University of Florida
Certified Instructional Coaching
The University of Florida offers schools a powerful program for developing highly effective teachers who boost student achievement. The UF Certified Instructional Coaching program is developing leaders throughout Florida who master the art and science of teaching and work effectively with their peers. The program draws on the latest research and evidence-based practice from Marzano, Danielson, Common Core Standards and frameworks of effective teaching and leadership, collaborative coaching and e-learning breakthroughs.

Making the school a learning laboratory, this cost-effective, efficient program builds districts’ capacity for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. UF works closely with school systems to develop a strong cadre of Certified Instructional Coaches who play a pivotal role in actualizing the Florida Student Success Act and make a strong, measureable impact on teacher practice and student learning.
Principles and Structures

Successful completion of the UF Certified Instructional Coaching program provides certification in implementing coaching tools, skills and strategies aimed at enhancing collaborative curriculum development, instructional strategy implementation, teacher reviews of student work and authentic applied student learning. The certification program is the starting point for continuous learning and skill refinement.

Upon completing the UF Certified Instructional Coaching program, coaches continue to expand and refine their skills by coaching other teachers, attending particularly to practices included in the district observation and teacher evaluation system, using resources provided in the program and accessing follow-up learning opportunities offered by UF.

This coaching initiative embodies the following principles and structures closely aligned with adult learning principles:

- Building learning partnerships and Communities of Practice within and across schools.
- Promoting collaborative learning and problem solving.
- Employing research-based design and implementation practices.
- Designing job-embedded learning to improve individual and group practice.
- Cultivating an inquiry stance that energizes and engages teachers while generating meaningful data to inform practice changes.
- Using structured dialogue to analyze professional literature, design and plan lessons and solve complex practice problems.
- Providing an online platform for community building, resource sharing and distance learning.
- Modeling public sharing of practice to inform and inspire colleagues.
- Deep content knowledge is fundamental to strong teaching. Participants should possess strong content knowledge in their academic areas.
- Instructional coaching is most effective as a collaboration based on shared learning, the development of which involves tools, skills and strategies that coaches-in-training learn, practice and implement.
Outcomes

- Highly skilled coaches who guide teachers in improving their practice, collaborating with their peers and boosting student learning.

- A sustainable coaching system that embeds professional development into the daily lives of teachers, who seamlessly apply what they learn about curriculum, content, the Common Core and other concepts in their classrooms.

- Communities of Practice that support curriculum integration, shared lesson design, collaborative student-work review and peer observation, all focused on upgrading teaching and learning.

- Substantially improved instruction and student achievement.
Program Components

UF works with districts around Florida to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement by providing teachers with collaborative peer coaching tools and a rigorous field practicum in instructional coaching.

Here are the main components of the UF Certified Instructional Coach program:

**Intensive Induction Into Coaching:** During a four-day immersion facilitated by UF professors and experts, participants develop an understanding of the frameworks of effective teaching, review the core philosophy and design components of strong instruction and reflect on their practice. They also learn the philosophy and mechanics of collaborative peer coaching, learn strategies for supporting new teachers and plan to engage colleagues in productive coaching relationships.

**Coaching Practicum and Symposia:** They coach each other on “effective coaching” as they coach one or two colleagues in effective instruction. As their coaching efficacy increases, they widen their circle by recruiting colleagues to Communities of Practice, reciprocal observation and coaching conversations. As participants engage in coaching through the practicum they simultaneously attend six interactive half-day sessions with their district-based UF Coach-in-Residence and/or Professor-in-Residence. (UF coordinates the dates with the district calendar and cohort participants’ schedules.) In these sessions, teachers utilize an inquiry approach to identify focus areas for coaching. The UF Coach-in-Residence and Professor-in-Residence provide support and constructive feedback to participants who develop their skills in data collection, collaborative planning and analysis, peer coaching conference conversation and Community of Practice development.

**Principal Forum:** UF staff members lead a two-day induction for administrators whose teachers participate in the UF Certified Instructional Coach program. Principals explore the role of the school leadership team in supporting the emerging coaches. They learn how highly effective coaches play a pivotal role in actualizing the vision articulated by the Florida Student Success Act. UF also provides continuing support to the school leadership team through an online platform.

**Communities of Practice:** Participants establish Communities of Practice on a user-friendly, interactive website. They work with colleagues across multiple school sites to analyze and review their evolving coaching skills.
Performance Review: Participants produce video clips of classroom practice and coaching conversations. They review the clips with their partner and the UF Coach-in-Residence and/or Professor-in-Residence.

Online Coaching Resource Center: Participants utilize the online platform to upload videos for analysis and download resources. They access the online platform for learning and cohort development.

