

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Promoting knowledge development
to support institutional change in
higher education

ascnhighered.org

ANNUAL REPORT ASCN

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for contributing to a successful year for the Accelerating Systemic Change Network (ASCN). This annual report provides an overview of ASCN activities, highlights our milestones and accomplishments, and includes some of our vision for the future. Some highlights from 2021:

- Our numbers continue to grow -- we now have more than 671 members and subscribers, an increase of more than 100 in the last year.
- In June we hosted the 2021 Transforming Institutions Conference virtually. We had 260+ attendees over 3 days of presentations.
- We offered four webinars in 2021 on topics including: facilitating change through the Departmental Action Team (DAT) model, impactful change management, organizations' role in promoting equity, and evaluating effective and inclusive teaching.
- Our working groups hosted informal discussions to build community and provide research-based strategies around recruitment and retainment of faculty from diverse backgrounds and equitable teaching and evaluation strategies.
- We worked with other organizations, such as the Inclusive STEM Teaching Project to host a learning community in the fall semester to improve instructors' equitable teaching practices.
- In collaboration with the American Association of the Advancement of Science (AAAS), we held a SEA Change Learning Series that included 5 sessions around the Transforming Institutions book with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in STEM.
- Our working groups continue to meet and develop new projects, including guides to theories of change (Guiding Theories); a newsletter and webinar series (Change Leaders); an informal discussion series on hiring and retaining diverse faculty members (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice); and gathering more institutional initiatives to add to their matrix of teaching evaluation innovations (Aligning Faculty Incentives with Systemic Change).

The work of ASCN in 2021 was supported by a National Science Foundation five-year grant of \$905,141 and by a Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust's three-year grant of \$794,612. This past year was a year of growth, and we want to thank you for your support. We are looking forward to continued collaborations, new beginnings and further success in 2022!

Sincerely,

Charles Henderson, Andrea Beach, Scott Simkins, & Rachel Renbarger

Table of contents

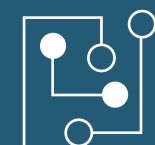
3	Letter
4	ASCN Leadership Teams
4	Hub Leadership Team
4	Steering Committee
6	Working Group Leaders
6	HUB Staff
6	SERC Staff
	Year in Review
7	Transforming Institutions Conference
8	Webinars
9	Informal Discussions
10	Collaborations
11	SEA Change Learning Series
12	Working Groups
14	Web Space
16	Blog
17	Newsletter & Social Media Looking Ahead

18



Hub Leadership Team

1. **Charles Henderson**, Western Michigan University
2. **Andrea Beach**, Western Michigan University
3. **Linda Slakey**, University of Massachusetts-Amherst
4. **Scott Simkins**, North Carolina A&T State University



Hub Leadership Team
Steering Committee
Working Group Leaders
HUB Staff
Systemic Change Institute
Staff
SERC Staff



Steering Committee

5. **Marilyn Amey**, Michigan State University
6. **Maura Borrego**, The University of Texas at Austin
7. **David Bressoud**, Macalester College
8. **Mark Connolly**, University of Wisconsin-Madison



- 9. **Anthony DePass**, Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus
- 10. **Susan Elrod**, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
- 11. **Noah Finkelstein**, University of Colorado at Boulder
- 12. **Adrianna Kezar**, University of Southern California

- 13. **Kelly Mack**, Association of American Colleges and Universities
- 14. **Cathy Manduca**, Carleton College
- 15. **Emily Miller**, Association of American Universities
- 16. **Karen Paulson**, Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus

- 17. **Karl A. Smith**, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
- 18. **Gabriela Weaver**, University of Massachusetts-Amherst
- 19. **Lorne Whitehead**, University of British Columbia
- 20. **Julia Williams**, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

Working Group Leaders

Working Group 1: Guiding Theories

Tessa Andrews, University of Georgia

Daniel Reinholz, San Diego State University

Working Group 2/4: Costs, Benefits, & Demonstrating Impact

Pamela Brown, CUNY-New York City College of Technology

Archie Holmes, University of Virginia-Main Campus

Lorne Whitehead, University of British Columbia

Working Group 3: Change Leaders

Gita Banger, Bellevue College

Stephanie Chasteen, University of Colorado at Boulder

Madhura Kulkarni, Northern Kentucky University

Working Group 5: Equity & Inclusion

Holly Cho, Oregon State University

Pat Marsteller, Emory University

Ruthmae Sears, University of South Florida

Working Group 6: Aligning Faculty Work with Systemic Change

Christine Broussard, University of La Verne

Kadian Callahan, Kennesaw State University

Working Group 7: Learning Spaces

Jonathan Cox, University of Arizona

Hub Staff

Rachel Renbarger, Research Director, Western Michigan University

SERC Staff

Cailin Huyck Orr, Associate Director

Mitchell Awalt, Geoscience Assistant

Transforming Institutions Conference

In June 2021 we cohosted the ASCN Transforming Institutions Conference with the Network of STEM Education Centers (NSEC). This conference is the fourth in a series following the 2019 Transforming Institutions Conference held in Philadelphia, PA. ASCN will hold the next Transforming Institutions Conference in 2023.

