding the work of the group, someone to ask for help if I needed it, someone overseeing my progress)
- o Compensation (stipend, conference/materials funding, parking passes)
- o Rewards/recognition (lunches provided, participation contributes to rehiring and promotion)

Because of the many types of NTTF, it can be challenging to develop a thorough understanding of their needs. Campuses that faced the most challenges often did not use a systematic approach to needs assessment.

Section 2: Environments

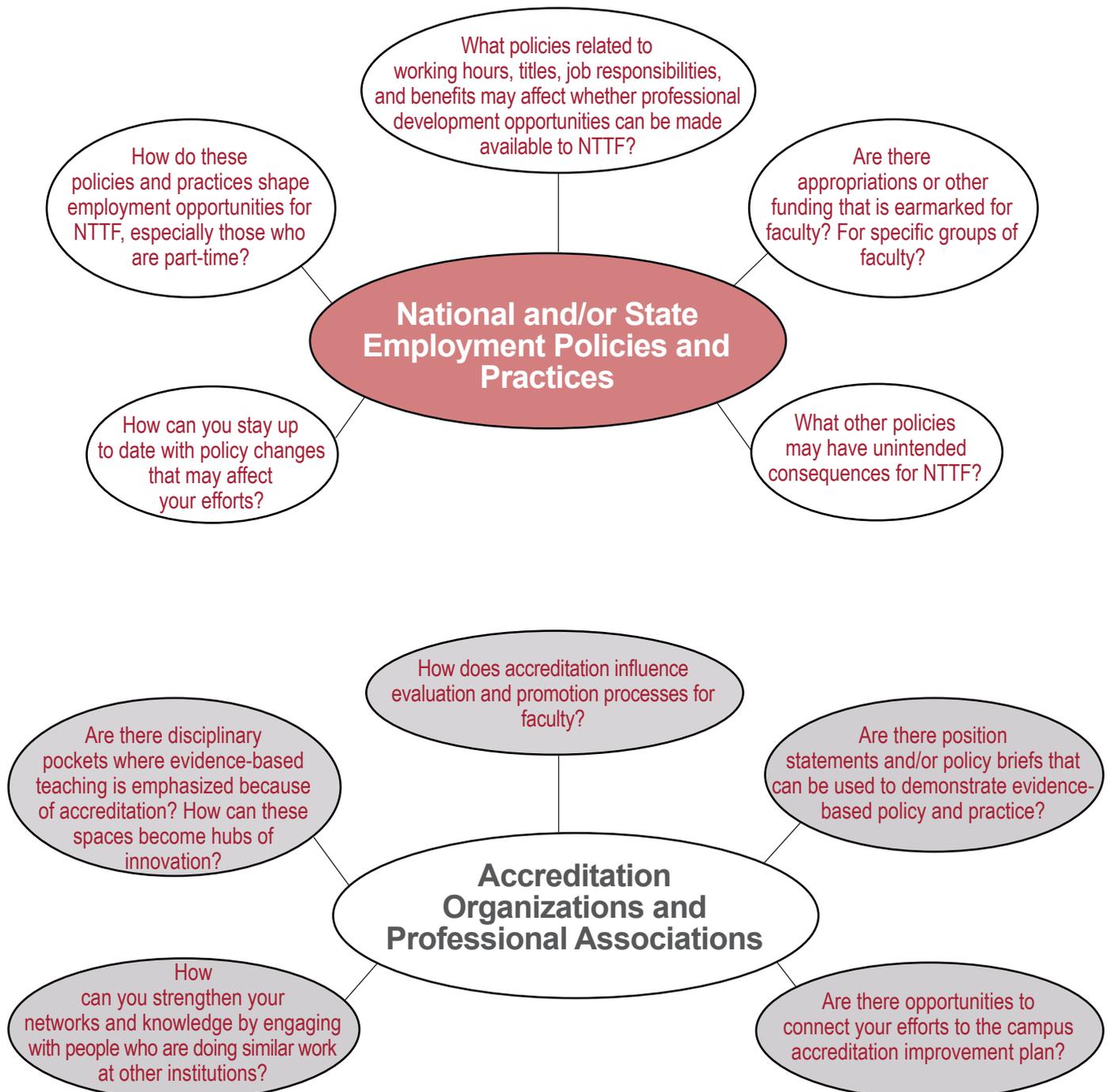
Our study found several external influences on the success of professional development initiatives. Professionals in higher education such as human resources staff, professional development specialists, and instructors have highly specialized roles and responsibilities. Thus, designers may have a limited understanding of how their institution “works,” including the many dimensions of campus environments and contexts that contribute to the success of professional development efforts.

