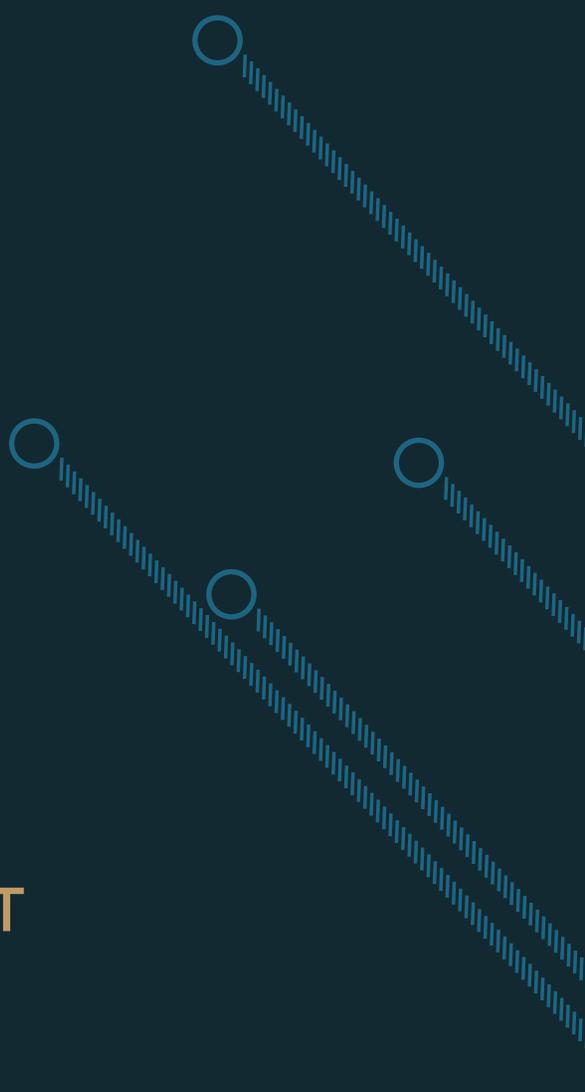# DESIGNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR IMPACT

Despite the critical role of professional development in the success of digital learning and courseware initiatives, institutions report barriers to scaling professional development. A focused approach centered on the right kinds of training at the right times can support success in a significant way.

TIME FOR CLASS TOOLKIT

QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

How important is professional
development to digital learning and courseware
implementation success?

What are best practices in professional
development design and implementation?

How does professional
development impact faculty satisfaction
with courseware implementation?

What types of professional
development have the biggest impact on
courseware implementation success?

KEY INSIGHTS

Both faculty and administrators see professional development as the
most critical enabler of digital learning initiative success, but institutions
still report challenges in implementing professional development at scale.

Scaled and effective professional development doesn't require outsized
resources; what is more important is a place in the institution's strategic
plan, investment in structures like a center for teaching and learning
(CTL), and smart use of tools and systems.