We brought together more than 260 researchers, faculty, change agents, administrators, and policymakers to focus on transforming undergraduate education. We were pleased to include many excellent presentations, posters, and workshops in our program, some organized into our four tracks which aligned with our working groups: aligning faculty incentives with systemic change (group 6), change leadership (group 3), equity and inclusion (group 5), and guiding theories of change (group 1).

Evaluation from the conference was overwhelmingly positive; respondents (n=63) answered questions about the quality of aspects of the conference from a score of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) and gave high average scores for the overall experience (4.41), communication (4.61), and interactions with other participants (4.17).

See more, including the full program, on the conference site:

ascnhighered.org/ASCN/transforming_institutions/2021/index.html

Plenary Sessions

Higher Education's Rapidly Evolving Eco-System: How Must We Adapt

Paul LeBlanc, President of Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)

President LeBlanc spoke about how universities can provide a more flexible learning model through credentials. He stated, "How do we continue to engage with our students throughout their lives? ... We try to give our students the right amount of learning at just the right time in just the right way." Credentialing provides students with opportunities to learn skills in smaller amounts of time and provides them with evidence of that learning for their employers.

Pathways into Higher Education Panel

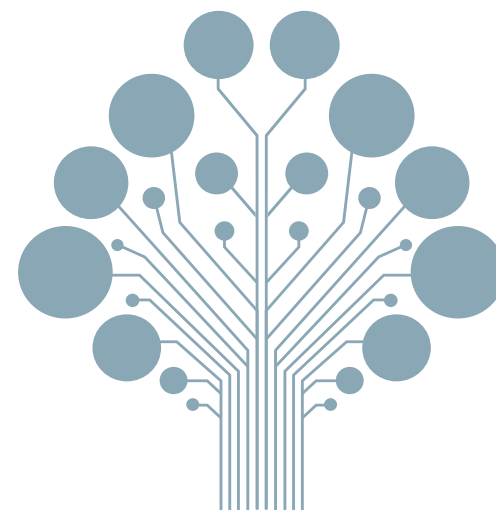
Panelists: *Yves Salomon-Fernandez*, President of Greenfield Community College and *Will Tyson*, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of South Florida

This plenary session was a facilitated conversation between speakers from the recent NASEM Imagining the Future of Undergraduate STEM Education convening. We explored ways to strengthen pathways into and through postsecondary education; increasing access to postsecondary education; and connecting researchers (across disciplines and/or contexts) and change agents to support these goals.

Foundations' Funding Priorities Moving Forward Panel

Panelists: *Celeste Carter*, National Science Foundation Program Director; *Debra Humphreys*, Vice President of Strategic Engagement, Lumina Foundation; *Dale Whittaker*, Senior Program Officer, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; and *Lee Zia*, Deputy Division Director of the Division of Undergraduate Education, National Science Foundation
Moderator: *Ryan Kelsey*, Executive Director, Partnership Development, Markle Foundation

Equity and the need to work across academic silos was prioritized in the funding panel. Improving racial equity is a key focus of each of these funders with the increased understanding of how racism exists within all structures of our society.



ASCN Webinars



The goal for the ASCN webinars is to offer a wide range of topics that align with the vision of the ASCN and contribute to learning and sharing knowledge or expertise. Our intention is for the webinars to be part of our mission to disseminate the knowledge and expertise of systemic change scholars and practitioners to the wider higher education community.

The four webinars of 2021 brought together interested scholars and researchers, with an average of 100 registrants at each event. The topics of these webinars include: evaluating effective and inclusive teaching, understanding the role of national STEM networks in promoting justice, facilitating change through the Department Action Team (DAT) model, and differentiating engagement for educators. Participants have given high satisfaction ratings from the webinars, with an average satisfaction rating of 8.6 (out of 10).

All of our webinars are available to watch on our website. For more information, follow the links listed to the right.

Facilitating Change Through the Departmental Action Team (DAT) Model

A Change Cafe Webinar

Presenters: Joel Corbo, Courtney Ngai, Gina Quan, & Sarah Wise (University of Colorado Boulder)

Attendance: 83

Watch online at https://ascnhighered.org/ASCN/webinars/2021/dat_model/index.html

Impactful Change Management: Differentiated Engagement

A Change Cafe Webinar

Presenter: Kip Zwolenski & Gretchen Robertson (Sagit Valley College)

Attendance: 41

Watch online at https://ascnhighered.org/ASCN/webinars/2021/impactful_change_mgmt/index.html

Building Structural Equity: National Networks' Role in Promoting Justice

Presenters: Tabbye Chavous (National Center for Institutional Diversity), Elizabeth Holcombe (University of Southern California), Nita Kedharnath (SEISMIC), Stanley Lo (SABER), Shirley Malcom (AAAS), Rachel Renbarger (ASCN)

Attendance: 104

Watch online at https://ascnhighered.org/ASCN/structural_equity/index.html

Evaluation of effective and inclusive teaching: How can teaching and learning center professionals be involved in change for social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion?

Presenter: Susan Elrod (University of Wisconsin-Whitewater) + Working Group 3, 5, & 6 leaders

Attendance: 175

Watch online at https://ascnhighered.org/ASCN/webinars/2021/eval_teaching/index.html

ASCN Informal Discussions

Similar to ASCN webinars, the goal for the ASCN informal discussions is to offer a wide range of topics that align with the vision of the ASCN but centered on members' engagement with the content in a more casual environment. Informal discussions are meant to be part of our mission to be responsive to the immediate needs of participants and create communities of change agents.

