



TEACHING CULTURE INDICATORS

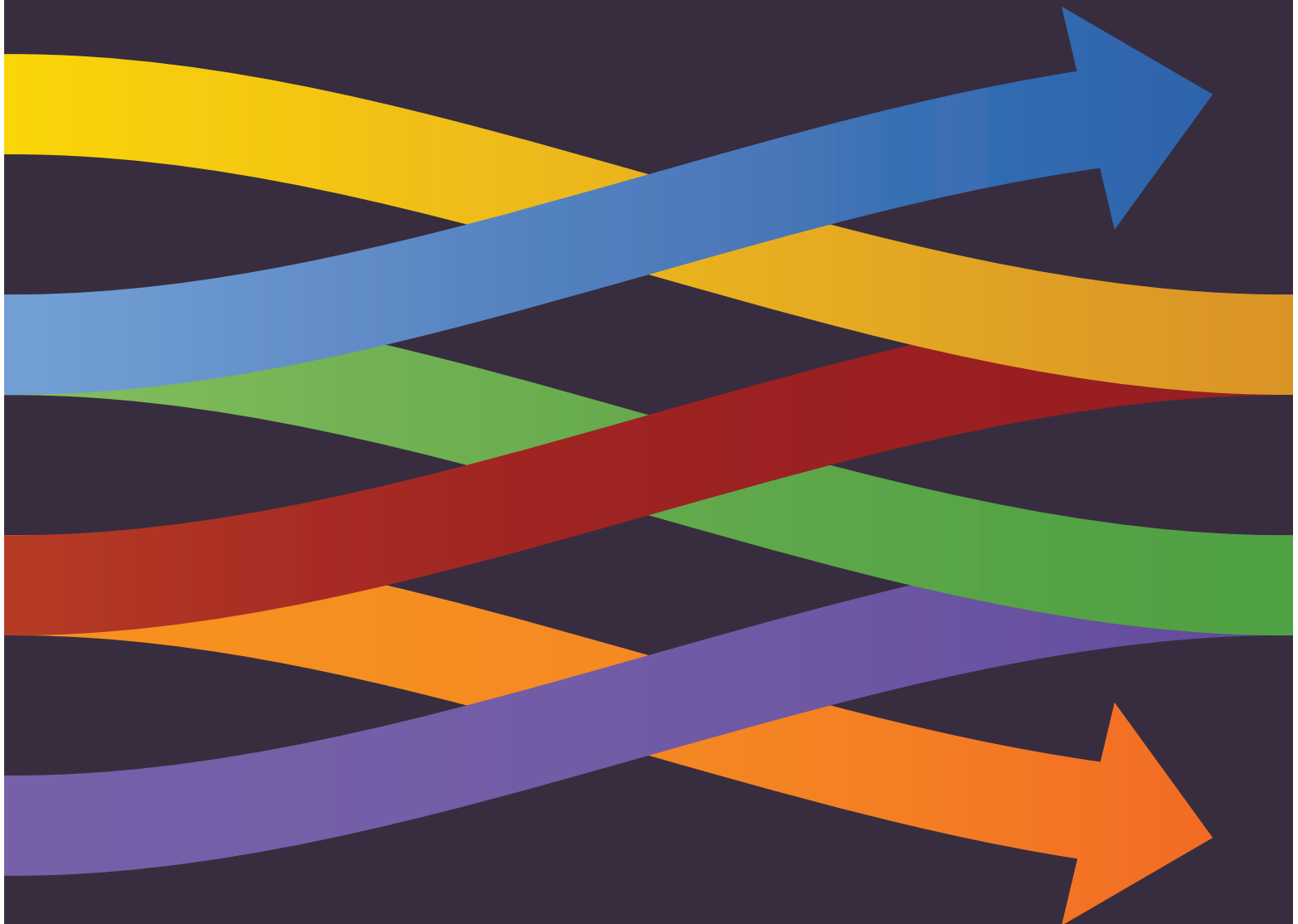
Co-Investigators:

Joseph Beer
Paola Borin
Debra Dawson
Donna Ellis
Lori Goff

Erika Kustra
Madelyn Law
Ken N. Meadows
Lindsay Shaw
Peter Wolf

The 6 Levers of Teaching Culture in Higher Education A Reflective Guide

Use the 6 Levers for Institutional Teaching Culture for insights on how your educational institution can further embrace teaching as a critical component of your organizational culture.



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WHAT IS INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING CULTURE?

Institutional teaching culture is the product of a dynamic interplay among the embedded patterns, behaviours, values, beliefs and ideologies about teaching and learning within and across the many microcultures that make up an educational institution (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Cox et al., 2011).

THE INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING CULTURE PERCEPTION INVENTORY

Educational researchers from across Canada developed a set of Institutional Teaching Culture Perception Surveys (ITCPS) to gain insight into an institution's teaching culture at a particular point in time (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012; Kustra et al., 2015). Using the ITCPS tool, faculty, students, and staff provide feedback on the current teaching culture from their different stakeholder perspectives. Aligning with the six ITCPS levers articulated during our research, the results identify both barriers and pathways to a strong institutional teaching culture, highlighting strategic priorities, assessment methods, effective pedagogy, supportive infrastructure, engagement opportunities, and public recognition.

