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MAGNA REPORT

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Sessions are geared toward

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- Division heads
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Follow Me: A Leadership Philosophy Framework for Leaders in Higher Education

Gretchen Oltman, PhD, JD, and Vicki Bautista

In higher education, the expectation that faculty maintain a teaching philosophy is customary. As faculty transition into academic leadership roles, sometimes unexpectedly, the same narrative description is needed to describe an individual's leadership methods (Beatty, Leigh, and Dean 2009). When leaders have clarity about who they are, how they lead, and what followers can expect, their actions become transparent and more consistent. Taking the time to create a personal leadership philosophy (PLP) enables leaders to be more intentional in their leadership. A PLP is a reflective explanation of a leader's core values, attitudes, and real-life experiences that guide their leadership behaviors.

The *leadership style* each leader in higher education uses is unique. There are three commonly observed leadership styles: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. An authoritarian leader has a strong preference for structure and ground rules and supervises followers. A democratic leader seldom gives orders and prefers to help followers figure out how to complete work tasks. A laissez-faire leader allows followers to accomplish tasks in their own way with complete freedom. Leaders tend to embody aspects of multiple styles depending on the situation. A democratic leader, for example, may have to behave in an authoritarian way when making a difficult decision. Thus, while an inventory might indicate a leader has a commonly observed style, it is not static or unchanging (Northouse 2015).

> ***When a leader demonstrates an optimistic attitude, followers exhibit confidence.***

Whether leaders recognize it, they are constantly evaluating their environment and people and their ideas as good or bad and decisions as ethical or unethical. *Core values* are an individual's guiding principles. They keep an individual grounded and centered. Core values might include honesty, dedication, trust, or humility. When leaders are aware of their core values, they can use them to guide the decision-making process by determining whether the choice aligns with their core values. Core values live at the center of who a leader aspires to be and provide a grounding point for where leadership decisions are made (Kouzes and Posner 2016).

Attitudes are the way a leader views the world, that is, how an individual perceives, thinks, and feels about his or her workplace, profession, and future. A leader's attitude can be judged by observing actions, words, or reactions to everyday situations. Leaders exhibit attitudes purposely as well as accidentally. When a leader demonstrates an optimistic attitude, followers exhibit confidence. When a leader demonstrates a negative attitude, followers might exhibit defeat. Both intended and unintended consequences of attitudes can change the tone, demeanor, and output of the workplace (Daft 2015).

Real-life experiences are events that define your professional history. That is, almost no one begins his or her career as an academic leader. Most academic leaders have spent time in the classroom or lab or have served in a variety of academic roles before assuming leadership positions. In addition, most experienced leaders have a work history that creates a story about them as workers. A college president who began her working years as a waitress in high school, sold flowers as a college student, and worked odd jobs while earning her PhD brings with her a personal work history of service, responsibility, and growth. These experiences, often tied to our tapestry of professional work history, are what mold us into who we are today and should be readily attributed to how a leader learned while working in a variety of employment settings.

In practice, a PLP should begin with a brief introduction that provides details about leadership style. Second, the leader's core values should be shared describing how they influence his or her professional behavior. Third, the PLP should address how the individual's attitude or mindset impacts his or her leadership behavior. Last, a leader should share how real-life experiences shaped his or her personal work history.

A PLP should be reviewed often and shared with others. It is important that a leader not hide the content of a PLP, as the intent is to help others understand and appreciate the leader's history and leadership principles. Publishing a PLP can occur informally, such as sharing within a leadership team, or formally, such as posting on a LinkedIn profile or at the top of a resume. In addition, the accountability found when sharing the PLP helps the leader maintain a realistic approach to how he or she behaves and responds while leading in action.

The benefits of establishing a PLP are that it provides insight for both the leader and the followers. A PLP demonstrates reflective practices and self-awareness (Kouzes and Posner 2016). It can provide a framework to help leaders remain consistent in their leadership behaviors. Last, it can establish a standard that leaders can turn to when they are faced with a challenging situation.

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Articulating Expectations: A Meta-Assessment Infrastructure

Katie B. Boyd, PhD

"Assessment is a part of every class we teach. We do not need *data* to understand what our students can and can't do. We don't have any problems attracting students to our program. We know that they are getting good jobs."

