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The Value of a Teaching and Learning Center for Faculty Development

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Agenda

- Evolution of Faculty Development
- Snapshot of Faculty Development as Currently Practiced
- Highlights from a U.S. Teaching Center
Definition

“Faculty Development is both a comprehensive term that covers a wide range of activities ultimately designed to improve student learning and a less broad term that describes a purposeful attempt to help faculty improve their competence as teachers and scholars.”

- Eble & McKeachie (1985)
The Evolution of Faculty Development: The Five Ages

“I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know no way of judging of the future but by the past.”

- Patrick Henry
The Age of the Scholar: 1960s and prior

- Faculty development for advancement of scholarly competence
- Informal, uncoordinated, few measures of outcomes
- First teaching centers open in U.S. reflecting an emerging interest in improving teaching
The Age of the Teacher: 1970s

- Field expands to include faculty, instructional, organizational development - primary focus on teaching

- Foundation support spurs growth of centers - few studies of impact

- Faculty development gains professional identity – POD Network in Higher Ed founded
The Age of the Developer: 1980s

- Multidimensional: different career/life stages; curricular issues; individual to faculty communities
- Programs supported by institutional as well as foundation funds
- Interest in measurable outcomes of teaching, of faculty development efforts
- Canada's STLHE founded
The Age of the Learner: 
1990s

- More centers - issues, complexity, scope expand
- Multiple venues for faculty development - educational associations, foundations, disciplinary societies
- Faculty development as key to educational excellence - Theodore M. Hesburgh Award
- Globalization of faculty development, e.g., ICED
The Age of the Network: The 21st Century
Evolution of the Field from…

- A focus on individual to collective development
- Singular to multidimensional purposes
- Uncoordinated activities to centralized units
- Few to more measures of impact
- “Soft” funding to “firm” institutional support
- A small network of developers to a global faculty development profession
Study of North American Faculty Developers

- Completed survey from 494 faculty developers at 300 U.S. institutions and 31 Canadian institutions (POD Network members)

- Overall response rate: 50% (M: 39%, W: 61%)

- Institutional type: Res/doctoral, 44%; Comprehensives, 23%; Liberal arts, 11%; Community colleges, 9%; Canadian colleges and universities, 8%

Structures of Faculty Development

- Centralized unit with dedicated staff (54%)
- Individual faculty member or administrator (19%)
- Committee that supports faculty development (12%)
- Clearinghouse for programs and offerings (4%)
- Other structures (e.g., system-wide offices) (11%)
Top Three Goals Guiding Teaching Centers

- Creating or sustaining a culture of teaching excellence (72%)
- Responding to individual faculty members’ needs (56%)
- Advancing new initiatives in teaching and learning (49%)
Seven Issues Most Important to Address and Currently Addressed

- Teaching for student-centered learning (3.69)
- Development of new faculty (3.60)
- Integrating technology into “traditional” teaching and learning (3.51)
- Active, inquiry-based, or problem-based learning (3.51)
- Assessment of student learning outcomes (3.43)
- Multiculturalism and diversity related to teaching (3.36)
- Scholarship of Teaching (3.28)

Respondents used a 4-point scale (1= not at all; 2= to a slight extent; 3= to a moderate extent; 4=to a great extent)
“Faculty development should be preparing faculty to think differently about teaching—to enable them to move away from primarily lecture (dispensing knowledge) to a learning orientation (facilitating student learning).”

- Faculty Developer,
  Liberal Arts College
New Faculty Development

“With high numbers of retirements, faculty development should focus on the new generation of faculty. If these new faculty can be assisted to develop a culture of teaching and learning that is student centered, then there is great hope for the future.”

– Program Coordinator,
Research/Doctoral Institution
Integrating Technology into Teaching and Learning

“Faculty development should support the instructor’s appropriate, effective, and innovative use of evolving, mainstream instructional technology tools that support students wherever they are—be it in the classroom, on campus, in transit, at home, or at work.”

– Director, Community College
Active, Inquiry-based, Problem-based Learning

“Much remains to be done to engage students in their own education—be it active, problem-based, inquiry, or other instructional approaches that lead to better learning.”

– Director,
Research/Doctoral Institution
Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

“Faculty development will need to be better grounded in assessment literature and practice. We need to incorporate assessment into our classrooms to better understand the impact of our teaching on student learning.”

– Senior administrator, Research/Doctoral Institution
Multiculturalism and Diversity

“We should help faculty gain the knowledge and skills necessary to engage students in productive dialogue about race, ethnicity, religion, and gender. This will help prepare students for life and work in a culturally diverse environment.”

– Director,
Liberal Arts College
Scholarship of Teaching

“We should encourage teachers to study the processes of teaching and student learning in their own classrooms and to apply the results to their practice.

– Faculty Member,
Research/Doctoral Institution
The Value of a Teaching Center

- Addresses needs and interests of entire academic community in support of education of students
- Advances new initiatives in teaching and learning
- Serves as convener to foster collegial dialogue and showcase expertise
- Assures confidentiality to individual instructors—develop vs. evaluate
- Key to creating a campus culture that values and rewards teaching
Center for Teaching (CFT) Services

- Consultations for individual instructors
- University-wide orientations/workshops
- Intensive, year-long “learning communities”
- Grants for individuals
- University and college teaching awards
- Resources and publications
- Specialized services for departments
CFT Learning Communities

New Faculty:  
*Lilly Teaching Fellowship Program*

“The Lilly Program is particularly effective because it recruits young energetic professors to form an extraordinary learning community and to become advocates for good teaching within and beyond their departments.”

Multiculturalism:  
*Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom*

“TLDC helped us to improve our courses and the teaching of them, and to affect the lives of our students—in all of their social and cultural diversity.”
CFT Learning Communities

Technology: 
TEACHnology Senior Fellows

“The TEACHnology Fellowship pushed me to invest in a new level of reflection about teaching and learning. It elevated my use of technology in the classroom and demystified this innovative movement.”

Assessment: 
Mid-Term Assessment Program (MAP)

“This process has made me realize that teaching is only worthwhile if it results in learning and that understanding the point of view of students in the classroom can result in more effective teaching.”
Recognition of CFT

- One of the top four Model Faculty Development Programs in the U.S. and Canada (2006)
- Outstanding Lilly Teaching Fellows Program (2003)
- 2002 Innovation Award from the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network (2002)
- National Hesburgh Award for Faculty Development to Enhance Undergraduate Teaching and Learning (2000)
References

- Center For Teaching, University of Massachusetts Amherst. [http://www.umass.edu/cft](http://www.umass.edu/cft)