Requiring faculty participation in specific forms of professional
development is connected to a more positive sense that the institution is
creating an ideal digital learning environment – but only 28% of faculty
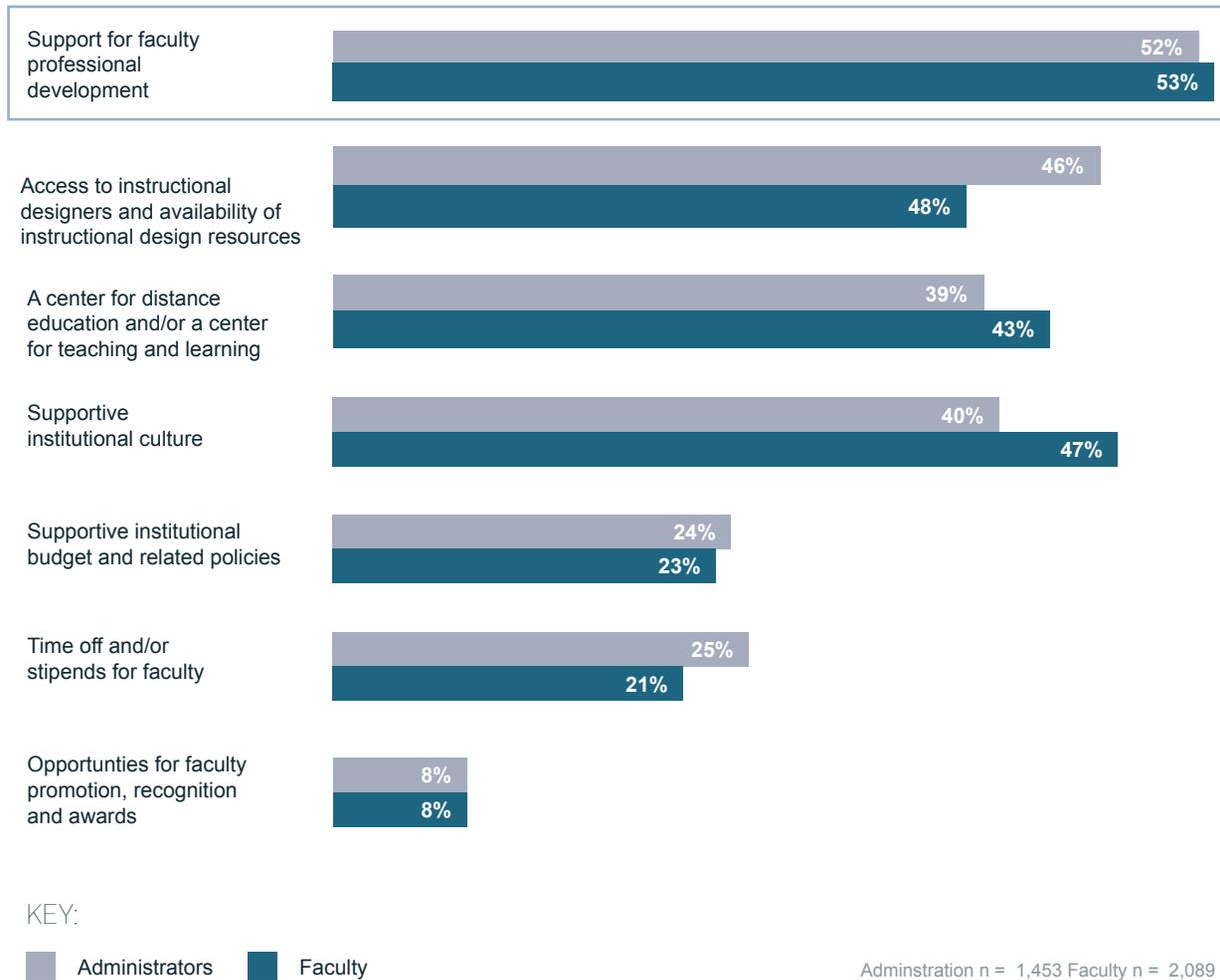report that it is required at their institution.

Specific professional development activities are correlated with both
courseware adoption and positive faculty experience.

Authored by **Tyton** PARTNERS & **BABSON** Survey Research Group

Professional development is seen by both faculty and administrators as the most important enabler of digital learning initiatives (Figure 1).

Although there are many factors (financial and otherwise) that can contribute to successful digital learning implementation, professional development and support for faculty is the top factor as cited by both faculty and administrators.

Figure 1: Positive Factors in Digital Learning Implementation[1]

Factor	Administrators	Faculty
Support for faculty professional development	52%	53%
Access to instructional designers and availability of instructional design resources	46%	48%
A center for distance education and/or a center for teaching and learning	39%	43%
Supportive institutional culture	40%	47%
Supportive institutional budget and related policies	24%	23%
Time off and/or stipends for faculty	25%	21%
Opportunties for faculty promotion, recognition and awards	8%	8%

KEY:

Administrators   Faculty

Adminstration n = 1,453 Faculty n = 2,089

[1]Question: "Which factors, if any, have contributed most positively towards digital learning? Please select up to three."

