**Xavier University Center for Teaching Excellence**

**Faculty Learning Community - Member Application**

**Topic: Practicing Radical Hospitality: Xavier as a Refuge**

**Start Date: January 2025**

**Facilitator(s): Sheena Steckl and Katie Robiadeck**

Radical care is a top value at Xavier. Part of radical care at our university, in terms of *cura personalis*, is ensuring people feel welcome to bring their whole self to every space on campus. Knowing, feeling, and relating to others as if we all belong together is part of what defines hospitality. And, “a key virtue for the academy is hospitality—the extension of self in order to welcome the other by sharing and receiving intellectual resources and insights” (Bennett 2000). With a broad focus on hospitality, this FLC will bring together individuals to learn and share what hospitality means in the spaces they take part in on campus—from the classroom to our green spaces (including the Nexus Garden) and from the places we study (library and office) to the places we eat (dining hall) and recreate (HUB). To that end, this FLC especially seeks to learn what we can do to ensure all students feel secure in their identity and confident they can thrive on campus as a part of our community.

**Project Description**

The primary goal of this FLC is to learn what we can do to ensure all students feel secure in their identity and confident they can thrive on camps as a part of our community. Scholars such as Vincent Tinto posit students need to be integrated into both academic and social systems if they are to succeed in college, and this proposed FLC will discern how students can grow as a *whole person* during their time at Xavier. Current students are having difficulty adapting socially and emotionally to college life—this cohort particularly so due to the pandemic and its associated restrictions. This problem is not unique to Xavier; institutions around the globe are struggling with student attendance and retention, as well as with gaps in academic and social skills and degraded mental and physical wellbeing.

Hospitality is a key component of educating for empathy across colleges such as ours focused on the humanities, professional studies, and medicine. The FLC will explore how, through the radical care exhibited in acting radically hospitable on campus, our commitment might improve the sense of belonging on campus to boost student motivation, engagement, interpersonal relationships, and academic success.  Furthermore, as Xavier seeks to continue to increase and diversify the student population, the academic and social wellbeing of our students depends on faculty ability to support international students, first-generation students, and others having a difficult time adapting to college. Though we have various support systems on campus, including the Office of Academic Support, TRiO, Smooth Transitions, and International Student and Scholar Services, faculty and staff may have little training or experience with helping students hone their academic, social, and emotional skills in the classroom. Members of the FLC will examine strategies and tools to help students be their best selves and get the most out of their college experience, exploring how we can design assignments and activities to support both academic and personal growth. Importantly, the work of radical care cannot ignore the faculty and staff who help define spaces, programs, and relationships as hospitable and welcoming. So, our thinking about the concepts of radical care, radical hospitality, and belonging will extend to practices that involve all campus members inside and outside the classroom.

**Guiding Questions:**

1. What are the characteristics of a thriving campus community for individuals and the collective alike?
2. What are the common threads that connect students struggling to adapt to college?
3. What tools or techniques have faculty used to increase engagement and learning with or without success?  What tools or techniques can be used?
4. How does security in identity impact feelings of belonging and academic and personal success.
5. What do we do to promote a sense of belonging among our students—campus-wide and in our individual classrooms? What can we do?

**Tentative Topics**

* Radical Hospitality
* Identity
* Student Populations
* Immigrants and Refugees
* Relationship-Rich Education
* Educational Transparency
* Belonging and Retention

**Application Deadline: December 15th**

**We will continue to accept applications if the FLC does not fill up at this deadline.**

**FLC Member Information:**

* Members will be selected from all teaching faculty at Xavier, with typically no more than two members from a single academic department; staff may also be considered. Selection criteria include commitment to engage reflectively on this topic, openness towards new ideas and perspectives, and commitment to full and regular participation in the community.
* Members agree to engage in a year-long learning community, attend all meetings (approximately 10-12), and complete an individual or collective project related to the FLC topic and directly relevant to teaching and learning at Xavier. They also are expected to share their learning with the Xavier community, both through a collective final presentation and informally.
* FLC budgets will be proposed and approved after the learning community has been formed and members have been selected. FLCs can request relevant expenses, which may include up to $500 in professional development funds for each members. The final budget proposal should be the consensus of the full group.

**Questions?** Feel free to contact the facilitators with questions about this particular FLC:

For general questions about FLCs, check the [CTE website](http://www.xavier.edu/cte/faculty-learning-communities.cfm) or contact Faculty Director, Eric Bucher (buchere1@xavier.edu or 745-3462)

**Complete this application and e-mail it to** **cte@xavier.edu** **by December 15th**

**Name:**

**Phone**:

**Department:**

**Email:**

**Number of Years at Xavier:**

Respond briefly to the following questions:

1. Why are you interested in this topic?
2. What do you believe you can gain from participating in this community?
3. What do you think you can contribute to the group?
4. What are the questions or issues you are most interested in exploring?
5. Do you have a specific project in mind that you will work on within the FLC? If so, briefly explain.

**Meeting availability:** Indicate below when you are **NOT available** to meet during the Spring 2025 semester. The FLC will meet approximately every three weeks for 1.5-2 hours.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| 9:00-9:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9:30-10:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10:00-10:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10:30-11:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11:00-11:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11:30-12:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12:00-12:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12:30-1:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1:00-1:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1:30-2:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2:00-2:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2:30-3:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3:00-3:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3:30-4:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4:00-4:30 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4:30-5:00 |  |  |  |  |  |

Would you consider an evening meeting time? Yes | No

 If yes, indicate which weeknight evenings you would NOT be available.

**Applicant’s Agreement**

If I am selected as a member of the faculty learning community (FLC) on  **Practicing Radical Hospitality: Xavier as a Refuge**, I agree to participate fully in the community’s activities including the meetings, readings, projects, reports, and documents associated with this FLC. I will also share the things I learn with faculty outside the FLC, in both formal and informal settings.

(Please indicate your agreement to this statement by typing your name below.)

Applicant’s Name (please type): Date:

**Please email your completed application as an attachment to** **cte@xavier.edu** **by December 15th.**

**One completed copy of the application should also be sent to the applicant’s Department Chair, who can indicate their endorsement by typing their name below the following statement and emailing this page of the application to** **cte@xavier.edu**

**Department Chair’s endorsement**

I endorse the above applicant’s participation in the faculty learning community (FLC) on **Practicing Radical Hospitality: Xavier as a Refuge** and will support the implementation of the curricular and pedagogical work completed.

(Please indicate your agreement to this statement by typing your name below.)

Department Chair’s Name (please type): Date: