

Faculty Collaboration as Faculty Development

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Agenda

- ✦ A few questions to think about
- ✦ A few attempts at definitions
- ✦ Two collaborative projects
- ✦ Discussion/Q&A

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A Few Questions for A Few Moments of Reflection

- ✦ What is *faculty collaboration*?
What forms can it take?
- ✦ What is *faculty development*?
What forms can it take?

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A Few Attempts at Definitions: “Collaboration”

- ✦ **working in combination towards a unified action (Cameron, 1984)**
- ✦ **laboring with others, cooperating, blending oneself in a group (Keohane, 1985)**
- ✦ **a process of functional interdependence to coordinate skills, tools, rewards (Patel, 1973)**

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adapted from Austin and Baldwin, 1991

A Few Attempts at Definitions: “Collaboration”

- ✦ **cooperative endeavor that involves common goals, coordinated effort, and outcomes or products for which collaborators share responsibility and credit (Austin and Baldwin, 1991)**

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A Few Attempts at Definitions: “Faculty Development”

Programs that focus on the faculty member as:

- ✦ **teacher (class organization, evaluation, and presentation skills; advising; tutoring, etc.)**
 - ✦ **scholar and professional (career planning; grant writing, publishing; committee and administrative work, etc.)**
 - ✦ **person (wellness, stress, and time management; interpersonal skills, etc.)**
- (POD Network)**

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A Few Attempts at Definitions: “Faculty Development”

**“includes formal and informal means of helping teachers not only learn new skills, but also develop new insights into pedagogy and their own practice, and explore new or advanced understandings of content and resources.”
(Grant, 1996)**

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Two Collaborative Projects

Sharing Cultures

(Columbia College Chicago and
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University)

New Millennium Studies: The First-Year Seminar Teaching Academy

(Columbia College Chicago)

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Aspects of Each Collaborative Project

- ✦ **Project: what it is**
- ✦ **Participants: who is involved**
- ✦ **Support and sustainability**
 - of the project
 - of the collaboration itself
- ✦ **Where is the development?**

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Project: Sharing Cultures

Sharing Cultures Goals

- Provide 'under-empowered' students with the verbal, technological, and cultural competencies to succeed both academically and beyond the classroom;
- Leverage the Internet and digital technology to provide international learning experiences for students who do not have the means to participate in traditional exchange programs, and to create an online space in which students and teachers from vastly different backgrounds share diverse perspectives, experiences, and beliefs; and
- Collaboratively develop innovative, cross-cultural pedagogical models for successful post-secondary teaching practice that promotes students' individual academic and personal development, while fostering greater engagement among both students and faculty in 21st-century issues of global citizenship.



Project: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

New Millennium Studies: The First-Year Seminar

- required of all first-year students
- connects liberal learning with creative practice in arts and media
- variety of texts, big questions
- portfolio model of assessment
- faculty drawn from all Columbia College departments
- not team-taught; instructors have individual sections



Project: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

Three Primary Goals

- support adjunct and full-time faculty from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, and with varying levels of teaching experience
- ensure consistency of approach and goals in multi-section first-year seminar
- support curricular innovation, development, and assessment



Project: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

Process

- large-group meetings (twice per semester)
- small-group meetings (for new members)
- two-day summer retreat



Participants: Sharing Cultures

- intermural (multiple institutions), intradisciplinary (English faculty)
- Collaboratively written article in KAIROS: <http://english.ttu.edu/Kairos/10.2/binder2.html?coverweb/blum-malley/index.html>



Participants: Sharing Cultures

Technological/Pedagogical Changes Made at Columbia College

- Found an online LMS (Blackboard and not Columbia's own Oasis) that was accessible—therefore hospitable—to both parties
- Lengthened the class period so students could do most of their posting in class
- Began to recognize the ways that the South Africans wanted a kind of personal connection that the Americans did not usually engage in online
- Understood how the distance and political pressures affected the speed with which the South Africans would respond—in class and on our listserv—and became less demanding of the timeline.



Participants: Sharing Cultures

Technological/Pedagogical Changes Made at UPE/NMMU

- Provided "at-risk" students with the "good" internet access—a step above what is usually available to them and then even upgraded that access
- Hired two lab techs to help students
- Shifted ideas regarding the online email exchange—pen-pal style—to accommodate US students who were less eager to engage in such communication



Participants: Sharing Cultures

Technological/Pedagogical Changes Made Together

- Established regular communication in the way of phone conferencing and a listserv exchange which would come to include incorporating theoretical discussion of shared readings for instructors
- Realized the need to translate and interpret all the possibilities of organization on Blackboard
- Altered the course to place the discussion board at the center of the project
- Shifted the curriculum to emphasize personal narrative
- Recognized the need for us to be in physical proximity once a year and to alternate where these visits occur - especially because the participants in the project change



Participants: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

- intramural (all Columbia), interdisciplinary (many fields)
- adjunct faculty
- full-time faculty
- academic staff
- three schools (LAS, Media Arts, Fine and Performing Arts)
- twenty departments



Participants: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

- logistically and administratively interdisciplinary
- curriculum and pedagogy adisciplinary
- “planned and taught as if knowledge were one and the disciplines had not yet been invented” (Rinn and Weir, 1984)
- currently 50 members, growing by ~30/year



Support and Sustainability: Sharing Cultures

Sharing Cultures Plans (Pending Funding)

- A regular system of 2-3 week student exchanges with civic engagement / service-to-the-community components
- Faculty face-to-face meetings once per year to support curricular and professional development activities.
- Technological support to accommodate our use of open-source software for the project both in the US and in South Africa and to provide adequate access to high-speed connections in both countries.
- The establishment of a Sharing Cultures Institute, which would
 - offer "fellowships" to Sharing Cultures faculty to become involved in the program and thus provide for project sustainability
 - invite faculty from other institutions, with visiting fellow funds, to learn the model and potentially replicate the program in other countries
 - provide an umbrella for SC related activities (lectures/events/exhibitions) as a means of fostering global engagement on our campuses and build relationships with other institutions



Support and Sustainability: New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

- sustaining the project
 - infrastructure, support
- sustaining the collaboration
 - getting everyone in the same room
 - allowing all voices to be heard while providing some guidance



Where's the Development? Sharing Cultures

- Engagement with curricular goals from more than one institutional/cultural perspective
- Enrichment of individual research via transcultural conversation and exploration
- Extension of scholastic community beyond discipline/field and institution
- Emergence of open-source educational models
- Enhancement of our understanding of global learning

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Where's the Development? New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

**An institution helps to sustain
collaboration...**

**Can collaboration help to sustain an
institution?**

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Where's the Development? New Millennium Studies Teaching Academy

- Frequent use of discussion as classroom strategy
- No individual instructor is an "expert" in all the texts discussed
- Student portfolio work in variety of media ensures that projects are not assessed as artworks

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**Where's the Development?
New Millennium Studies
Teaching Academy**

Consciously de-emphasizing “professional” or “academic” expertise and craft, along with Enhanced or renewed commitment to discussion as way of learning and knowing
▶ **Liberal learning outcomes freed from the encumbrance of specialized knowledge and specialized fields**



A Final Thought

An institution and its faculty are needed to help sustain collaboration; but Collaboration can help to sustain—support and enrich—the faculty and the institution.


