

Improving Teaching and Learning: Faculty, Academic Leaders and Faculty Developers as Partners

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Global Challenges, College Teaching, and
America's Promise

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Guiding Questions

- What is Meant by Faculty Development?
- What Are Common Structures, Goals and Practices?
- How to Start or Sustain: What To Do *and* Avoid?
- How to Build Partnerships Among Faculty, Academic Leaders and Faculty Developers?

Getting Started

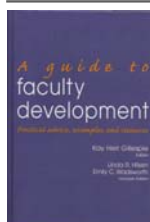
- How do you define faculty development at your institution? What does it mean in faculty culture and conversations?

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)

Key Resources



Ten Principles of Good Practice in Creating
and Sustaining Teaching and Learning Centers

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A Portrait of Current Faculty
Development: Personnel and Programs

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%)

(Sorcinelli, et. al., 2006)

Top Three Goals Guiding 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%)

(Sorcinelli, et. al., 2006)

Current and Future Challenges

- **Changing Professoriate:** learning new roles; balancing and integrating roles; mentoring new, diverse, *part-time faculty*; *academic leadership training (chairs)*
- **Changing Student Body:** teaching diverse, multicultural students; *underprepared students*
- **Changing Nature of Teaching, Learning, Scholarship:** teaching for student-centered learning; integrating technology; assessing learning outcomes; *building interdisciplinary (and global) communities*

Sorcinelli, et.al, 2006

Principles of Good Practice

1. Build stakeholders by listening to all perspectives
2. Ensure effective program leadership and management
3. Emphasize faculty ownership
4. Cultivate administrative commitment
5. Develop guiding principles and clear goals
6. Strategically place center within your organizational structure
7. Offer a range of opportunities but lead with strengths

Principles of Good Practice

8. Encourage collegiality and community
9. Highlight innovation, not remediation
10. Provide discipline-based approaches and work directly with departments/schools/colleges
11. Create partnerships with other units and initiatives (e.g., graduate school, writing program)
12. Gather data to assess needs and evaluate the work of the center
13. Provide institutional recognition and reward

(Sorcinelli, 2002)

It Is Often a Mistake To:

1. Think little is known about how to improve teaching and learning
2. Take your finger off the pulse of the faculty
3. Ignore or overlook institutional context or needs
4. Assume that teaching awards or mini-grants are enough
5. Start off too slowly

It Is Often a Mistake To:

6. Take on too much—"mission creep"
7. Reinvent the wheel
8. Pay inadequate attention to program quality
9. Expect that most faculty will participate
10. Rely on external funding

(Eison & Sorcinelli, 1999)

Strengthening Partnerships

Directions: Working at your table, discuss ways to strengthen partnerships between faculty development centers and:

- Faculty Members
- Department Chairpersons
- Academic Deans
- Campus-level Administrators and Directors

At the end of the discussion, each group should be ready to report out *one or two* "best ideas."

Partnerships with Faculty

- Provide special programs for new faculty (e.g., orientations, midterm student feedback, mentoring)
- Work with faculty who want guidance and funding for focused projects (e.g., SoTL, General Education)
- Create an advisory board of campus opinion leaders to guide center policies and programs

Partnerships with Department Chairs

- Conduct departmental focus groups to identify instructional and broader faculty development needs
- Offer customized, faculty-driven teaching development programs within departments
- Develop workshops for department chairs

Partnerships with Deans

- Make occasional presentations to the Deans' Council
- Consult with Deans on ways to partner/expand college-level faculty development opportunities
- Assist Deans with curricular reform efforts

Partnerships with Campus Administrators

- Ask administrators to make welcoming remarks at center programs, stay to show their support, and meet informally with faculty participants at the conclusion of major events
- Prepare an annual report synthesizing outcomes of center activities
- When naming new awards or initiatives, recognize administrators who have supported the programs

Value of a Teaching & Learning Center

- Addresses needs and interests of entire academic community in support of education of students
- Advances "leading-edge" issues in teaching, learning, faculty development
- Fosters collegial dialogue within and across disciplines and career stages
- Builds feedback and assessment "loops"—self, peer, and student

Value of Teaching & Learning Centers

- Informs professional preparation, growth, and practice based on scholarship
- Key to creating a campus culture that values and rewards teaching
- Serves as a campus liaison to national agency and foundation projects on teaching, learning and faculty development

For More Information



www.crlt.umich.edu



www.umass.edu/ofd

References

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