The seven informal discussions of 2021 focused on topics like teaching effectiveness and evaluation with justice, equity, diversity and inclusion and recruiting, supporting, and retaining diverse faculty. The types of activities within these informal discussions varied; some discussions had guest speakers while others encouraged participants to bring vetted resources to share in a "potluck" format.

You can see the **resources** on the event pages:

- <https://bit.ly/ASCNDiverseFaculty>
- https://bit.ly/ASCN_WG6
- https://bit.ly/ASCN_eval

Series: Recruiting, Supporting, and Retaining Diverse Faculty

Working Group 5: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

Overview: Why Now?

Hiring Plans: Cluster Hires & Diversity Statements

Planning Recruitment

Anti-Bias Training & Faculty Search Advocates

Changing the Culture: Collecting Data & Making a Plan

To ensure members could join the conversation even if they missed one of the initial discussions, working group 5 leaders created "in case you missed it" summary documents.

Series: Teaching with Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (JEDI)

Working Group 6: Aligning Incentives with Systemic Change

Teaching Effectiveness & JEDI

Teaching Evaluation & JEDI

As the informal discussions were not recorded, leaders created slides for members to keep as a resource following the event. These include vetted resources for members to improve classroom practices and the evaluation of all instructors.

ASCN led a learning community through the **Inclusive STEM Teaching Project**. The Inclusive STEM Teaching Project is designed to advance the awareness, self-efficacy, and ability of STEM faculty, postdocs, graduate students, and staff to cultivate inclusive learning environments for all their students and to develop themselves as reflective, inclusive practitioners. In addition, these ideas and concepts are valuable to individuals in all aspects of education, such as high school teachers, instructors in the arts, humanities, law, medicine, social sciences, and other fields, as well as administrators and faculty developers. The Inclusive STEM project created online modules that cover the following themes designed to help instructors construct classroom environments that support the complexities that contribute to student persistence: social identity and its impact on learning; power, positionality, and privilege; inclusive course design; interruption of oppression and microaggressions; and evidence-based teaching. The Inclusive STEM Teaching Project also trained 32 teams of facilitators from a range of institutions to create learning communities for other interested faculty, graduate students, and postdocs. Three ASCN members, Jennifer Manilay, Rachel Renbarger, and Sheela Vemu, learned how to facilitate a community and led a virtual learning group in the fall of 2021 with other ASCN members. Approximately a dozen members registered for the community and participated in the community over the course of the 6 meetings.

More information about the project can be found here: <https://www.inclusivestemteaching.org/>

ASCN in the Broader Community

ASCN also participated in larger conversations through conference presentations with and for other organizations.

In July, ASCN PI Andrea Beach and Research Director Rachel Renbarger presented about ASCN at the annual **Aspire iChange** meeting. Aspire's Institutional Change initiative (iChange) seeks to cultivate post-secondary institutions where STEM faculty from underrepresented groups (URGs) are widely recruited, hired and retained, and all STEM faculty employ inclusive teaching, advising, and research mentoring. Thus, the ASCN team was able to meet change agents and bring them into the ASCN community to find resources and continue their important work.

In November, ASCN Research Director Rachel Renbarger presented with **SEISMIC** project manager Nita Kedharnath on "A Nation of Bridges: Teaming Up Across Multi-Institutional Organizations for Collective STEM Reform." This was an innovation session at the Association of American Colleges & Universities 2021 Virtual Conference on Transforming STEM Higher Education. Participants discussed how national networks and disciplinary societies can work to create larger changes in equity.



INCLUSIVE STEM TEACHING PROJECT

The Inclusive STEM Teaching project's online course features pedagogy that centers identity through asynchronous content and local learning communities.

Join our community of facilitators!

Benefits:

- Comprehensive training
- Portfolio of resources
- Ongoing support
- Early course access

Host your own learning community to facilitate connection, dive deeper into the course material, and make a broader impact on your campus.

Flyer for the Inclusive STEM Project online course that paired with the ASCN learning community

SEA Change Learning Series

The SEA Change learning series **Transforming Institutions: Systemic Change for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in STEMM** provided higher education change leaders the opportunity to expand their knowledge of how to create systemic change within their institution to improve DEI within STEMM. The learning series, developed in partnership with the **American Association for the Advancement of Science**, took a systemic approach to organizational change to develop participant's knowledge of how to apply evidence-based change strategies. The series was structured to guide participants through the process of outlining a change process that aligns with the context of STEMM at their institution.

Audience. 235 individuals signed up for this learning series. This learning series was designed for current and emerging change leaders from colleges and universities, including STEM faculty as well as provosts, deans, and department chairs, human resource and institutional research leaders, and directors of teaching and learning centers.

