



The Faculty Academy (2002-Present)

The Faculty Academy as an Invisible College:

Beyond Mentors and Collaborators to Accelerators

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Collaborative Hosts Final Event of the Year: Faculty Academy “Invisible College” Zoom Session

The Collaborative hosted its final event of the year—the Faculty Academy “Invisible College” Zoom Session—on Monday, May 5 at 6:30 PM. More than 40 participants joined from across the United States and from China, Kenya, and Pakistan. Framed as a small-c “invisible college,” the session brought together teacher-education faculty from eight universities to explore how informal, cross-institutional networks sustain scholarly resilience.

Dr. Cheryl Craig (Texas A&M University) opened by tracing the concept’s roots in eighteenth-century scholar gatherings that led to the Royal College of London. She then described the modern Faculty Academy—an unaffiliated group founded to advance post-desegregation teaching research—highlighting its recent presentation to the capital-C “Invisible College” and this year’s Division K symposium at AERA.

Representatives from Texas A&M University (Craig; Gayle Curtis); University of Houston–Clear Lake (Kent Divoll; Diana Wandix-White; Omah Duncan; Jane McIntosh Cooper; Mary Curtis; Leslie Gauna; Sheila Baker; Carol Waters); Mount St. Joseph University (Michaelann Kelley); University of Houston (Karla Garza; Karen McIntush; Paige Evans; Donna Stokes); University of Houston–Downtown (Bernardo Pohl); Nevada State University (Christine Beaudry); St. Thomas University (Jean Keikel; Anne Gichuri); and University of Louisiana Monroe (Sandy Watson) each shared how the Academy’s regular check-ins, resource-sharing, and conferring calls helped them navigate project setbacks, departmental isolation, and personal challenges.

Several presenters became emotional as they recounted moments when a simple message of support—or a timely methodological suggestion—made all the difference.

Dr. James O’Maera, Dean of Texas A&M International, served as discussant. He praised the Academy’s blend of intellectual rigor and mutual care, noting that such networks are essential for fostering innovation and faculty well-being.

By the session’s end, participants agreed that the Faculty Academy model offers a powerful blueprint for sustaining scholarly communities across geographic and disciplinary boundaries. As Dr. Craig concluded, “In today’s fast-paced academy, our invisible college proves that mutual support and open dialogue are not just enriching—they are essential.”

