Multi-Institutional Networks as Catalysts for Transformative Learning and Teaching
Andrea Greenhoot, KU; George Rehrey, IU; Linda Slakey, AAU, AACU; Gabriella Weaver, UMass
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University of British Columbia • University of California Davis • University of Colorado Boulder
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Plan for our time together

• Brief introduction to the Bay View Alliance, and the key features of a networked improvement community (NIC) – Linda Slakey
• Three RAC’s (Research Action Clusters)
  • Course Transformation – Andrea Greenhoot
  • Learning Analytics – George Rehrey
  • Evaluation of Teaching – Gabriela Weaver
• Small group discussions
• Report outs

The BVA arose as a Networked Improvement Community

“A networked improvement community creates purposeful collective action to solve complex educational problems.”
• Infrastructure – enough structure is needed to make it easy for members to meet, organize Research Action Clusters (RACs), and share findings
• Each RAC defines a specific problem and determines strategy and tactics for addressing it
• RACs strike a balance between common elements of the approach they choose and taking advantage of local context to understand the limits of generalizability of the approach


Bay View Alliance Structure

Elected Team plus consultants. Weekly video conference calls (monthly includes RAC leaders)

2 reps from each member campus PLUS Hub. Two meetings per year (in-person and video conference)

Steering Committee: policy decisions

Nine member campuses. Members pay $10K/yr. And commit to participation in at least one RAC.

Member campuses – Canada
Member campuses – USA

How do RACs arise?

• Typically suggested by a member campus willing to take the lead, often based on a project they have in progress.
• Potential RAC is discussed in the Hub, then the Steering Committee
• A call, or face to face meeting, is arranged to see who wants to participate.
• Participating campuses begin to meet to refine the ideas and plans.

RACs Represented Today

RAC1: Course Transformation-> 2013/2014
RAC3: Learning Analytics-> 2016
RAC4: Teaching Evaluation-> 2017
BVA “RAC 1”  
Course Transformation

Course Transformation RAC

**Theme:** Collaborative course transformation as a catalyst for change

**Two Projects:**
  - Teagle Funding; KU, Elon, Rockhurst and Park
- TRESTLE (2015-2020): NSF funding, 7 Research Universities

**Common Components:** Applied at all campuses

**Local Adaptations:** Each campus tailored the plan to their own institutional context

TRESTLE: How Are We Pooling Findings and Learning What Works?

- **Regular Opportunities Built into Project:**
  - Annual (in-person) Network Meetings
  - Bi-Monthly Virtual Leader Meetings and Virtual Colloquia
  - Common Data Collection, Sense-Making
    - Annual reports, faculty surveys, classroom observations, syllabus analysis
    - Case Studies of 4 Depts. (BVA Hub Scholars Pat Hutchings and Mary Huber)
  - Campus reflection meetings with BVA hub - End of Y2
  - External Evaluation (Peter Ewell/Marianne Boeke)- A Mirror and Sounding Board

TRESTLE: What are We Learning?

**Stimulating significant course transformation activity:**
- ~80 courses, 90 faculty members across 6 campuses (not including UBC), most showing improved learning

**Changes in Faculty Practices - Classroom Observations**

- Targeted Courses - All Institutions
- Comparison Courses - All Institutions
TRESTLE: What are We Learning?

Change takes time

Change depends on
• Department readiness
• Department leadership - Chair and Usual Suspects
• How the program is situated in the university

These programs can be a catalyst for other initiatives (e.g., learning analytics, teaching evaluation, UG learning assistants)

Being able to walk down the road with peers makes a big difference

BVA “RAC 3”
Learning Analytics Fellows Program

Terms

Learning Analytics (LA) is the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts for purposes of understanding and optimizing learning and the environments in which learning occurs (SoLAR, 2011).

Big Data generally refers to data sets that are so large or so complex that it is challenging to make practical use of them. Often they exist in more than one repository.

Common Components and Local Adaptations

Common Components
• Engage faculty in the use of LA.
• Develop analytics tools, techniques, and data dashboards for faculty.
• Advance transformations at the course, program & institutional levels.
• Develop/disseminate best practices.
• Shift faculty perspectives on student success.

Adaptations to Local Context
• Departmental/Multidisciplinary
• Focused/Open Ended
• Facilitation
• Funding
• Engagement Strategies
• Administrative Support
• Faculty Expertise

Inherently Collaborative Structure

The Learning Analytics Fellows Research Action Cluster (RAC-3) is a network of local Learning Analytics Fellows programs.

Generally speaking, each institution in the network has a program composed of:
• Faculty Fellows
• Data Experts/Data Stewards
• Facilitator
• Administrator


Shifting Perspectives

Typical Faculty Perspective

Shifted Faculty Perspective

"My participation in the Reflaxis program transformed me and turned me into a bit of a zealot for student success." (2015 Fellow)


Inquiry About Student:

Demographics
- Race, ethnicity, economic status and class standing

Preparation
- Transfer credits, perquisites, curriculum requirements, remedial education programs

Performance
- GPA, Persistence, retention, engagement indicators, and graduation rates

Choice
- Selection of major(s), inflection points, and graduation pathways

BVA “RAC 4”

Changing Approaches to the Evaluation of Teaching

KU Kansas University of Colorado Boulder

UMass Amherst

Widespread use of ERPs

Establish valid and reliable measures of teaching and guidelines for their use

Support and reward for faculty to learn develop and implement ERPs

• Overarching Goal: advance understanding of the institutional change process by studying the adoption and integration of new approaches to evaluating teaching.

Common across all 3 campuses: Improve quality of teaching evaluation

- Implement methods that will be valid and reliable across different approaches to teaching.
- Provide a measure(s) that can be used by administration
  - For improvement of courses
  - For P&T
- Implement methods that are feasible for departments and faculty to incorporate into their workloads
- Common framework
  - Multiple sources of information: students, instructor, observers, outcomes data

Case Study Research and Cross-Case Analysis

KU
CU
UMass
BVA Institutions
Campus Implementations

• Rubric as framework for teaching evaluation:
  • KU developed; designed to be customized by each department.
  • CU-Boulder adapted Carnegie/KU framework
  • UMass adopted KU rubric
• Departments apply to participate.
  • Opt-in by departments (bottom-up) and admin. endorsed (top-down)
• Departmental cohort model – 3 to 5 per year
  • Applying framework to structure peer review and mentoring - formative emphasis. Will later move to promotion evaluations.
• Project leadership differs at each campus
  • KU: reports to V. Provost, Director of teaching center
  • CU-Boulder: reports to Dept. Head, Director of STEM research center
  • UMass: reports to Provost, Director of teaching center

Connecting across Campuses

• Among the 3 project campuses
  • PI conference calls – planning and mutual support
  • Meetings with Advisory Board – mutual learning
• With campuses beyond the project
  • Knowledge exchange meetings (NIC model) – dissemination as well as mutual learning
  • Sharing approaches, tools
  • Addressing challenges on individual campus

Research – Another Component of NIC Model

• Key Features of Change Processes
• Effective Strategies and Factors Facilitating the Change Process
• Barriers and Challenges
• Stages
• Important Organizational Context Factors
• Lessons

Questions

What questions do you have about the RACs or BVA structure?

Discussion

Form a group of 3-4.
• Move chairs as needed. Discuss:
  How could you advance your campuses work in educational improvement by creating or engaging with a cross-institutional community?

Thank You