Goals. The learning series focused on creating institutional change to generate diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments for STEMM learning in higher education. The Transforming Institutions team and guest speakers guided participants

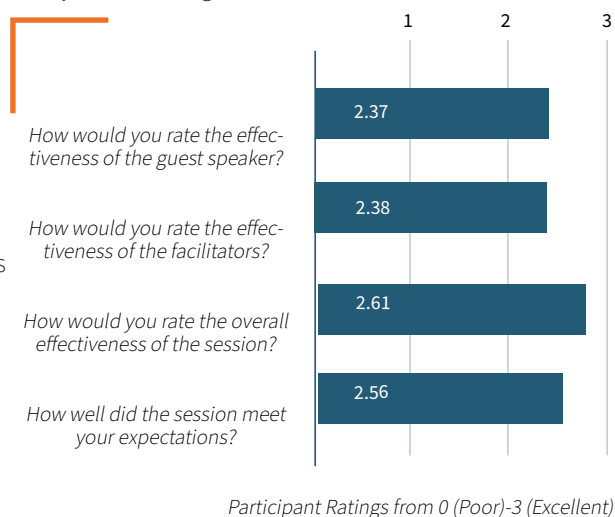
through discussions of the definition of institutional transformation, research on creating institutional change, composition of effective teams, adapting effective approaches to different contexts, and continuous improvement. The overarching goals of the series were to:

- Improve participants' knowledge of theory and practice related to systemic transformation in higher education
- Facilitate participants' reflection on their experiences with local, institutional, and systemic change
- Illustrate how participants can create connections across levels of their institution to drive change
- Assist participants in determining the next steps for their ongoing or upcoming change projects

Design. Five sessions addressed core learning objectives through interactive presentations and discussions, guided and complemented by pre-readings and reflection prompts. Guest speakers included Susan Shadle (Session 1), Travis Kibota (Session 2), Gili Marbach-Ad and Ruthmae Sears (Session 3), Ann Gates and Michael Sorrell (Session 4), & David Asai and Alison Cook-Sather (Session 5).

Results. Overall, participants enjoyed the design and content of the learning series. On a scale from 0

(poor) to 3 (excellent), each session averaged a score above 2.3. When asked about what they liked about the series, participants said things like, "I liked that there was high-level conversation about change, and that there were tangible theories and articles provided" and "All the resources provided during the session and the real life example of how to use systemic change literature."



Registration information and additional details are available here: bit.ly/TI_SEAChange

Working Groups

The ASCN working groups met many times in 2021 and active membership has grown for each group. Each group has continued to develop an identity and vision. The ASCN Research Director, Rachel Renbarger, has met regularly with the working group leaders and worked closely with each group as they develop these projects.

Much of the work of the network occurs within these working groups, and each group focuses on one specific aspect of systemic change. The groups are:

Working Group 1: Guiding Theories

Working Group 2/4: Costs, Benefits, and Demonstrating Impact

Working Group 3: Change Leaders

Working Group 6: Aligning Faculty Work with Systemic Change

Working Group 7: Learning Spaces

Working Group 1: Guiding Theories

In 2021, Working Group 1 finalized the collection of change theory summaries, including a landing page, six summaries, and an organizational structure for summaries. The working group held one meeting and also held a virtual gathering at the Transforming

Institutions conference.

Working Group 2/4: Cost, Benefits, and Demonstrating Impact

In 2021, Working Group 2/4 held meetings to discuss new reports that had come out that would be relevant to working group members. At the end of the year the group met with Working Group 7 to discuss a possible collaboration between the two groups. In December the leadership changed; Pamela Brown and Lorne Whitehead stepped down as co-leaders while Andrea Beach and Linda Slakey stepped up as co-leaders.

Working Group 3: Change Leaders

In 2021 Working Group 3 added a new co-leader, Madhura Kulkarni. Along with existing co-leaders Gita Bangera and Stephanie Chasteen, Madhura has helped to plan and strategize working group activities.

This year Working Group 3 hosted 5 events aimed at helping to support change leaders at a variety of levels, but mostly aimed at teaching and learning center professionals. We offered a webinar, “Facilitating Change through the DAT model” (March

30); this event was preceded by 2 related blog posts written by that group. We also offered a webinar on “Impactful change management” (April 13). We collaborated with working groups 5 and 6 to offer an event “Evaluation of effective and inclusive teaching,” (August 30), aimed at teaching and learning center professionals. We continued our successful “informal discussion” series with two events, “Supporting faculty in developing equitable assessments” (January 19) and “Collaboration for Change: Engaging stakeholders” (March 4). The latter was an experiment in offering a “short course” compiling resources on a single topic (see short course website), followed by an informal discussion; this experiment was not fully successful, as most did not engage in the resources in advance. Thus we’ve decided to offer future short courses as standalone items that complement one another, for example, a blog post about resources, a webinar, and a separate informal discussion on the topic. This lets us highlight existing webinar recordings and resources as well as engage the community. Stay tuned for our future short courses and discussions on the nonlinear process of change, and the politics of leading change.

Our group was also active in the Transforming Institutions conference, offering a Meet-and-Greet on the first day, and a panel discussion of questions related to change leadership at the conference. These were successful and generated ideas for our group. We do not currently hold regular working group meetings apart from the group leaders, but are considering this for the future. We did offer a newsletter in January 2021 but not in Fall 2021.

Working Group 5: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

In spring 2021, the group developed an informal discussion series to help institutions hire and retain faculty members from diverse backgrounds. Over the summer, Pat Marsteller summarized the takeaways in a blog post. In the fall, the group collaborated with other working groups around the topic of inclusive teaching evaluation event. This working group also began creating a call for proposals to solicit blog posts on various topics around diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice to release in January 2022.

