

DAT Project Core Principles



STUDENTS ARE PARTNERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.

Students are empowered to make meaningful decisions about their education and to impact departmental decision-making around undergraduate education. Faculty and staff actively seek out student input on the departmental activities and structure on an ongoing basis. Students see themselves as having a say in how departmental decisions are made. There is continuous student involvement to meet the needs of the current student population.



WORK FOCUSES ON ACHIEVING COLLECTIVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES.

Department members use a shared vision to guide work aimed at achieving change. The process of developing the department's vision includes a diversity of relevant stakeholders. Focusing work around outcomes of the long-term vision, rather than immediate problems, allows the group to be more creative, cooperative, and flexible.



DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION INFORM DECISION-MAKING.

The department collects multiple forms of evidence about undergraduate education (e.g., institutional data, research literature) on an ongoing basis. Department members actively identify and avoid bias in interpreting data by distinguishing observation from inference, developing multiple interpretations of the same data set, considering both systemic and individual factors, and working toward individuals' cultural proficiency and understanding of others' perspectives. These interpretations, rather than personal preferences or idiosyncratic anecdotes, are what drive decision-making.





COLLABORATION AMONG GROUP MEMBERS IS ENJOYABLE, PRODUCTIVE, AND REWARDING.

All members of the department are collaborators with equal access to contributing to decision-making. The department develops community through activities such as eating together and having celebrations. Members of the department interact with one another in functional and productive ways.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IS AN UPHELD PRACTICE.

Department members view change as an ongoing process rather than an event (e.g., they recognize that complex problems do not simply stay solved on their own). Department members regularly reflect on how the department can be improved and explicitly attend to long-term sustainability when making changes to the department. Incremental accomplishments are incorporated into the change process to support internal momentum and communicate success to maintain external support.



WORK IS GROUNDED IN A COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Department members recognize the existence of systemic oppressive power structures, so they actively mitigate power imbalances and work to create anti-oppressive structures. Department members consider the impact of their decisions on underrepresented populations. Department members feel a sense of individual responsibility toward improving inclusion in the department. The department intentionally recruits a diverse membership.