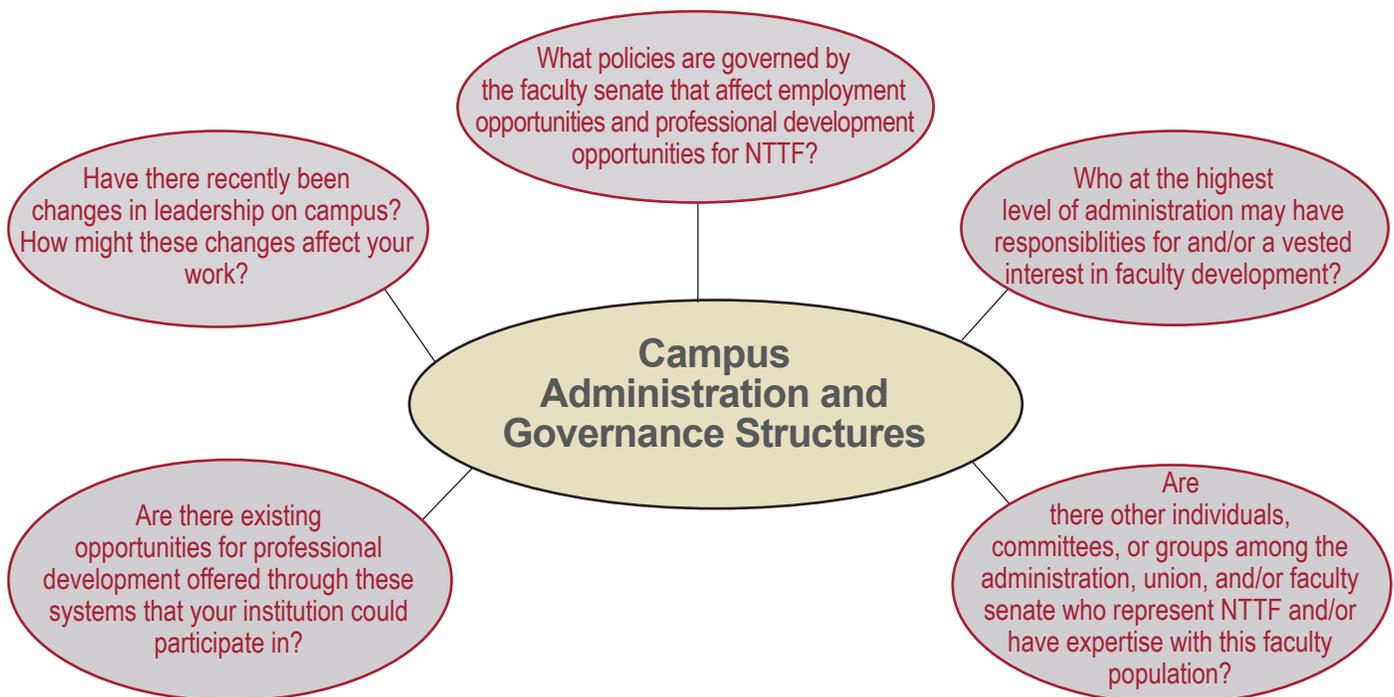
To help designers take a wider view of their work as situated within a specific context and environment that may create unique challenges in their work, we have included two tools in this section: the first focuses on the larger national, state, and institutional landscape in order to help designers identify how certain aspects of organizational structure, policies, and mission can be leveraged to create opportunities for increasing access and inclusivity for NTTF. The second section focuses on institutional climate and culture, which are often less visible than stated structures and policies, but nonetheless play an important role in the success of IPD for NTTF.