Portfolio Documentation and Certification: Participants document their development in an electronic portfolio consisting of written reflections, video clips and coaching conversation reports. UF staff members review the portfolios and award successful program completers the UF Certified Instructional Coach certificate.
Traditional Coaching vs. The UF Coaching Model

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<th>Clearly Defined Role of Coach</th>
<th>Traditional Coaching</th>
<th>The UF Coaching Model</th>
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<td>The role of the coach is rarely clearly defined. Coaches are being utilized as administrators and evaluators with little time to support teachers.</td>
<td>Collaborating with district and school administrators, as well as the coaches, we clearly define the role of the coach. Coaches participate in a yearlong professional development module to develop their expertise. This enables them to transition from evaluator to a collaborative coach who supports teacher development to boost student achievement. “To facilitate learning, coaches must take off the expert hat, asking rather than telling, in order to assist teachers to adapt recommendations and find their own best way forward. Authentic coaching puts teachers at the center of their professional learning. They own the process. They’re animated, energized—and in charge” (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Tschannen-Moran, 2011, p. 15).</td>
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| Coaches vs. Content Experts | Coaches are chosen because they’re effective teachers or content experts. Many coaches attend trainings in their content area of expertise but have little to no training in the art of coaching. Coaching then becomes the “experts” coming into the room to impart their knowledge on the teacher rather than the coach and teacher working together. | Coaching is about building relationships and helping teachers surface their existing needs. The coach and teacher should collaborate to help the teacher to improve. The coach must take the time to develop relationships and empower the teacher to want to change their practice. Trained UF facilitators work with coaches to develop the essential skills necessary to work with all teachers. Effective coaching focuses on using relationships with teachers for planning and lesson design, content knowledge development, pedagogy, classroom management and culture, and assessment (Knight, 2009, 2007; Gottman, 2001). Through trusting relationships with colleagues, coaches help build a culture of collaboration and shared learning that strengthens a faculty's collective efficacy—a shared belief that students can be successful and that teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to help students achieve. Collaborative peer coaching takes “teachers out of isolation and into a relationship that provides support as well as pressure to learn, grow, change and evolve … in response to student needs” (Dana, Thomas & Boynton, 2011, P. 125). |

| Evaluation and Support for Teachers | With new accountability measures in place, many teachers receive long lists of areas of improvement but little effective support to make those improvements. Even the “lucky” teachers who attend training sessions face the prospect of having to implement the “solutions” to their struggles with little follow-up before their next evaluation. | Coaches play an integral part in helping teachers improve their practice. An effective coach works alongside teachers to empower them to change their practice. Utilizing inquiry, the UF Coaching model helps teachers to identify areas of improvement—and make those improvements. The UF Certified Coach helps the teacher collect data around the identified area and collaborates on effective strategies to improve the teacher’s practice. The coach follows up, empowering the teacher to continue improving and reflecting on her practice. Coaching increases teachers’ confidence in their ability to increase student learning (Edwards & Green, 1999). |
# The UF Coaching Model

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<td>Professional development is often referred to as &quot;sit and get&quot; – educators typically convene in a large room to hear an expert deliver a lecture. They are then expected to implement it with little or no follow-up or support. Research has proven that this type of professional development rarely translates into change in practice.</td>
<td>Through its job-embedded model, UF works with coaches to develop skills for delivering effective professional development and enabling the coaches to provide structures for teachers to collaborate and receive support. UF utilizes research-based adult learning principles to teach coaches about adults learning. This enables the coaches to more effectively deliver professional development to teachers. Instructional coaching increases new learning among teachers. Teachers who receive professional development plus follow-up implement the new learning quicker and at a much higher rate than teachers who receive no professional develop follow up (Fullan &amp; Knight, 2007; Knight, 2007; Showers, Joyce &amp; Bennett, 1987). The UF coaching module begins with a four-day summer institute during which the participants receive art-of-coaching training. After the summer institute, participants participate in six follow-ups sessions designed to allow them to practice their coaching skills and receive extensive feedback. Coaches videotape themselves in coaching conversations and receive feedback from their peers as well as UF staff members.</td>
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| Coaching Impact on School Culture | Many schools utilize coaches as evaluators or “experts” who come into the classroom to give teachers a list of tasks. In many instances, this causes a lack of trust between coaches and teachers. This can have a negative impact on the school culture in general and lead to teachers shutting their doors to visitors. This isolation negatively impacts student learning. | In the UF model, the coach constantly collaborates with colleagues to build trust and help teachers improve on self-identified areas of concern. This collaborative approach empowers the teachers and makes the school a learning lab. Besides individual relationships, the coaches help develop Communities of Practice to encourage teacher collaboration. These learning communities have the potential to increase the collective efficacy of an entire faculty. Findings suggest that, in some urban districts, collective perceptions of faculty capability were predictive of the differences among schools in the perceptions that teachers held of their own self-capability (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). |