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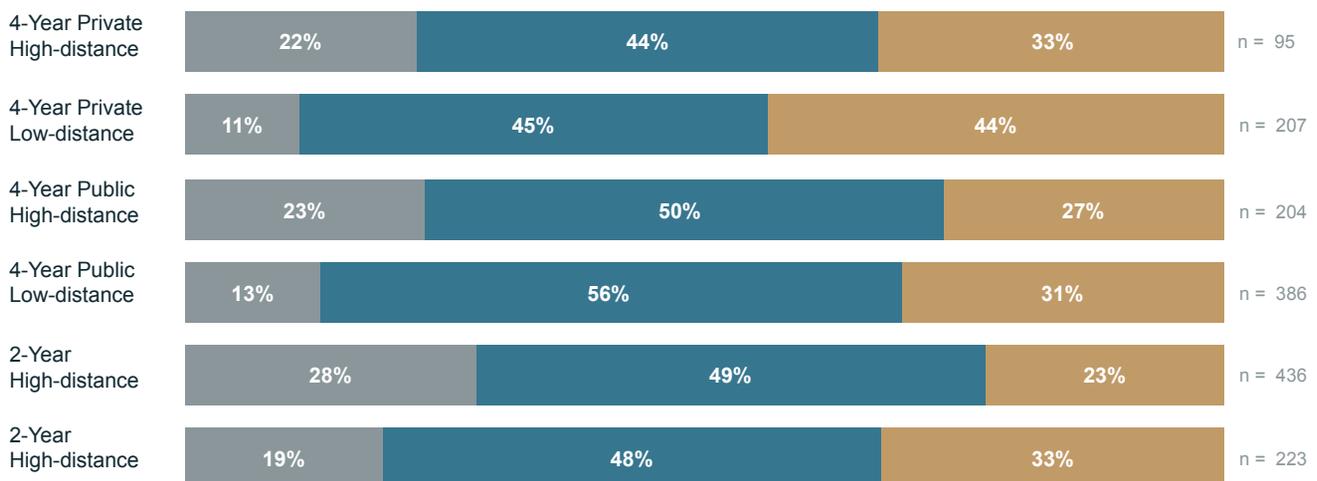
everylearner
everywhere

However, on-the-ground progress implementing professional development is not complete at most institutions.

Only 19% of administrators say that digital learning professional development has been implemented effectively and at scale. Almost half (49%) say implementation is in progress or being planned and 33% say it is incomplete.[2]

Scaled and effective professional development doesn't require outsized resources.

Where there is a will to provide professional development, there is a way. High-distance institutions—which employ a higher percentage of adjunct faculty[3] than low-distance institutions in the study—cite higher rates of scaled professional development implementation (Figure 2). This suggests not that they have more or better resources than other schools, but that they have made professional development a priority and put the right systems and tools in place.

Figure 2: Status of Professional Development by Institution Type[2]

Institution Type	At Scale	In Progress	Incomplete	n
4-Year Private High-distance	22%	44%	33%	n = 95
4-Year Private Low-distance	11%	45%	44%	n = 207
4-Year Public High-distance	23%	50%	27%	n = 204
4-Year Public Low-distance	13%	56%	31%	n = 386
2-Year High-distance	28%	49%	23%	n = 436
2-Year High-distance	19%	48%	33%	n = 223

KEY:
- At Scale
- In Progress
- Incomplete

One example of a commitment to professional development is the presence of a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)—82% of institutions with scaled professional development report having a CTL compared to only 66% of those with incomplete professional development

[2]Question: "To what extent is digital learning professional development (PD) implemented at your institution?" Answers: At scale = Digital learning PD has been implemented effectively and at scale; In progress = Digital learning PD implementation is in progress OR the institution is planning to implement digital learning PD at scale; Inconsistent = Digital learning PD is incomplete, inconsistent, informal, and/or optional OR Digital learning PD does not exist. [3]Question: "Please indicate your adjunct status."

According to faculty, availability of and participation in professional development is connected to a more positive sense that the institution is creating an ideal digital learning environment.

While only 27% of overall faculty note that their institutions are achieving an ideal digital learning environment, 42% of faculty at institutions that require professional development report that their institutions are achieving an ideal digital learning environment.[4] In addition, faculty who participate in certain forms of professional development are more likely to report that their institution is achieving an ideal environment (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Faculty Views on Ideal Digital Learning Environment and Professional Development

KEY:

▮ Ideal   ▮ Neutral   ▮ Not ideal

Faculty			
27%	41%	34%	

| Of faculty who...	X% agree their institution is achieving an ideal digital learning environment
Are required to participate in digital learning professional development	42%
...have participated in…	
Training and pedagogy for teaching online	32%
Training on incorporation of digital learning tools	32%
Selection and/or advising regarding third-party tools	31%
Curriculum and course redesign to develop digital resources	34%
None of the above	17%

n = 1,988

Despite the clear benefits of professional development, only 28% of faculty say their institution requires professional development for their instructional practice for digital learning.