Working Group 6: Aligning Faculty Work with Systemic Change

In 2021, Working Group 6, led by Christine Broussard and Kadian M. Callahan, a) worked to refine the mission of the group, b) developed a mechanism for cataloging resources in support of teaching evaluation and effectiveness, and c) hosted a series of interactive sessions to foster idea-sharing and discussion among individuals interested in leveraging teaching effectiveness and evaluation to foster systemic change. Because the work of this group has evolved over time as we have expanded our understanding of the importance of equitable teaching evaluation, we felt it was important to refine our mission statement to more accurately reflect our present goals.

Providing a mechanism to share resources related to teaching effectiveness and evaluation has been a focus of Working Group 6 for some time. Rather than continuing to collect resources in matrix form, we sought to create a tool capable of searching and filtering contributed resources using parameters that would be of interest to a broader audience. Thus, in 2021, we worked together to identify tags that would make sense to people sharing resources

and added a page to ASCN's website where anyone can share resources related to teaching effectiveness or evaluation.

In addition to continuing to hold interactive discussions among our members and guests, we purposefully sought to build on conversations that began during the January 2021 National Academies Dialogue on Transforming STEM Teaching Evaluation in Higher Education by launching a blog to serve as a bridge to the Transforming Institutions 2021 Virtual Conference (held in June 2021). Working Group 6 finished up the year with two informal discussions on teaching effectiveness and JEDI (October) and teaching evaluation and JEDI (December).

Working Group 7: Learning Spaces

In 2021, the group met to discuss the development of a survey to understand change agents' needs for learning space change and development. Working Group 7 also met at the Transforming Institutions conference to inform members about a learning space profile that was written and engage new members. In the fall, Brittnee Earl stepped down as co-leader.



The ASCN Web Space

This year we renewed our contract with the Science Education Resource Center (SERC) at Carleton College. SERC provides the online platform for the ASCN community with funding from the Helmsley Charitable Trust. They also built and supported the website and virtual program for the 2021 ASCN Transforming Institutions Conference.

The major areas of SERC's charge include:

1. Hosting the network website, including both public pages and private working areas on its servers;
2. Providing use of the Serckit tools for community authoring of online resources;
3. Supporting meetings and webinars;
4. Supporting the use of these tools by members;
5. Developing other pages and resource collections.

This year we examined how these areas, collectively referred to as the ASCN Web Space, were utilized to advance the what ASCN does: connect people and groups, curate resources, and endorse ideas.

Transforming Institutions Conference Site

The Transforming Institutions Conference site accomplished all 3 of the ASCN goals and was the most popular use of the ASCN Web Space came through the Transforming Institutions Conference (see p. 7). Indeed, page visits to the ASCN website doubled from 2020 (10,266) to 2021 (21,513); the most visited page was the ASCN home page followed by the Transforming Institutions website. SERC constructed and maintained conference

pages, including program pages, workshop pages, session pages, forms, and informational pages. The conference website and chrome were updated to enhance the look and usability of the conference website, including tagging pages with appropriate theme, track, and logistical information. SERC staff communicated with workshop and symposium leaders regarding web space support, and ran a webinar for workshop and symposium leaders. SERC also managed the conference registration and payments queue.

This allowed ASCN to promote the work of and create a community for change agents but also led to resource curation as presenters uploaded their materials for all conference attendees to access. Of the top 10 most downloaded resources, 8 of them were Transforming Institutions Conference presentation resources.

Connect People and Groups

SERC continued to manage working group membership and support the working groups through the creation of pages, forms, and other tools as requested. Support was provided for the webinars and informal discussions, including setting up event pages, sending event communications, and providing in-webinar technical support.

A new calendar page was added to bring new members to ASCN events and another page was added to help groups collaborate with ASCN. Two

groups utilized ASCN as a connection point: the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) and the Teaching Evaluation Collective (TEC). ASCN hosted and organized meetings that were advertised on the ASCN Web Space to bring more people into conversation about updates in evaluating quality teaching.

Curate Resources

Continued support was provided for the ASCN resource collection. This year the ASCN resource collection was redesigned to highlight key resources, such as the Change Dashboard, and limit barriers, such as high load times, for all resource pages. SERC worked with Working Group 6 to create a submission form for teaching evaluation resources that will be publicized in 2022.