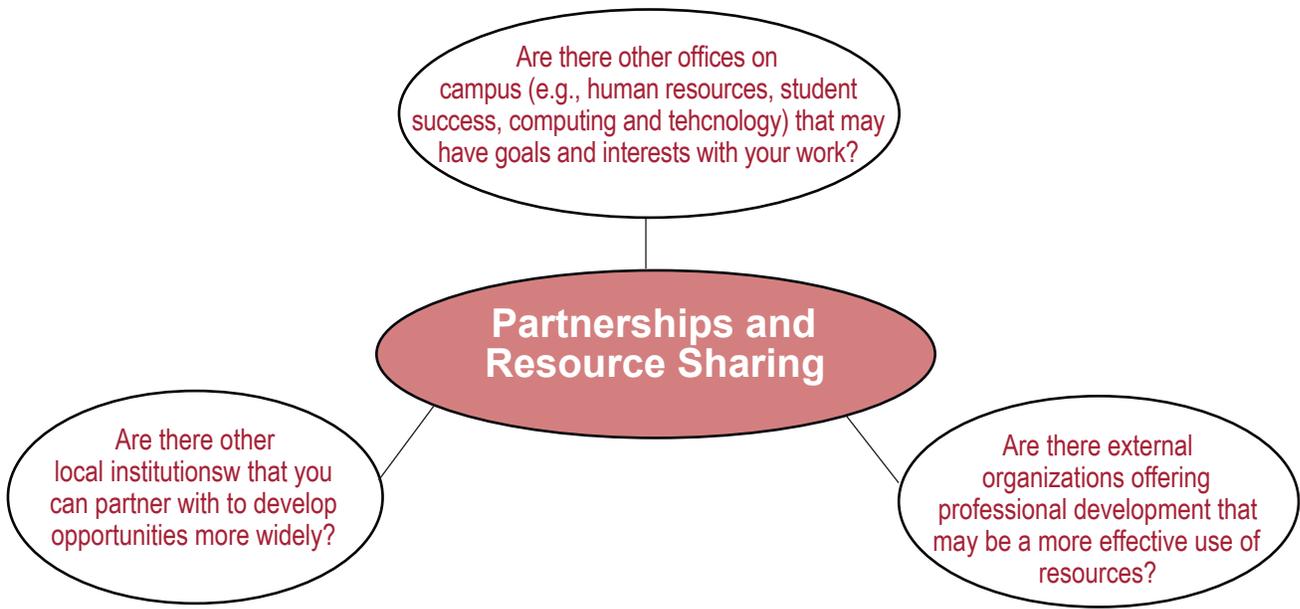


External Impacts: Understanding the Landscape

These questions invite you to find out more about how policies and practices, administration and governance, accreditation, and potential partners might create challenges and opportunities for improving sustained professional development opportunities for NTTF. In many cases, you may need to do research and/or talk to others on campus to find out the answers. By gaining a stronger understanding of these external impacts, you may be able to anticipate how to work around potential challenges and to integrate your work strategically in ways that position your program for success.







Assessing Campus Inclusion of NTTF: Understanding Climate and Culture

Institutional and disciplinary priorities, cultures, and norms are often less visible than policies and practices, but they have a strong influence on whether non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) will be willing to engage in intensive professional development activities. These issues relate to how adjuncts and NTTF are viewed, as well as the value that is implicitly given to teaching effectiveness and professional development.

- ?** **What do the practices for hiring NTTF convey about institutional climate and culture?**
 - o Who decides on the process for hiring, renewal, and/or promotion of NTTF?
 - o To what degree is teaching effectiveness evaluated for renewal and promotion in practice?
 - o How do the people making employment decisions evaluate evidence of teaching effectiveness, including student evaluations, teaching portfolios, peer observations, teaching awards, and/or engagement in professional development?

