

What SFIGs Do:

- Create professional communities in which educators can share what happens in classrooms and on campus
- Articulate and negotiate the most important outcomes for student learning
- Use the tools of classroom research to understand the experience of students more deeply
- Share insights and findings
- Examine a wide range of evidence, from examples of student work to campus-level quantitative data that describes patterns of student performance
- Invite, and offer, critical reflection and peer review
- Collaborate in the design of curricula, assignments, and assessments
- Build trust as an essential component of ongoing improvement
- Support professional identity and responsibility among educators and professional staff

Designing an Inquiry Plan



The most important feature of any plan for a classroom inquiry is that it is achievable. Too often and too easily faculty set off with grand plans and complicated evidence-gathering ideas only to feel overwhelmed early on. When designing an inquiry plan, either alone or in the context of a faculty inquiry group, consider the five following ideas:

1. Focus first on evidence that you can gather from the course of your own teaching and everyday practice.
2. Often, the best inquiry plan centers on being intentional with work you're already doing. If your inquiry plan involves going outside the boundaries of your teaching—collecting video think aloud data for example—then find collaborators.
3. Although you may have many questions about student learning, and want to focus on many aspects of a target course, stay focused on a single important issue of student learning. Everything seems important when you're swimming in the middle of your own teaching.
4. An important feature of any inquiry plan is the clarity of the question and match between the question and the evidence.
5. Expect that your plan will change. Be open to surprises that will lead you in different directions.



[Erich Holtman \(Los Medanos\) discusses how an inquiry plan arose out of a Faculty Inquiry Group.](#)

Homework: REFLECTION PROMPT: **How would you describe your inquiry plan to a colleague? What aspect of your plan are you least sure about?**

Send me your answers via email if possible

Source: The Carnegie Foundation for Teaching and Learning. <http://spectoolkit.carnegiefoundation.org/how-figs-work/>