Endorse Ideas

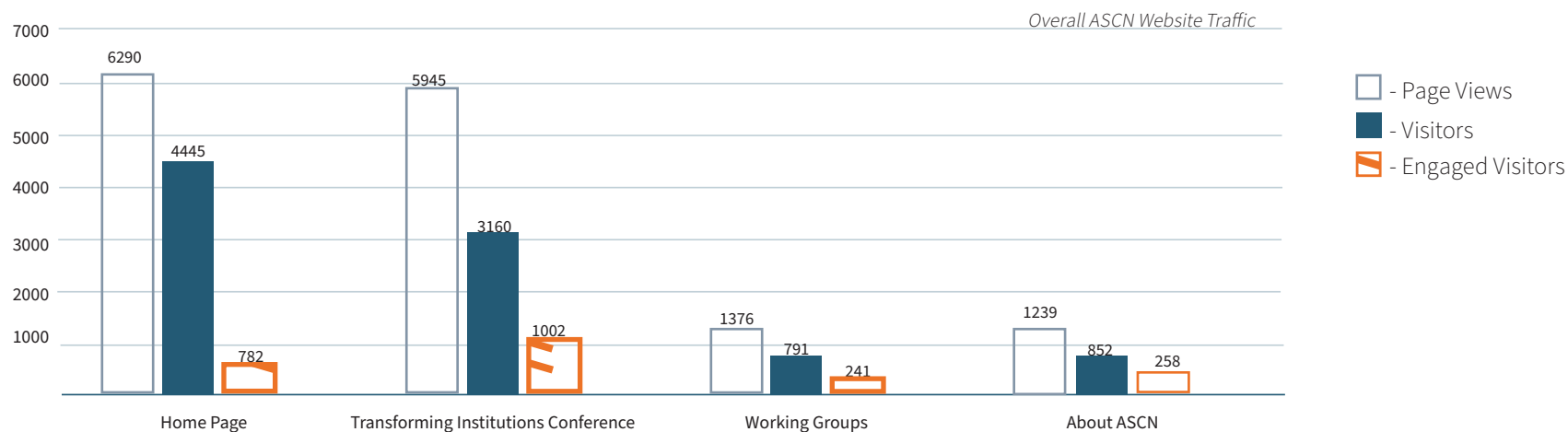
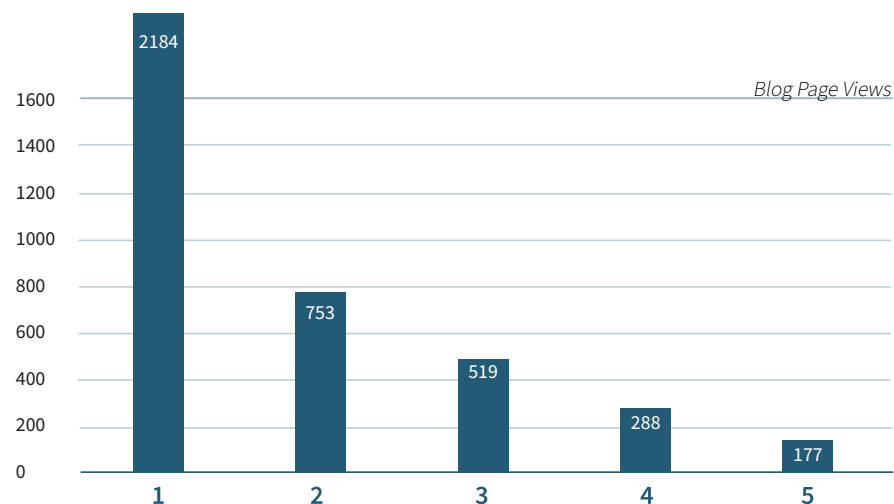
Continued support was provided for the ASCN blog, Systemic Change Institutes, and ASCN publications webpages. ASCN also endorsed ideas in monthly newsletters and on social media (see p. 17).



Top-Five Most Visited ASCN Blog Posts in 2021

(see p. 16)

1. Mark Connolly, "What Does Systemic Change Mean to You?" (February 1, 2017)
2. Naneh Apkarian & Kate White, "Start somewhere: Resources on equity and inclusion for STEM and higher education" (June 9, 2020)
3. Judith Ramaley, "Communicating and Collaborating Across Disciplines" (November 27, 2017)
4. Pat Marsteller, "How do we recruit, support, and retain diverse faculty? Reflections from our discussion series" (August 2, 2021)
5. Charles Henderson, "What Is Systemic Change?" (March 9, 2017)



Notes:

- *Page Views*: This is the number of times the page has been opened in any web browser.
- *Unique Visitors*: the number of different people who have viewed the webpage. This number is generally lower than the page view number because individuals often visit a page more than once.
- *Engaged Visitors*: This is the subset of the visitors who were on the page for at least 30 seconds or downloaded a file from the page. In general, this number does a better job of reflecting the number of people who interacted meaningfully with the page. For some pages (e.g. one that acts as a table of contents), a 15-second interaction may be meaningful.

ASCN Blog

The vision for the ASCN blog is to become a platform to engage scholars and practitioners, including those who are already involved with ASCN work, as well as the wider community of researchers and practitioners who are engaged in or supporting pedagogical, curricular, and culture change in higher education. The blog serves three purposes:

1. It informs stakeholders about the work of ASCN by providing updates from the working groups, highlights about resources on our site, information about our meetings and conferences, etc.
2. It disseminates knowledge and expertise of scholars and practitioners by encouraging guest posts that align with the vision of the ASCN, showing clear connection to our work, and contributing to learning and sharing knowledge or expertise.
3. It facilitates discussions about relevant frameworks, articles, books and tools that align with the vision and principles of ASCN.

The ASCN Blog is a place where ideas based on research and evidence are expressed in posts and comments and contribute to the development of new knowledge about change in higher education.

Contributors and Blog Highlights

The ASCN blog was started in December 2016. The blog currently has 50 posts; 10 were written in 2021.