- ?** **What aspects of your campus context might create specific opportunities and challenges for supporting NTTF?**
 - o Does the campus have a special mission?
 - o How hierarchical is the organizational structure? For instance, can designers share information with academic leaders directly?
 - o What individuals and groups already provide support to some or all NTTF?
 - o To what degree are NTTF included in shared governance, committee work, and other mechanisms for decision-making on campus?
 - o Are there formal communication channels (e.g., websites, email listservs) specifically for NTTF?
 - o What stage of the strategic planning cycle is the campus in currently? Where will it be next year?

- ?** **What is the culture for NTTF on campus?**
 - o How are NTTF viewed by institutional leaders?
 - o What do institutional policies and communications convey about the degree to which NTTF are valued on campus?
 - o What cultures and norms at the college and departmental levels shape the work environment for NTTF? For instance, how do different programs value teaching effectiveness?
 - o How do tenured and tenure-track faculty treat their NTTF colleagues?

Section 3: Design

The overall design of IPD that emerges from planning influences the success of these programs. Design considerations include which office or program houses the program, and whether there is collaboration or coordination with others on campus. The planning work, such as that outlined in sections 1 and 2, including conducting a needs assessment of NTTF and analyzing existing institutional data, also shape the design of program. Other considerations are more specific to the IPD program: stated and unstated program objectives, the composition of faculty cohorts, and how participation is recognized or rewarded.

The tool included in this section demonstrates some ways you can “level up” IPD, improving existing efforts and setting high standards for new programs.

Leveling Up Professional Development Design

This tool can help you design new IPD and assess existing IPD for opportunities to take programs to the next level of accessibility and inclusion for NTTF. It is intended to help you think through opportunities for leveling up across different types of IPD (e.g. action teams, certificate programs) and in different institutional environments.

As you read through the different levels, keep in mind that the tool is not a checklist. Each column provides different alternatives for leveling up, and you may find that some options are more suited to your IPD. For each aspect of IPD design, we have also identified the types of resources that are necessary to level up, in order to help you think about what tools you’ll need to level up.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	What's Required to Level Up?
Locating IPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located in single programs, departments or colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located in a central office such as a Center for Teaching and Learning that specializes in professional development for faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs are offered through a central CTL and also through specific departments or colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic leaders recognize the importance of professional development for faculty and support this work through individuals or offices such as a TLC
Partnerships and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various IPD is offered by different departments and colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific offices lead IPD relevant to their objective (e.g., diversity offices offers a summer institute on teaching diverse learners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IPD is designed through partnership with educational specialists Central office (TLC, provost) inventories all IPD to reduce duplication of efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus policies and culture that support collaboration An individual or office that coordinates activities across campus
Group Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort size based on literature Inter-disciplinary Full-time faculty only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort size based on capacity More specific cohorts by career role or disciplines (new faculty, STEM) Mix of NTTF and TTF; part-time and full-time faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort size based on design objectives NTTF and adjunct-specific groups that offer a safe space Advanced options for previous NTTF participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campus policies that allow NTTF to access IPD NTTF who are able and motivated to participate in IPD
Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal conversations with NTTF who engage in professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using existing institutional data Conversations with faculty senate Survey of NTTF interest in and availability for IPDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborating with senate, unions, etc. to assess needs of less engaged NTTF Assessing needs related to teaching professional development resources and integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The voices of NTTF A campus culture that supports data sharing
Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds for professional development resources or course release Paid retreats Food provided at meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money for participating in all IPD Pay/salary increase associated with certificates or badges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable funding source
Rewards and Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No rewards or recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public recognition on website, fall invocation, banquet, etc. Certificate of completion sent to department and division leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification valued by institution as important artifact in personnel file for promotion Completion associated with continued employment and promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion opportunities for NTTF Support from academic leaders Collaboration with human resources
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up lunches/reunions to assess changes over time Pre-post survey of teaching practices Analysis of deliverables/artifacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing multi-method assessment Student ratings of instruction Student success metrics (DFWI rates) Pre-post surveys of teaching practices, institutional integration, and sense of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to collect data from previous participants Access to student-level data

Section 4: Implementation

After the IPD has been designed, there are still a number of choices that designers have about how the program will be implemented. As shown in our multilevel model, these factors must closely meet the needs of NTTF in order for programs to be successful. At the same time, most decisions related to implementation are also context-specific, based on the campus, the population of NTTF, and the objectives of the IPD.