| Teacher Practice/Teacher Quality | Teachers’ evaluations play a big part in teacher pay and promotion. Although teachers are rated based on their district-adopted system, little has been developed to meet teacher needs and improve teacher quality. Teachers attend “one-size fits all” professional development. Teachers have more and more evaluators coming through their classrooms to tell them how to improve. But teachers lack the follow-up to help them improve based on their individual evaluations. | UF takes a partnership approach. The coaching cycle begins with an interview where the teachers identify areas of improvements. The coach then collects data for the teacher. Together, they examine the data. This leads to professional development designed to meet the teachers’ individual needs. This leads to professional development designed to meet the teachers’ individual needs, which improves teacher quality. |

| Student Achievement | To improve student achievement, schools often analyze student data and identify areas of intervention. This often leads to interventions to improve student achievement but seldom ends in long-term changes in teacher practice. | The UF coaching model emphasizes teacher reflection and discovery so that teachers identify issues in their practice and implement effective strategies to improve instruction and, therefore, student achievement. In this model, the coach is a partner who provides space for teacher reflection as well as captures what is happening in the classroom based on teacher needs. In this model, analyzing student data leads to student learning gains. |
Research: Coaching Improves Teacher Performance and Student Learning

The research evidence is strong: High-quality instructional coaching improves teacher practice and student learning. Research findings indicate that instructional coaching of teachers has a positive impact on teacher efficacy, collective faculty efficacy, teacher classroom practice and, most important, student achievement. Here’s a sample of…

- **Student achievement**: Multiple studies indicate that effective coaching increases the transfer of skills into the classroom (Truesdale, 2003; Baker, 1983; Showers, 1983). The quality of instruction students receive affects their academic performance. Teacher quality is often considered the most important variable in student achievement. (Knight, 2009; Wenglinsky, 2000).
• **Teacher practice:** Teachers who receive professional development plus follow-up coaching implement the new learning in their classrooms quicker and at a much higher rate than teachers who receive only professional development with no follow-up coaching (Fullan & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2007; Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987). Furthermore, standalone professional development with no coaching follow up has little or no impact on teacher practice.

• **Teacher efficacy:** Coaching, especially cognitive coaching, increases teachers’ confidence in their ability to increase student learning (Edwards & Green, 1999). Teachers who receive “feedback that highlights effective teaching behaviors while providing constructive and specific suggestions for ways to improve” have a high sense of self-efficacy (Protheroe, 2008, P. 43).

• **Collective efficacy:** Coaching has the potential to increase the collective efficacy of an entire faculty. Findings suggest that, in some urban districts, collective perceptions of faculty capability were predictive of the differences among schools in the perceptions that teachers held of their own self-capability (Goddard & Goddard, 2001).

• **Teacher attitudes:** Research in this area is limited but preliminary studies indicate that teachers who receive instructional coaching have greater job satisfaction than teachers who do not receive coaching (Edwards, Green, Lyons, Rogers & Sword, 1998).

• **Collaborative Coaching:** Effective coaching focuses on using relationships with teachers for planning and lesson design, content knowledge development, pedagogy, classroom management and culture, and assessment (Knight, 2009, 2007; Gottman, 2001). Through trusting relationships with colleagues, coaches can help build a culture of collaboration and shared learning that strengthens a faculty’s collective efficacy – a shared belief that students can be successful and that teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to help students achieve. Collaborative peer coaching takes “teachers out of isolation and into a relationship that provides support as well as pressure to learn, grow, change and evolve … in response to student needs” (Dana, Thomas & Boynton, 2011, P. 125). According to Killion (2009) there are two principal benefits to collaborative, job-embedded coaching — during the coaching process, “every school community engages in ongoing, ruthless analysis of data and continuous cycles of improvement that allow its members to measure results in a matter of weeks, not months or years” (P. 27).
An education innovation incubator, the Lastinger Center for Learning harnesses the University of Florida’s intellectual resources to partner with school districts, philanthropies, governmental entities and the private sector to research, design, build and field-test models that transform teaching, improve learning and promote healthy child development.

Housed at the UF College of Education, the Lastinger Center blends the latest research with best practices to build award-winning learning systems. It won the US Department of Education’s 2011 Investing in Innovation (i3) grant, the 2011 Florida Association for Staff Development’s award for the state’s top professional development program, and the Association of Teacher Educators’ 2011 award for the country’s top teacher education partnership program.

The Lastinger Center builds practical, effective programs that advance teacher quality and student learning, focusing on early childhood learning, pre-K-12 education and e-learning. Developing programs and initiatives that mobilize communities and improve child well-being, the Lastinger Center seeks scalable opportunities to affect public policy and educational practice.

In addition to the UF Certified Instructional Coaching program, the Lastinger Center’s innovations include Algebra Nation, Early Learning Florida, the Master Teacher Initiative and STEM projects, among others.

For more information, please visit lastingercenter.com, call 352-273-4103 or email dpemberton@coe.ufl.edu