[4]Question: "Which of the following professional development topics for digital learning have you engaged with at your current institution? Please select all that apply." Answers: Training on new pedagogy for teaching online; Training on incorporation of digital learning tools into existing pedagogies; Selection and/or advising regarding third-party digital learning tools; Curriculum and course design to help me develop new digital learning tools; Curriculum and course design to help me develop new digital learning resources for my course; None of the above; Other

Professional development can also be a lever to support courseware adoption.

Faculty who participate in professional development are more likely to adopt courseware. This connection suggests that availability of and participation in professional development can support faculty adoption. Specifically, faculty who participate in professional development focused on the selection of third-party digital learning tools adopt courseware at higher rates than those who receive other types of training (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of Faculty Using Courseware by Professional Development Received[5]

Professional Development Around Tool Selection — 38%
Any Professional Development — 31%
No Professional Development — 17%

n = 2,429
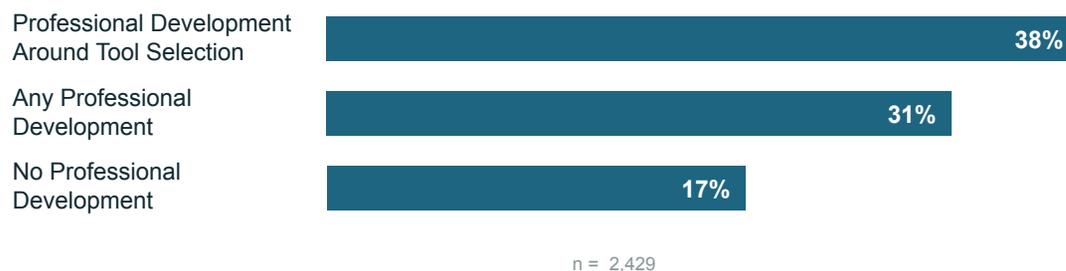
Professional development is a particularly important tool for ensuring that adoption and implementation are high quality and that faculty have a positive experience.

Faculty at institutions with required participation in professional development on instructional practice for digital learning[4] report an average courseware Net Promoter Score[6] of 16, while those with no requirement have an NPS of -6. Similarly, faculty at institutions with a CTL[7] report higher NPS scores than those without such a center: 5 vs. -7. This underscores the importance of professional development to support a positive courseware implementation experience.

These findings are reinforced by SRI's *Next Generation Courseware Challenge* study, which shows that training for instructors on how to integrate the courseware with their intended pedagogy is associated with more positive impacts for adaptive courseware implementation.[8]
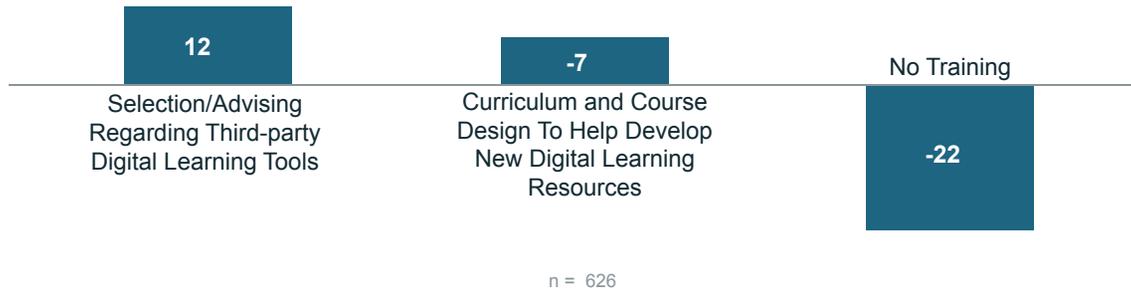
[5]Question: "Does your intitution require faculty to participate in professional development on their instructional practice for digital learning?"
[6]Question: "How likely are you to recommend [this courseware product] to a colleague?" Respondents giving courseware product recommendation scores of 9 or 10 (out of 10) were labeled as "Promoters" and those giving the product scores of 1-6 were labeled as "Detractors." Promoters – Detractors = Net Promoter Score (NPS). [7]Question: "Does your institution have a center for teaching and learning?"
[8]House, A., Means, B., Peters Hinton, V., Boyce, J., Wetzel, T., & Wang, S., Next Generation Courseware Challenge Evaluation. (Menlo Park, CA: SRI International, 2018) https://www.sri.com/sites/default/files/publications/next_generation_courseware_challenge_evaluation_final_report_dec_2018.pdf