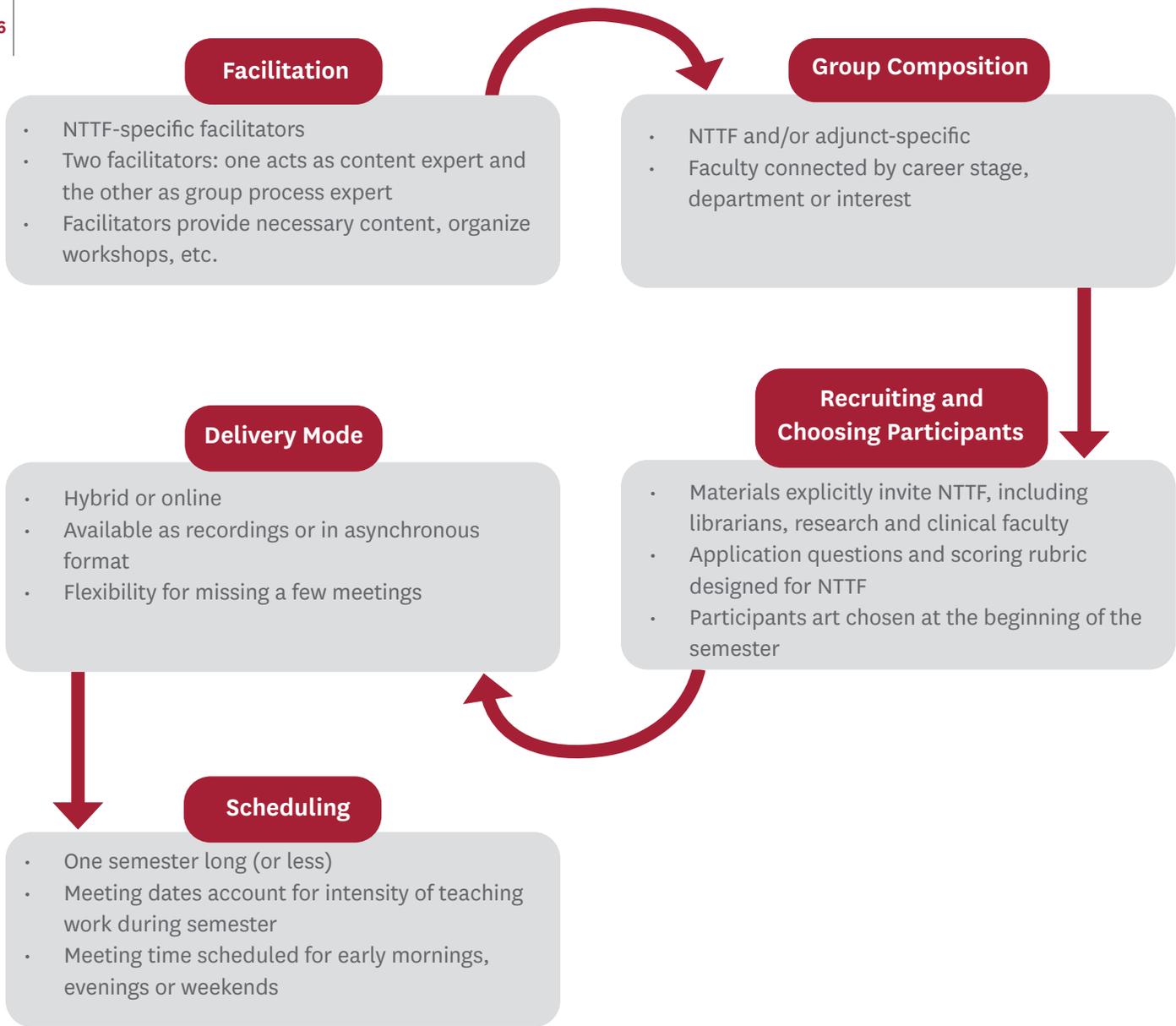
The tool in this section first presents the top equity-boosting practices we identified through our research. To help you consider these dimensions of implementation, we have also included questions that prompt you to reflect on how your practices might shape the ways that NTTF can access and engage in IPD, even if you make different choices related to implementation.