It is not uncommon to hear similar comments from faculty and administrators in reaction to assessment reporting requirements. Not surprisingly, faculty members often feel confusion and can resent requests for annual assessment reports. However, the spirit behind the requirement is to inspire programs to continuously improve (Smith et al. 2015). To reap the benefits of effective assessment, it is critical for faculty to stay connected to learning. Unfortunately, on many campuses, assessment is viewed as a rigid and artificial activity. The following are a few assessment strategies for making assessment more meaningful and accessible to faculty and administrators:

1. Clearly articulate quality assessment through the development of an "assessment rubric" (Ory 1992), allowing for meaningful formative feedback to academic degree programs about the quality of their assessment practices
2. Create a straightforward and undemanding annual assessment report submission process
3. Provide support to programs seeking to improve the quality of their assessment practices and improve student learning

> ***Assessment of student learning can be meaningful with the right support available to the faculty.***

Meta-assessment can help provide programs with a clear definition of quality assessment that allows for systematic feedback (Ory 1992; Fulcher, Swain, and Orem 2012). The practice of meta-assessment is useful because it clearly communicates assessment expectations, enables programs to receive systematic feedback on the quality of their assessment practice, allows assessment offices to target professional development opportunities to what faculty needs most, and allows assessment offices to capture an institutional snapshot of assessment and track assessment improvements over time. To do this, many universities purchase an assessment management system. There are many customizable and performance-based assessment management systems. Even with the many options available, there are many institutions that are unable to invest the time to train faculty on how to best use an assessment management system and pay for one of these systems. It is possible, though, to maintain meaningful and accessible assessment processes even without such a system. There is great merit in articulating quality assessment through meta-assessment and involving faculty in the process; the process can be done meaningfully and efficiently while also adding much value without the aid of an assessment management system. To clarify stable expectations and best support programs with their assessment work, this institution chose to create a meta-assessment infrastructure that required no additional purchase of an assessment management system, beginning with the articulation of assessment expectations.

1. ARTICULATE EXPECTATIONS

One way to dispel confusion around assessment is to articulate quality assessment practices in a format that is accessible and easily interpreted. Our assessment expectations take the form of a "Quality of Assessment Rubric," which includes 11 elements (e.g., student learning outcomes, curriculum mappings) and behaviorally anchored levels of performance for each element (i.e., beginning, developing, mature, and exemplary). Faculty members from across our university met weekly to define major rubric elements and anchors within the rubric. The rubric was shared widely with academic degree programs.

2. CREATE AN ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT SUBMISSION PROCESS

Few resources are needed to create an annual assessment report submission process and the meta-assessment infrastructure described. Every year between the months of April and July, programs submit assessment reports (a 2.5-month submission timeline accommodates *both* 9- and 12-month faculty). During the submission window, faculty members send their Word document assessment report to our office via email, where assessment report features are tracked using a simple Excel worksheet. Our office uses SharePoint to house reports, resources, and feedback rating forms (other similar systems could be used). During the institute, faculty members receive extensive assessment cycle training and become assessment report raters. Using the Quality of Assessment Rubric, faculty members rate assessment reports and are tasked with creating a feedback report that includes a score for each element of the rubric as well as high-quality, actionable, formative feedback (an embedded form aids them with this process). The feedback written during the institute is distributed back to academic degree programs.

3. PROVIDE AMPLE SUPPORT

Like many assessment offices across the country, we are available to faculty members for consultation on their assessment work. In addition to providing academic degree programs with the rubric, an optional report template, and sample reports, we offer assessment workshops on every element of the assessment cycle and host panels of faculty experts to discuss especially tricky areas in assessment (e.g., assessing graduate programs). We collaborate with other faculty development offices to provide dedicated and specialized workshops to support programs working toward data-based, innovative curricular improvements. We also offer to facilitate focus groups with students using questions that faculty members generate around programmatic student learning. Providing support options has helped us to work with the faculty from a diverse number of programs.

Assessment of student learning can be meaningful with the right support available to the faculty. Administrators and faculty seeking to improve the quality of their assessment processes by making them more meaningful and efficient might take advantage of a flexible and purposeful process like that of the one described above.