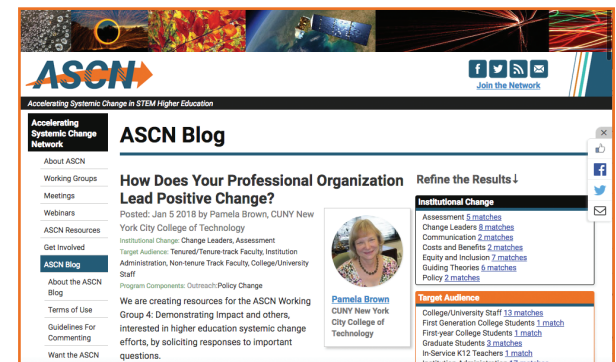
- In the spring, Joel Corbo, Courtney Ngai, Gina Quan, & Sarah Wise described key points from their webinar series. This included a post in January on the Departmental Action Team (DAT) model principles, a blog in February on starting an initiative, a post in March on engaging in departmental change, and one in April on sustaining departmental change.
- In April, Tessa Andrews and Daniel Reinholz wrote a post to entice researchers and practitioners to consider using change theories in their work and writing summaries to help other change agents.
- In June, Rachel Renbarger published a post reporting on the 2021 Transforming Institutions Conference. She provided highlights from the conference on the whole, including feedback from attendees.
- In August, Pat Marsteller summarized the key points for recruiting, supporting, and retaining diverse faculty from their spring informal discussion series.
- In August, Rachel Renbarger worked with SEISMIC project manager Nita Kedharnath to reflect on the organizational equity panel event and describe each organization's commitment to equity in the future. This post is titled "Building

Structural Equity: What do our organizations need?"

- In September, Rachel Renbarger worked with Christine Broussard, Pat Marsteller, and Madhura Kulkarni to create two blogs that reflect on the webinar co-hosted by working groups 3, 5, and 6. These are titled "Learning from Evaluation of Effective Teaching Event: Perspectives on Aligning Incentives" and "Learning from Evaluation of Effective Teaching Event: Change Leaders Perspectives."

Blog Views

Even though it was published in August, the 2021 post with the most views was the post by Pat Marsteller that summarized the key points from the informal discussion series on hiring and recruiting faculty members from diverse backgrounds.



Newsletter

ASCN News is a monthly, subscription based email newsletter. The newsletter provides a way to maintain contact with the ASCN community, including working group members and supporters.

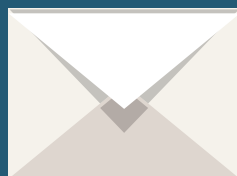
With the newsletter, we:

1. Communicate directly with ASCN members;
2. Provide updates from ASCN members, the working groups, and events;
3. Share new publications by ASCN members and articles and websites of interest to the ASCN community.

2021 in summary:

- We sent 9 ASCN newsletters, 3 Working Group 3 newsletters or reminders, 5 announcements about the Transforming Institutions Conference, and 4 other announcements about resources and events.
- Subscriptions rose from 500 to 671 between January and December.
- Our average open rate is 34.9%; the industry average is 17.4%.
- Our average click rate is 6%; the industry average is 1.6%.

671 December 2021
500 December 2020
445 December 2019
364 December 2018
225 December 2017



Mail List Reach

Social Media

Prior to 2021, ASCN used two social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter) to engage our community and to reach others interested systemic change in higher education. In 2021 our Twitter following grew from 195 to 359 users. On Facebook, our following grew from 136 to 164 users and we now have 146 people who “like” the page. Across both platforms, the most impressions and interactions occurred around announcements regarding the Transforming Institutions Conference.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ascnhighered>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ascnhighered>

At the 2021 Steering Committee, ASCN was encouraged to create a LinkedIn account to engage more community members. By the end of 2021, ASCN had 172 followers and 152 connections.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ascn/>



164 Followers
297 Posts
336 Highest Monthly
Reach

Facebook



172 Followers
152 Connections
35 Posts

LinkedIn



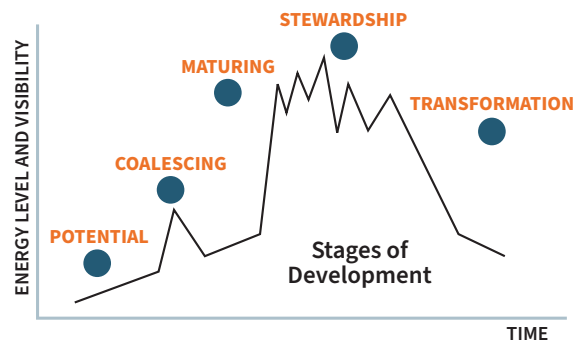
389 Followers
942 Tweets
13.4k Highest Monthly
Impressions

Twitter

Looking Ahead

This year was our second-to-last year of funding with a grant from the National Science Foundation for \$905,141. The award ends December 31, 2022. This five-year grant will support the infrastructure of the network, outreach and growth, as well as meetings and conferences. Kezar and Gehrke (2015) estimate that it takes Communities of Transformation (CoT's) five to seven years to develop a sustainability model. Progress toward sustainability for ASCN based on their findings is detailed in the project timeline below. The five typical phases of CoP/CoT development are Potential, Coalescing, Maturing, Stewardship, and Transformation.

ASCN is currently in the middle of the Maturing phase. In the five years of funding, the goal is to develop this community through the Maturing phase to the beginning of the Stewardship phase.



Project Timeline

Year 1: 2018 Summary

Goal: Increase Participation (Coalescing Phase)

During 2018, which was the fourth year of ASCN activity, we met our goal of increasing participation. However, we wanted to continue to grow the reach of the network in 2019. Our working groups continued to work together to address network goals and key questions. Some groups met more frequently than others, but all groups were engaged in a project as of December, 2018. Some developed deliverables (including critical resource lists, surveys, webinars, and newsletters) while others were in the planning stage of various projects. We continued to grow the ASCN online presence, by developing the website and our social media accounts. In 2019 we continued to improve our reach online and to engage more frequently with our members through the ASCN blog. We also continued to develop webinars, the ASCN newsletter, and other events. We surveyed our members about their involvement with ASCN and began to consider the future of the Network.