Implementation: Boosting Equity in Practice

To create sustained professional development programs that are truly equity-centered, designers should consider not only whether NTTF can access the opportunity but also the degree to which the structure and practices create equity.

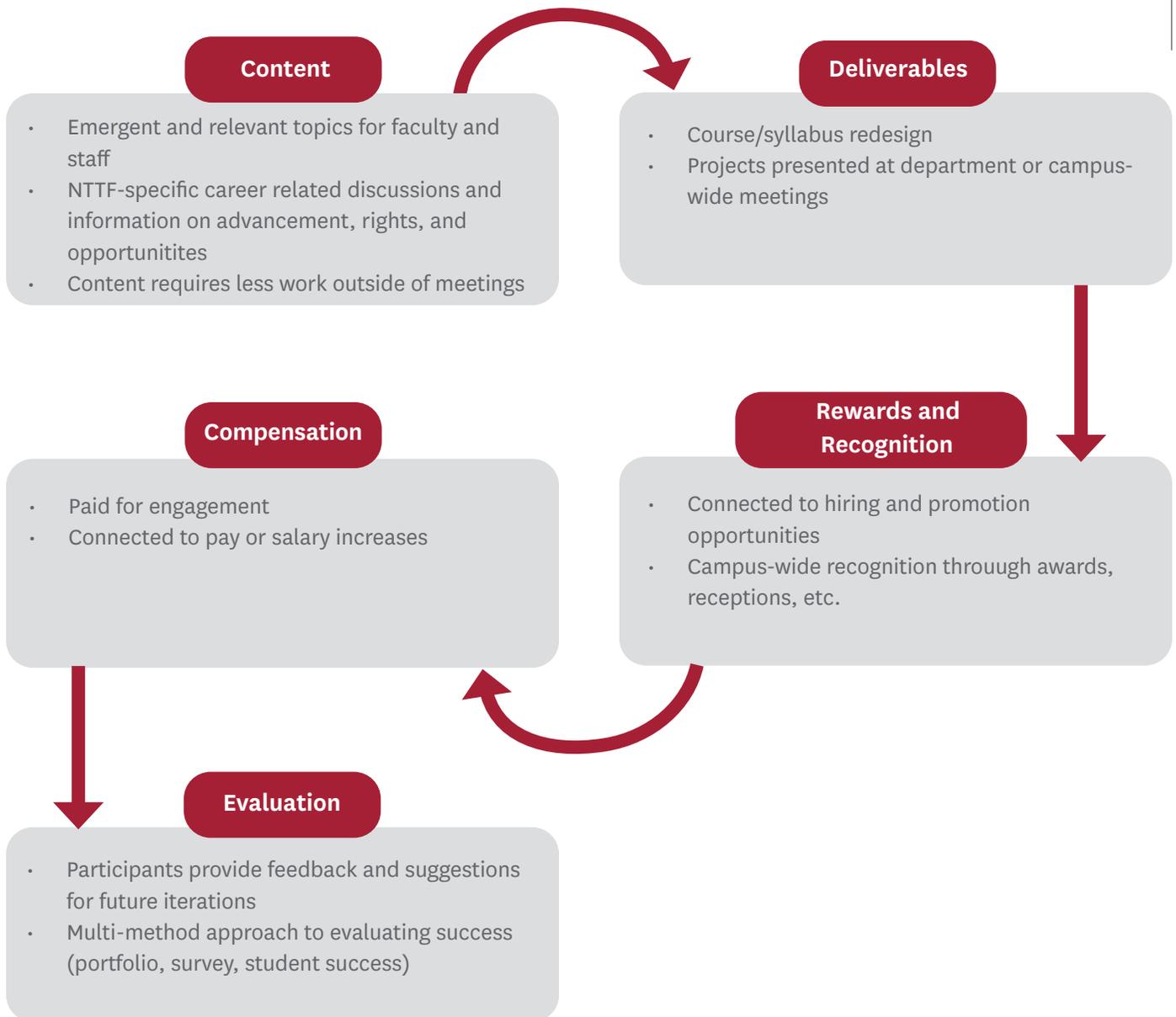
The tool presented on the next page is intended to help you identify opportunities to boost equity in your current practice and to guide the design of future efforts. It highlights 2-3 powerful practices employed by the campuses in our study that reflect equity-centered approaches for each aspect of FLC design.