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An Inclusive Classroom Framework: Resources, Onboarding Approach, and Ongoing Programs

Ann Marie VanDerZanden, PhD, and Laura Bestler, PhD

A 2016 US Census report describes an increasingly more diverse population in the United States, and this diversity is also reflected in today's college student population. The result is that many university classrooms are more diverse than in the past. In these more diverse classrooms, there is a need to acknowledge and accept students with perspectives other than our own, to diversify our syllabi, to be more aware of classroom dynamics, and to pay more attention to how our students are experiencing the learning process. Our collective ability to respond to, and be enriched by, these challenges will determine the success of both our students and our institution.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY MODEL

To build on the diversifying undergraduate student enrollment at Iowa State University, the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) created and facilitated an inclusive classroom task force (December 2015–April 2016). The task force of faculty and graduate and undergraduate students was charged with designing a faculty development program that would help faculty build positive student learning experiences by creating inclusive classrooms.

> *Our collective ability to respond to, and be enriched by, these challenges will determine the success of both our students and our institution.*

Ultimately, the task force created a multi-part Creating an Inclusive Classroom workshop with the following goals for participants:

- Learn about teaching inclusively and why it is important at Iowa State University
- Identify an individual's attitudes toward inclusion, determine how it affects teaching, and develop strategies to be more inclusive
- Enhance instructional skills that contribute to an inclusive campus environment
- Become familiar with student support resources at Iowa State University

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

The Creating an Inclusive Classroom workshop includes four online modules that participants complete prior to a three-hour face-to-face workshop that is facilitated by teaching center staff.

Each online module includes a short reading, a brief video(s), and a set of critical reflection questions. The online modules prepare the faculty to actively engage in the conversation during the face-to-face workshop and include these topics:

- Module 1: ISU policies relevant to inclusion
- Module 2: Exploring your inclusive teaching persona
- Module 3: Developing a mindful syllabus and course design
- Module 4: What are microaggressions and how do they affect learning?

During the face-to-face workshop, participants engage in individual, small-group, and large-group activities to explore the inclusive classroom, the importance of inclusion to Iowa State University and barriers to effective inclusion and strategies to overcome them. Next, in small groups, participants discuss two or three diversity and inclusion classroom scenarios and identify possible solutions. The workshop is concluded with a work session where participants develop an inclusive pedagogical practice action plan based on the Mindful and Learner-Centered Syllabus (http://www.celt.iastate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/LearnerCenteredMindfulSyllabusChecklist-1.pdf) and the Strategies to Create an Inclusive Course (http://www.celt.iastate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/StrategiestoCreateanInclusiveCourse.pdf) checklists. This exercise gives participants a tangible takeaway from the session.

In addition to the online modules and workshop activities, participants are directed to the CELT Creating an Inclusive Classroom (http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/creating-an-inclusive-classroom)website, which includes several workshop resources.

RESULTS TO DATE (APRIL 2016–OCTOBER 2017)

In the 18 months since the first workshop was offered, over 450 people have participated in CELT's diversity and inclusion programs. During this time frame, CELT has also strategically identified target audiences for the workshop, including department chairs, faculty senate leadership, and college equity advisors.

Furthermore, the center's Creating an Inclusive Classroom website has had over 9,000 visits, and over 50 percent of website visitors have downloaded resources. The teaching center has also been asked to contribute to other university diversity and inclusion programs. One example includes leading a new diversity course initiative in collaboration with the office of the provost and the faculty senate.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Workshop participants have included administrators, faculty, staff, and graduate students. Through their feedback, participants valued the content shared during the workshop and how it applied to their teaching as well as how the workshop was organized with open discussion, interactive activities, and personalized action plans. Workshop facilitators observed the supportive interactions between participants during the workshop and the in-depth discussions that occurred.

Two common themes have emerged from written comments in the post-workshop evaluation: the usefulness of sharing and discussing this topic with colleagues and that participants feel more prepared to make changes to increase inclusion in their own courses. Furthermore, the post-workshop evaluation responses showed an increase in knowledge, awareness, understanding, and comfort with creating an inclusive classroom, which supports the overall goals of the workshop.

NEXT STEPS

During the 2017–2018 academic year, CELT will continue to offer the Creating an Inclusive Classroom workshop monthly and facilitate customized workshops for departments and colleges (upon request). The center is also hosting an informal monthly gathering focused on teaching inclusively. This new program will provide faculty with an additional opportunity to discuss barriers to effective inclusion and strategies to overcome these hurdles. Additionally, the center is working in partnership with the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost to develop a recognition program for workshop participants.