USING THE 6 LEVERS AS TOOLS FOR REFLECTION AND PLANNING

This Guide has been developed for those invested in enhancing their institution's teaching culture. It provides a selection of questions adapted from the full ITCPS surveys and analysis tools. The guide provides an evidence-based reflective approach to understanding and enhancing the teaching culture of your institution overall, or of a division within the institution, so you can identify plans for future actions.

This guide is NOT intended for use in formal assessment or performance management, nor to judge or compare different institutions' teaching cultures; rather, we intend for the guide to be used as a reflective tool leading to plans for teaching culture enhancement.

Please feel welcome to adapt this tool for your context. This may include adapting the language for names (School/Faculty/Unit Name), roles (Adjunct, sessional), or terms to match your institution. In each indicator list, you may add relevant indicators that are not included such as Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, Indigenization, or technology-enabled learning. Finally, there is a blank page at the end of Lever 6 where you can include additional levers relevant to your context.

THE 6 LEVERS

- **Lever 1**
 Institutional Strategic Initiatives and Practices Prioritize Effective Teaching
- **Lever 2**
 Assessment of Teaching is Constructive and Flexible
- **Lever 3**
 Effective Teaching is Implemented
- **Lever 4**
 Infrastructure Exists to Support Teaching
- **Lever 5**
 Broad Engagement Occurs Around Teaching
- **Lever 6**
 Effective Teaching is Recognized and Rewarded

THE REFLECTIVE TOOL

This tool is derived from the comprehensive surveys developed across ten institutions to explore factors that indicate a culture that promotes quality teaching in higher education. This tool is for those who hope to learn from the indicators uncovered from the research, but who choose not to complete the full set of surveys. For related scholarship, [visit our Publications, Presentations, and Awards](#) page.

Before considering the statements below, decide the perspective you will take to answer the questions (e.g., yours, the institution overall, a division, a program, a stakeholder) and respond accordingly. Completing the tool more than once from different perspectives, or with different stakeholder groups, can be insightful as perceptions of teaching culture vary.

Lever 1	Indicators	Select (✓) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Institutional, strategic initiatives & practices prioritize effective teaching	1. Teaching is considered a priority in the primary institutional strategic plan				
	2. Effective teaching is clearly defined in institution-wide documents				
	3. Senior administrators convey that effective teaching is an institutional priority				
	4. Institution-wide initiatives promote innovative teaching practices				
	5. Most instructors consider effective teaching to be a priority				
	6. Institutional policies recognize effective teaching in the evaluation of job performance				
	7. Staff supporting/enhancing teaching are regarded as an important resource for instructors and educational administrators				

Lever 1	
Institutional, strategic initiatives & practices prioritize effective teaching	<p>For this lever, identify your institutional strengths (YES responses) as well as areas for potential development (NO responses)*.</p> <p>*Also consider the implications of your other responses (<i>At Times</i> and <i>Don't Know</i>).</p>

Lever 2	Indicators	Select (✓) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Assessment of teaching is constructive & flexible	8. Students are invited to provide feedback to their instructors in addition to end of course evaluations				
	9. Students are invited to provide feedback on course design				
	10. Student feedback on teaching is taken into consideration in hiring, promotion and tenure practices				
	11. Student feedback on teaching is taken into consideration to improve teaching				
	12. The response to student feedback is shared back with students				
	13. Student learning outcomes are considered in program evaluation				
	14. Teaching is formally assessed in multiple ways through the lenses of multiple stakeholders (student, faculty, staff)				
	15. Course design is considered in the assessment of teaching				
	16. Instructors have some influence over how their teaching is assessed				
	17. Professional staff are invited to provide feedback on course design				

Lever 2	
Assessment of teaching is constructive & flexible	<p>For this lever, identify your institutional strengths (YES responses) as well as areas for potential development (NO responses)*.</p> <p>*Also consider the implications of your other responses (<i>At Times</i> and <i>Don't Know</i>).</p>

Lever 3	Indicators	Select (√) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Effective teaching is implemented	18. Instructors tell their students how they use student feedback to improve teaching				
	19. Instructors have developed and communicate teaching and assessment methods that align with the learning outcomes of their course				
	20. Instructors tell their students how their course fits into the curriculum toward a degree				
	21. Instructors access the services and resources provided to support their development as teachers				
	22. Instructors are encouraged to spend time developing their teaching				
	23. Instructors are encouraged to use evidence about teaching to inform their teaching practices				
	24. Instructors think of creative or unique ways to engage students in the course material				
	25. Instructors communicate how course content is relevant to the workplace and future careers				
	26. Staff who support teaching contribute to the development and implementation of effective teaching				

Lever 4	Indicators	Select (✓) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Infrastructure exists to support teaching	27. Learning spaces such as classrooms, labs and/or studios are designed to support learning				
	28. Instructors have access to adequate materials/ supplies to provide a good learning environment				
	29. Instructors have access to resources to help them facilitate technology-enabled learning				
	30. Instructors have access to resources and support to improve their teaching				
	31. Instructors use technology effectively to support student learning				
	32. Instructors use technology in new and innovative ways to facilitate student learning				
	33. Instructors can get financial support to develop their teaching				
	34. Staff who support teaching are encouraged to develop their expertise in their role				
	35. Staff who support teaching can get financial support to develop their expertise in their role				