Professional development activities relevant to planning and implementation stages are critical for faculty to have positive experiences using courseware.

Coaching on third-party digital learning tools and support to help faculty develop new digital learning resources is critical. Faculty who report participating in professional development in these areas are much more likely to be promoters of their courseware than those who do not participate in any professional development.

12	-7	No Training
Selection/Advising Regarding Third-party Digital Learning Tools	Curriculum and Course Design To Help Develop New Digital Learning Resources	-22

n = 626

TOOL FOR ACTION
Resources to Support Professional Development

Based on survey results as well as an extensive body of literature about high-quality online learning experiences, it is clear that professional development and faculty support for teaching and learning with technology must be a critical priority and element of a high-quality digital learning experience. There are a few key steps to consider:

√ Make an institutional commitment to developing a professional development plan that supports faculty in their exploration of tools and instructional practice.

√ Make professional development a requirement for all faculty teaching in hybrid and online courses and wherever courseware is being used.

√ Partner across systems and institutions to scale professional development offerings and create community for faculty.

√ If your goal is to support faculty adoption of and positive experience with courseware, focus on the following specific training types:
- Tool and resource selection
- Pedagogy
- Curriculum and course design

The following table lists organizations offering tools and resources that can accelerate and augment your professional development activities.

Resource	About	Professional Development
Faculty Guild	Organization developed based on the work of former CUNY President, Dr. Gail Mellow. Uses "situated learning" and facilitated reflection to improve faculty teaching performance.	• Fellowship model to promote reflection, collaboration and planning to achieve teaching goals. • Weekly small-group reflection and planning sessions are held virtually over 1-3 academic terms and supported by a facilitator and online platform.
Online Learning Consortium	Member-based non-profit organization "dedicated to establishing and ensuring quality standards in online and digital learning."	• Online Teaching certificate programs for faculty and instructional designers at traditional and advanced levels • OLC "Mastery Series" emphasizes theory and application on key topics; badges awarded on completion • Stand-alone synchronous and asynchronous workshops • Institute for Emerging Leadership in Online Learning (IELOL)
Quality Matters	Non-profit organization focused on "promoting and improving the quality of online education and student learning"	• Teaching certificate aligned to the Online Instructor Skill Set • Workshops on online & blended course design and pedagogy • Online courses • Customized on-site or online training programs

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information, visit Every Learner Everywhere Resources or the Tyton Partners Library.

ABOUT

Time for Class is a comprehensive longitudinal survey of 4,000+ higher education faculty and administrators, fielded since 2014 by Tyton Partners and the Babson Survey Research Group and underwritten by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Results inform a comprehensive fact base focused particularly on the postsecondary digital courseware landscape, in the service of making this diverse and complex market easier to navigate for institutions and education professionals.

Tyton Partners is the leading provider of investment banking and strategy consulting services to the education sector and leverages its deep transactional and advisory experience to support a range of clients, including companies, foundations, institutions, and investors.
For more information, visit www.tytonpartners.com.

The Babson Survey Research Group is a survey design, implementation, and analysis organization. Founded in 2005, the organization has worked on a number of large surveys including an annual survey of online education that includes all colleges and universities in the United States.
For more information, visit www.onlinelearningsurvey.com.

Every Learner Everywhere is a network of 12 partner organizations focused on providing a comprehensive, coordinated approach to help colleges and universities take advantage of the rapidly evolving digital learning landscape.
For more information, visit www.everylearnereverywhere.com.

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We also would like to thank the 4,000+ survey respondents across 1,300+ institutions for their input and their daily work to advance the field's knowledge of digital tools and courseware in higher education.