



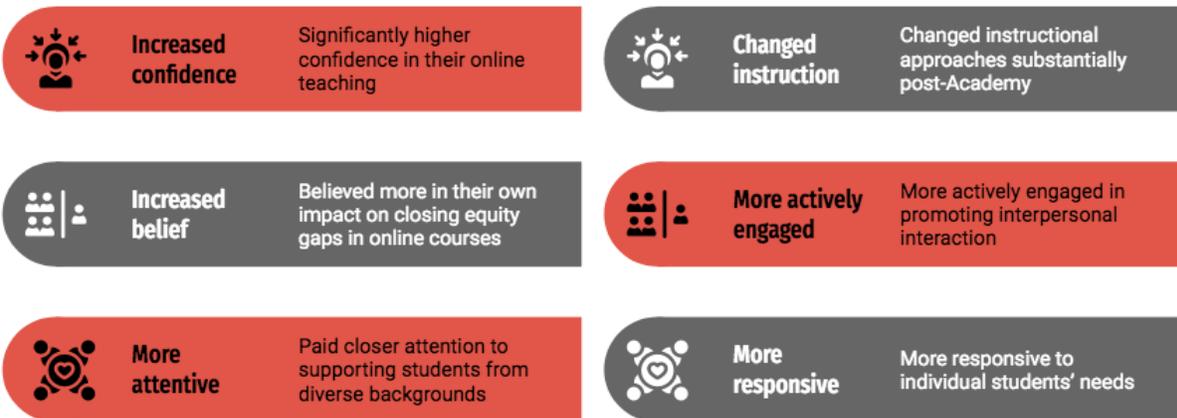
Humanizing Online STEM: Equitizing Learning & Teaching

Summary

Faculty-student relationships are critical to student success (Kezar & Maxey, 2014; Jaggars & Xu, 2016; Pacansky-Brock et al., 2020). Humanizing is an equity-based teaching practice centered in building relationships that fuel engagement and rigor in learning. Through support of the California Education Learning Lab, a collaboration of all three California public higher education systems created the *Humanizing Online STEM Academy*, a six-week online professional development experience focused on equitizing online undergraduate STEM courses. To date, eighty-two California educators have participated in the Academy, including teaching faculty and faculty developers across STEM and other disciplines. Cal Poly Humboldt has been the lead CSU campus and research partner in this collaborative.

Research Findings

Preliminary research on the impact of Humanizing Online STEM revealed the following for instructors:



Students also described these findings through reports of high levels of satisfaction with their learning experiences in humanized online courses, with particularly positive experiences reported by Black, Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islander students (Xu et al., 2022). Download the full preliminary research report at: <https://humanizeol.org/resources/>



Testimonials

Humboldt educators who participated in the Academy described significant changes to their courses, which are showcased in public digital portfolios highlighting the eight humanized online teaching elements: <https://ctl.humboldt.edu/content/humanizing-online>



"As a young female professor, I believe I needed to put on a tough outer shell in the classroom and uphold 'rigid expectations' so that students wouldn't take advantage of my kindness/vulnerability. But what

I've realized in the past year is that this was a terrible misconception that I held onto for much too long."
Kerry Byrne, Environmental Sciences Management



"The Humanizing Online STEM Academy has completely changed for the better how I teach my online courses. The material was relevant, well supported with examples and evidence of effectiveness, and extremely well

structured and enjoyable to learn."
Kimberly White, Chemistry



Implications for Humboldt

Equity is a process, not just an outcome (National Equity Project, 2021). Humanizing as an equity process has short and long-term implications for Humboldt that support the following goals:

- Promoting evidence-based, equitable learning practices to reduce DFW rates (CSU Priority 5)
- Creating opportunities for every student to succeed through practices that aim to eliminate equity gaps for ethnically minoritized, first-generation, and/or socioeconomic disadvantaged students (Humboldt's GI2025 goal)
- Increasing fully online and hybrid courses by fall 2025 and ensuring alignment with the Quality Learning and Teaching (QLT) framework. (Humboldt Strategic Plan 2021-2026)

Classroom equity begins with investment in ongoing teaching professional development as part of the infrastructure for quality, inclusive online teaching and learning; the incentive is *better teaching* and more students achieving their goals (Fox et al., 2021). The **Center for Teaching and Learning** will continue to offer in-house humanized programming that will scale over time, including a rollout of the Academy, as well as partnering with institutions across California in the Humanizing *Scaling Success* effort that incentivizes educator participation and works to increase adoption of humanized online teaching, and validate its efficacy through equity-focused research.

Read more about Humanizing Online and the Academy at: <https://humanizeol.org/>



HUMANIZING ONLINE STEM

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