Year 2: 2019 Summary

Goal: Develop an identity (Maturing Phase)

At the 2019 Steering Committee Meeting in January, we set several action items for 2019 to work towards the goal of developing an identity:

1. *To determine who the audiences are for each working group*

Each working group discussed this topic in 2019 and it led to more careful consideration of possible projects each group could pursue.

2. *To grow and plan for more ASCN publications*

In 2019 we established a publications subcommittee and began work on the volume that builds on the work of the 2019 Transforming Institutions Conference. All submissions for this volume have been published as a book.

3. *To distribute a survey of members in fall 2019*

In fall 2019 we surveyed all members of ASCN about the value of the Network and our activities for them and their work. The results of this survey are provided on p. 8-9 of the 2019 annual report.

4. *To research possible future network models*

In 2019 we had several discussions with ASCN steering committee members and other experts about what forms ASCN could take in the future. These conversations are ongoing but we have begun to consider the future of the Network and sustainability beyond the grant period.

In 2019 we also held the third iteration of the Transforming Institutions Conference in April, which continues the work of the previous conferences and provides one avenue to sustainability for ASCN.

At the 2020 Steering Committee Meeting we focused on the results of the member survey and possible future directions for the Network, the future of working group 5 (Equity & Inclusion), and planned

the 2021 Transforming Institutions Conference.

Year 3: 2020 Summary

Goal: Build strong systems (Maturing Phase)

In 2020, we became more systematic about all aspects of network activities that are necessary as the network grows. This consisted of discussing a more formal organizational and leadership structure and the involvement of the diverse perspectives of all potential participants. This year involved more intensified discussions and planning for the network to become self-sustaining.

The steering committee and working groups continued their work; significant progress regarding addressing key questions and development of project deliverables was made through the publication of critical resource lists. We also published the volume building on the work from the Transforming Institutions Conference.

Year 4: 2021 Summary

Goal: Finalize plans for sustainability (Maturing Phase)

By funded year 4 (year 7 of ASCN activity), the community is expected to take responsibility for its own development. Based on the experiences of other networks (Kezar & Gehrke, 2015) it was unlikely that the network will be fully self-sustaining at this point. But, a 3-5 year plan for sustainability was expected to be in place, including plans for securing additional external funding. To accomplish this,

ASCN leadership applied for two NSF grants: one focused on adapting the systemic change institute model to improve racial equity and another focused on updating the review of systemic change literature. In addition members of ASCN leadership met to discuss funding models and consider potential funding options; these discussions will continue in and plans formalized in 2022. Outside of funding, we created a handbook for working group leaders to define aspects of the organization and systematize event planning. We also held the next Transforming Institutions Conference as anticipated.

Year 5: 2022

Goal: Enact plans for sustainability (Begin Stewardship Phase)

Funded year 5 (year 8 of ASCN activity) is the final year of NSF funding. Thus, the community will need to enact its sustainability plan and put the necessary structures in place for the network to continue successfully after the funding period. This may likely include finding additional funding and identifying other organizations for collaboration efforts. The ASCN leadership will deliver the results of the ASCN member survey to identify areas for growth and potential next steps. Additionally, the ASCN leadership will identify ASCN members who may act in leadership capacities in the next iteration of ASCN. The steering committee and working groups will continue their work and will have completed the development of key project deliverables.

References

- Kezar, A., and Gehrke, S. (2015). Communities of Transformation and their Work Towards Achieving Scale in STEM Reform. Los Angeles: Pullias Center for Higher Education. Retrieved from <http://www.uscrossier.org/pullias/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/communities-of-trans.pdf>.
- Wenger, E. (1999). Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity. Cambridge university press.

Building Structural Equity: National Networks' Role in Promoting Justice

[REGISTER
HERE](#)

MAY 11 • 3 TO 4:30 PM EDT
POST-EVENT WORKING SESSION TBA

Join our panelists as they discuss,
"What is the role of multi-institutional,
multidisciplinary, and national organizations in
promoting equity in higher education?"



**Tabbye
Chavous**

National Center
for Institutional
Diversity



**Elizabeth
Holcombe**

Pullias Center for
Higher Education,
University of
Southern California



**Stanley
Lo**

Society for the
Advancement of
Biology Education
Research



**Shirley
Malcom**

American
Association for
the Advancement
of Science



*Flyer for the organizational equity panel
co-hosted with SEISMIC*

Pathways Into and Through Higher Education

How we can move from imagining to
implementing the future of
undergraduate STEM education?



Yves Salomon-Fernandez



**Yves Salomon-Fernandez - President of Greenfield
Community College**



**Will Tyson - Associate Professor of Sociology, University
of South Florida**



**TRANSFORMING
INSTITUTIONS**

#TransformInstitutions2021

21

*Yves Salomon-Fernandez speaking on one of the
Transforming Institutions plenary conference panels*



ascnhighered.org



WESTERN MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY

**Center for Research on Instructional
Change in Postsecondary Education**

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo MI 49008-5288 USA
(269) 387-1707