LESSONS LEARNED

The inclusive classroom initiative at Iowa State University is a campus-wide initiative with input from multiple stakeholder groups, including faculty, staff, faculty senate leadership, college-level equity advisors, and graduate and undergraduate students. Input from these groups has resulted in a broad representation of viewpoints, opinions, and concerns. The success of this initiative to date stems in part from the process followed to create the deliverables (e.g., training materials). The process is not departmentally specific and can easily be adapted to fit the local context of an institution, college, or curriculum area.

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Five Principles of Effective Faculty Development to Give You, and Your Faculty, the Greatest Return on Investment

Melinda Maris, PhD

Investing in the pedagogical development of faculty is one of the most effective ways to increase student learning, student engagement, and student success. However, in this era of increasingly tight budgets and difficult financial decisions, administrators may be reluctant to commit resources to faculty development. Similarly, faculty members can be resistant to investing their limited time and energy in professional development and then, more importantly, to committing to making the even more substantial investment in changing their teaching practices to reflect new knowledge gained through professional development. The following guiding principles for structuring faculty development will elevate the efficacy of faculty development, helping to ensure that investing in faculty development will yield a high return.

APPEAL TO EMPATHY

I believe one of the most important reasons to seek professional development is because it gives us empathy for our students. Putting ourselves in situations in which we are students again reminds us of the challenges our students face. If your faculty members are uncomfortable when confronted with new evidence about teaching and learning best practices that does not easily fit into their existing mental models, remind them that this mental remodeling is what we expect our students to do in our courses; while it is easy to hold onto existing misconceptions, dismantling and rebuilding mental schemata is very difficult.

MODEL BEST PRACTICES

Much like our students do not want to sit through unengaging lectures (Barone et al. 2016), neither do faculty. Instead, model best practices for teaching and learning by incorporating evidence-based, high-yield approaches, such as active learning, formative assessment, and peer instruction, into faculty development to allow participants to experience the impact of these approaches. Adult learning theory indicates that adult learners must be able to see immediate applications of professional development (Knowles 1984). By modeling best practices, we provide faculty members with concrete examples of strategies they can immediately use in their courses along with opportunities to brainstorm applications and get feedback on ideas for implementation.

REVEAL THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

The term "hidden curriculum" refers to the implicit messages conveyed by instruction (Great Schools Partnership 2015). The hidden curriculum includes the implications of the intentional and unintentional pedagogical choices that we make. Just as we should bring the hidden curriculum into the open when we teach and ensure that our pedagogical choices reinforce—and do not contradict—the formal curriculum, we must also reveal the hidden curriculum to faculty and make explicit the reasons we have structured development opportunities in the manner that we have, including examining the data supporting the effectiveness of our approaches. We expect students to draw rational, evidence-based conclusions and take action accordingly. Similarly, as educators, we should implement evidence-based best practices for teaching and learning—not simply rely on our intuition—just as we do in our scholarly work within our areas of disciplinary expertise (McGlynn 2016).

APPEAL TO YOUR FACULTY'S WISHES AND NEEDS

Getting to know our students' motivations helps us design engaging learning experiences. Similarly, getting to know what motivates our faculty enables us to design professional development experiences that provide solutions to faculty challenges. If faculty members lament that students are not self-directed learners, teach faculty formative assessment techniques designed to help students develop their skills in self-assessment and self-adjustment (Bain 2004). If faculty members complain about the time they spend in "grading jail," help them develop ways to incorporate peer instruction, feedback, and review (Gannon 2017). If faculty members express shock at students' summative assessment scores, show them data supporting the pivotal importance of low-stakes formative assessments that provide students with individualized, just-in-time feedback to help them monitor and improve their learning gains (Hattie 2008).

ADVOCATE FOR SMALL TEACHING

Sometimes faculty members have a misconception that, to improve their courses, they must start entirely anew. However, what James M. Lang has termed "small teaching"—relatively minor adjustments to pedagogical practices that elevate teaching effectiveness—can have a significant impact without the need for the more substantial investment of completely overhauling a course (Lang 2016). Help faculty members identify strategies that they are using that are already aligned with best practices, and support them in identifying tweaks that will further enhance student learning and student engagement.

While this list is not exhaustive, designing professional development experiences with these principles in mind will help ensure that both you and your faculty get the greatest return on your mutual investment.