Based on your context, these specific practices may not be possible — or they may not be beneficial. As you consider each dimension of design, reflect on your current practices, and use the examples to spark ideas for changes you can make to better support the NTTF on your campus. These examples may also be helpful for identifying needed changes to campus policies and/or environments to better support NTTF.



? Questions for Reflection:

- How do we expect NTTF to focus their time and efforts in this IPD? How can facilitators manage the other tasks related to IPD?
- How can we ensure that all members of the cohort feel comfortable? That their voices are heard?
- How can we increase motivation by emphasizing similarities among cohort members?
- How can we overcome the challenges that NTTF face related to employment insecurity in helping them participate in IPD?
- How can we schedule meetings and choose a delivery mode that facilitates participation among NTTF, especially among part-time NTTF?



? Questions for Reflection:

- What are the most pressing issues we hear NTTF talking about right now?
- How can we design content so that most of the work of learning happens during meetings rather than outside of them?
- What projects would be helpful for NTTF in terms of practical application? Career advancement? Development of a professional community on campus?
- How can we make NTTF feel valued? Are these the same rewards and recognition that demonstrate that the campus values NTTF?
- How do we invest in NTTF given their important contributions to student success, research, and service?
- What are the different approaches we could use to evaluate the effectiveness of the IPD?
- What methods of evaluation will help increase support for our work?

Project Team



Adrianna Kezar | Director and Principal Investigator

Adrianna Kezar is the Dean's Professor for Higher Education Leadership at the University of Southern California and director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the USC Rossier School of Education. She is a national expert on student success, equity and diversity, change, governance and leadership in higher education.



KC Culver | Co-Investigator

KC Culver is a senior postdoctoral research associate in the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the USC Rossier School of Education. She employs quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to study the impact of educational policy and practice on the development and success of diverse students. Her research focuses on policies and practices related to faculty, curriculum, and learning environments.



Jennifer Yeh | Research Assistant

Jennifer Yeh is a Research Assistant at the Pullias Center for Higher Education at the USC Rossier School of Education. Jennifer obtained her M.Ed. in educational counseling at USC Rossier School of Education and graduated from UC San Diego with a B.A. in psychology. Her experiences working in the charter school system — at more than 55 schools throughout Los Angeles — have organically shaped her commitment to academic counseling, particularly in areas of equity and access.

About the Pullias Center for Higher Education

Promoting Equity in Higher Education

The world's leading research center on student access and success in higher education, the Pullias Center for Higher Education advances innovative, scalable solutions to improve college outcomes for underserved students and to enhance the performance of postsecondary institutions. The Pullias Center is located within the USC Rossier School of Education, one of the world's premier centers for graduate study in urban education.

Since 1995, the mission of the Pullias Center for Higher Education is to bring a multidisciplinary perspective to complex social, political, and economic issues in higher education. Our work is devoted to the key issues of college access, retention, and accountability for underserved students—and the effectiveness of the colleges and universities that serve them. Both directly and through our research, we engage with institutional leaders, policymakers and the community at large to address the major challenges in educational equity today. For more information, please visit: <https://pullias.usc.edu>

This research is supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. (NSF DUE-1914784). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

pullias.usc.edu

pullias@usc.edu

213.740.7218

[@USCPullias](https://twitter.com/USCPullias)

©2022, University of Southern California. All rights reserved.

USC Rossier
*Pullias Center for
Higher Education*