Lever 5	Indicators	Select (√) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Broad engagement occurs around teaching	36. Students are involved in activities that foster effective teaching across the institution				
	37. Instructors discuss ways to improve the student learning experience with their colleagues				
	38. External stakeholders such as alumni, employers and/or community members are involved in initiatives that foster effective teaching across the institution				
	39. Professional staff such as library staff, educational developers, learning support student services, etc. are involved in initiatives that foster effective teaching				
	40. Teaching assistants provide effective support for student learning				
	41. Collaborative approaches to teaching are valued				
	42. Teaching practices are discussed across the institution through a range of mechanisms				
	43. Opportunities exist for instructors to lead initiatives that enhance teaching beyond their own instruction				

Lever 5	
Broad engagement occurs around teaching	<p>For this lever, identify your institutional strengths (YES responses) as well as areas for potential development (NO responses)*.</p> <p>*Also consider the implications of your other responses (<i>At Times and Don't Know</i>).</p>

Lever 6	Indicators	Select (✓) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know
Effective teaching is recognized & rewarded	44. Evidence of effective teaching is recognized in the evaluation of job performance				
	45. There are institutional rewards for effective teaching				
	46. Teaching accomplishments, contributions, and/or awards are publicized and/or celebrated				
	47. Effective teaching is valued in the hiring processes				
	48. Unit level administrators reward effective teaching as a priority				
	49. Research on teaching is recognized in the evaluation of job performance				
	50. There is institutional recognition for staff who support teaching				

Add your own lever.

Lever	Indicators	Select (✓) the most appropriate response			
	In my Context,	Yes	At times	No	Don't know

Lever	
	<p>For this lever, identify your institutional strengths (YES responses) as well as areas for potential development (NO responses)*.</p> <p>*Also consider the implications of your other responses (<i>At Times</i> and <i>Don't Know</i>).</p>

INTERPRETING RESULTS

When interpreting the results, it is important to acknowledge what you are doing well and what may require focused improvement. Be sure not to focus solely on challenges but also review and discuss those areas that were rated high to learn why and harness the strengths presented in these areas. Bringing together potential improvement ideas while sustaining and supporting organizational strengths will help enhance the teaching culture.

Focusing Improvement Efforts:

As you worked your way through the Guide, you have been prompted to reflect in the moment on your responses to each lever. Now is the time to review your results at the level of each lever as well as collate all your responses and reflections. It may help to create a master list of the indicators that are i) Strengths, ii) Areas for further investigation and iii) Areas for growth and development. Once collated, consider the following questions as you review your overall responses:

- Which lever(s) (or indicator) is a current priority for your institution? What do your ratings in that area indicate about your progress?
- Which levers stand out as particular areas of strength? How could you build on these areas of strength?
- Which levers are areas for growth?
- What levers would benefit from investigation?
- How could you get more information about any “I Don’t Know” responses?
- What does the uncertainty indicated by the areas for investigation suggest about your institutional culture?
- What patterns do you see in the areas to investigate and the areas for development to help inform next steps?
- How widespread do you think the results would be across different stakeholder groups at your institution? Is that an issue?
- When reviewing the lever responses as a whole, how might you articulate the strengths of the teaching culture at your institution? Areas for development?
- Have you identified specific elements for your institution to the reflective tool? If so, what insights have you gained from the results?
- How would you define effective or high-quality teaching in your institution or unit? What definition did you have in mind when you were answering? What should the answer be for the area moving forward?

The following ideas and associated resources are provided to support improvement efforts:

Step 1: Upon review of the teaching culture levers, consider which levers align with your institution’s strategic plan and would be important areas to focus on for improvement. Aligning change efforts to existing plans will help to enhance buy-in and support changes.

Step 2: Determine the “level” at which the improvements need to be made. The teaching culture may be very different depending on the level considered: institution, Faculty, department, school or centre.

Step 3: Identify potential strategies to help enhance the teaching culture levers. For concrete examples of how institutions have worked to enhance their teaching culture levers, please refer to the Teaching Culture Practices Repository at <https://qualityteachingculture.ca/effective-practices.html>

Step 4: Use existing tools to help identify potential strategies to enhance teaching culture levers. This can be done at a university, Faculty, school or departmental level to identify opportunities for improvements. One example is the Impact Matrix - <https://asq.org/quality-resources/impact-effort-matrix>. Using this approach allows the institution to review potential change ideas according to High-Low Impact versus High-Low Effort. Decisions can then be made related to resource allocation and readiness for engaging in these strategies.

Step 5: Determine what type of data, in addition to this tool, you have that will help to highlight the urgency and/or importance for engaging in this change and that will help others to understand why improvement is necessary. This data can then be used as a baseline for assessing the success of changes.

Step 6: Through implementation efforts, it is important to engage key stakeholders and communicate change efforts to gain buy-in and celebrate successes to support sustainability and spread.

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