Where Silos Break Down: Learning Communities as Cross-Campus Infrastructure

Kayoung Kim, PhD | Office of Teaching and Learning

kayoung.kim@du.edu

INTRODUCTION

- OTL offers sustained, opt-in Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) and Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- We asked participants what this programming changes for them

RESEARCH QUESTION

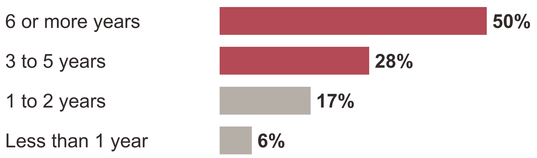
How does OTL group programming shape teaching, teacher-scholar identity, faculty connections, and capacity to navigate change?

METHODS

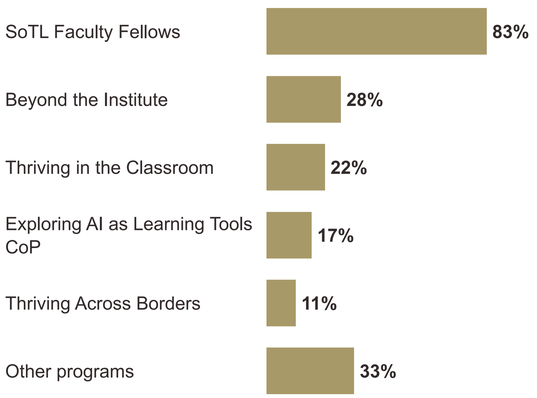
- **Who:** past and current FLC and CoP participants
- **Survey:** Likert items and eight open-ended questions
- **Analysis:** descriptive statistics; thematic analysis of open responses

WHO RESPONDED

78% **have engaged with OTL for three or more years**



Programs joined in the past three years



Respondents could select more than one program

RESULTS

94% **agree that OTL involvement deepened their commitment to the teacher-scholar model**



Strongly agree 78% Somewhat agree 16% Neither agree nor disagree 6%

Six themes from open-ended responses

1 Community across disciplines

- The most consistently named strength
- For many, the main route out of the home unit

"OTL was the only consistent place that I could regularly engage with and learn from faculty colleagues from across campus."

2 Teaching practice

- Course design, accessibility, inclusion, assessment
- Reflection on what I know and do not know

"OTL has made it possible for me to try many things I never would have otherwise."

3 Teacher-Scholar identity

- Teaching affirmed as scholarly work
- Community makes the work sustainable

"More than commitment, it has strengthened the connection between my teaching and research."

4 Navigating change

- Practical: AI, accommodations
- Emotional: Institutional changes, budget cuts, political climate

"It is just really nice to be in a room with people who are going through the same things."

5 What sets OTL apart

- Voluntary, sustained, cross-campus
- No single "right" answer
- Flexibility, adaptability, and interdisciplinarity

"OTL provides a safe space people WANT to be, not a space they feel obligated to be in."

6 Areas for growth

- Time and workload limit participation
- Clearer end products for open-ended programs
- Funding; off-campus retreats

"Please keep communities and opportunities like this in the budget!"

"It feels like a combination of a large umbrella that we all fit under, and a large net that will keep us safe as we strive to take chances in our teaching and research."

CONCLUSIONS

- OTL group programming builds cross-campus community, not only teaching skills
- Participants credit its opt-in, sustained, non-prescriptive format
- Community is how faculty sustain teacher-scholar work and move through change

Voluntary. Sustained. Cross-campus.

NEXT STEPS

- Sustain funding and time for participation
- Clarify goals and end products for open-ended CoPs
- Explore restoring off-campus SoTL retreats
- Keep widening reach across units

YOUR TURN

What matters most to you?

Add a sticker

Community	Teaching & Research ideas
Teacher-Scholar identity	Support through change

Where do you find your teaching community?

Add a sticky note