

**IEAP Initiative Status Report
Fall 2023**



Initiative Title: Critical Learning Collectives and Campus Climate Survey Findings

Initiative: IEAT 4.2

Lead: Kaia Tollefson

Date: January 8, 2024

A. OVERVIEW: Respond briefly (about 50-75 words per answer) to each of the following questions.

1. **Purpose:** What is the problem being addressed through this initiative?

We have data and findings from our second Campus Climate Survey (CCS) that we have not yet made use of in any organized way. Inclusive Excellence Action Team 4 (IEAT 4), charged with making recommendations for realizing a campus culture of inclusive excellence, worked in Spring-Summer 2021 on coming up with strategies for doing so. This initiative proposes using a combination of Critical Friends Groups – which have become known at CI as Critical Learning Collectives (CLC) -- and Town Hall meetings for discussing CCS findings and strategizing ways to make good use of them.

CLCs are comprised typically of 8-12 people who commit to regular participation (typically for two hours monthly) and the creation of a confidential, “safe-as-possible-for-risk-taking” kind of space. Survey data from CFG/CLC participants over the past several years at CI consistently support the idea that in these groups, support can be sought, risks can be taken, critical conversations can be had, trust can be grown, and thorny problems can be tackled -- all through the process of working on dilemmas of professional practice (for example, campus climate issues) with the help of structured protocols led by qualified facilitators.

2. **Goals:** What are participants trying to achieve? (Feel free to include objectives – i.e., smaller, measurable steps along the way toward achieving larger goals.)

Goal and Objectives

- Goal: improve campus climate.
- Objectives:
 - create “safe spaces” for students, staff, faculty, and administrators to discuss campus climate survey findings—purposefully building opportunities for critical, confidential conversation and a sense of community for participants
 - collect anonymized notes on those conversations and identify emerging themes for needed improvements
 - make recommendations to campus leadership and to the campus as a whole on strategies/actions to take

- publish recommendations and ensure transparency on campus climate improvement efforts.

3. Metrics/Data for Evaluation:

- What metrics will you use to evaluate achievement of this initiative’s goals?
- What data will be necessary for determining impact?
- How and when are these data being collected?

Metrics and Data Collection

- Formation of CLCs (yes/no measure)
 - Form at least five CLCs with at least 50 participants, including students, staff, faculty, and administrators (October 2023)
- Impact on participants (qualitative feedback)
 - Qualtrics survey (May 2024)
- Recommendations for improvement (yes/no measure)
 - Collate anonymized data from CLC discussions (Spr24)
 - Recommend action items derived from CLC data to President Yao and Cabinet (Spr24)
- Published action items (yes/no measure)
 - Track progress through [IEAP website](#)
- Campus Climate Survey findings (quantitative and qualitative findings)
 - Fall 2022: Employees – Job Satisfaction, part 1 (focus of 2022-23 CLCs)
 - Spring 2022: Employees – Job Satisfaction, part 2 (focus of 2023-24 CLCs)
 - Spring 2024: Students – National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates, by the USC Racial Equity Leadership Alliance to be administered to students Apr24

B. STATUS: Again, please respond briefly to each of the following.

- Progress:** Has progress been made on this initiative this semester? If so, please describe.

Seven CLCs were formed in October 2023, with groups varying in size from 5 to 9 members apiece and a total of 50 faculty, staff, and administrators participating in Fall 2023. The groups are studying findings from the Spring 2023 administration of the second job satisfaction survey and will be compiling recommendations to the President and Cabinet for action and improvement at the end of Spring 2024.

- Employees
 - o Faculty: 12
 - o Staff: 23
 - o Admin: 15
- Divisions
 - o BFA 4
 - o DAA 30
 - o DSA 7
 - o DUA 2
 - o OTP 6

2. **Evaluation:** What have you learned thus far? How do you know what you have learned?

The CLC-CCS initiative holds value for CLC participants, evidenced in: (1) the [May 2023 status report](#) posted on the IEAP website; and (2) stable participation rates from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

CLC Participants	2022-23		2023-24	
Faculty	8	16%	12	24%
Staff	30	60%	23	46%
Administrators	12	24%	15	30%
	50		50	

3. **Continuation:** Should this initiative continue beyond 2023-24, in your view? Why or why not?

Yes. By combining our CCS efforts with our campus’s CFG/CLC history and leadership capacity, we have created a unique model for engaging the campus community in making sense and use of climate survey data. As one 2022-23 participant noted in the end-of-year impact survey noted, “It's the best answer I have seen to the question of how do we make survey data meaningful.” Being serious about campus climate requires investment not only in the front end of that work – the development and administration of CCS – but also on the back end, to dedicate time and resources to the CLC effort, culminating in direct opportunity for CLC participants to advise the President and his Cabinet on necessary actions for improvement.

4. **Future Needs:** If your answer to #3 was yes, are ongoing funding or other resource needs required for this initiative beyond 2023-24?

\$85,000 was allocated for 2023-24. However, given the incredible difficulty we experienced in 2022-23 in paying all participants a \$500 stipend (in addition to paying facilitators \$3000), which created an unsustainable workload for several staff members across the OTP and BFA, we decided this year to thank participants by offering to host groups in the Islands Café -- with meetings taking place over breakfast, lunch, early dinner, or a mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack. The total estimated cost for the year in providing thanks in the form of a meal will be about \$3800, versus \$19,500 that a \$500 stipend would have incurred. All of that said, anticipated costs for the initiative in 2023-24 will be \$27,800:

- CLC coaches @ \$3000: \$18,000
- CLC interns @ \$1500: \$6,000
- Islands Café \$3800

The \$85,000 allocated for this year, should the initiative continue at current levels of participation, will fund this initiative for 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26.