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Integration of Strategic Planning and Assessment through an Electronic Theme–Based Program Portfolio

Matthew Dintzner, PhD, Kim Tanzer, PharmD, and Evan T. Robinson, PhD

As a new college of pharmacy and health sciences within a small, private university, we struggled at first with the challenges of promoting and navigating our *assessment and strategic planning* activities. Our assessment plan was designed around an "input–throughput–output" model and required the collection of massive amounts of data, most of which existed as paper files, Excel spreadsheets, and reports. Once gathered, the information was disseminated in very long annual reports. Our strategic plan, developed with input from a variety of stakeholders, existed as a 20-page written document that was accessible to everyone but acknowledged by only a few. It was clear that we needed to connect the dots between assessment and strategic planning to operate more effectively and work toward the accomplishment of our goals and objectives more intentionally. Of importance was the need to let the strategic plan inform the assessment data we were collecting and allow the data, in turn, to serve as documentation of the progress being made toward our strategic initiatives.

In looking to the literature for inspiration, we learned about *program portfolios*, which others have successfully used as platforms for organizing qualitative and quantitative information "for reflection, advocacy, and measurement purposes . . . and to find evidence of and describe progress toward desired goals" (Casey and McLaughlin 2000; Ewell and Lisensky 1988; Good and Kochan 2008; Seymour, Kelley, and Jasinski 2004). So we set out to develop our own program portfolio, choosing to make it *electronic* (web based) so it would be both dynamic and interactive. Along the way, "education as a journey" emerged as a *theme* because it promoted buy-in from all stakeholders by providing a conceptual framework for the process. What follows are some steps we took to create our electronic, theme-based program portfolio for integrating strategic planning and assessment:

1. **Distillation of the data into dashboards.** According to the traditional pyramid of data, information, knowledge, and wisdom, we needed to create context for the assessment data we were collecting (Rowley 2007). This facilitated transforming the data into information that we could use to gain the knowledge and wisdom necessary to make decisions for improvement. We accomplished this by distilling the data into tabular or graphical displays that we transformed into electronic "dashboards," which were organized according to the input–throughput–output structure of our assessment plan. These at-a-glance dashboards were much more manageable than the paper files and reports we had been using.

2. **Development of a theme.** Our strategic plan was constructed around four target areas: education, research, practice, and faculty. Goals, objectives, and action steps were developed for each target area, but there was nothing that created continuity across the plan. It lived as a static document, filed away for safekeeping. As a professional program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), however, it was important to be able to show that the plan was implemented and that we were making progress toward our goals and could document the steps. To do this, we knew we needed to make the plan more accessible to stakeholders, which we accomplished by repackaging it around a theme. This took some creative thinking, but we started by taking the first letters of each of the plan's targets (E, R, P, F) and rearranged them to spell out "PERFormance" as a hook to engage our stakeholders. The plan was written to span five years, so we

added that to the hook, making it "PERFormance → 2020." We incorporated a visual component by using the image of a mariner's compass with the four directional points replaced by the letters P, E, R, and F, tying it all together with our assessment dashboards around the theme of "education as a journey." Dashboards were created for each goal of the strategic plan, and all the dashboards were compiled to create our web-based program portfolio as described below.

PERFormance → 2020: Education as a journey

3. **Construction of the web-based program portfolio.** Although there are many excellent programs available for creating and displaying web-based dashboards, they can be costly, and many are more geared toward corporate analytics. We were able to build our web-based portfolio and dashboards through a dedicated page within the existing university learning management system at no additional cost to the institution. This had several benefits in addition to being economically attractive. First, the system is secure, and only users who are enrolled in the course have access to the information in the dashboards. Second, we can monitor how frequently stakeholders visit the site. The dashboard launchpad is shown below. Each section is a clickable link to dashboards pertaining to the relevant component of the assessment or strategic plan. Additional dashboards were added to enable stakeholders to access other routinely searched-for information pertaining to the program. In this way, the portfolio serves as a one-stop data and information warehouse.

PERFormance → 2020		
Learner Input	Learner Throughput	Learner Output
Curricula		Experiential
Faculty Input	Faculty Throughput	Faculty Output
College Standing Committees		
General Resources and Documents		

4. **Dissemination.** Another advantage of a web-based portfolio is that it can be updated as frequently as necessary and accessed at any time, which is highly desirable in a 24/7/365 environment. In this way, stakeholders are encouraged to engage with the data and information regularly; new data can be added as they are collected, and progress toward strategic initiatives can be continuously documented and monitored. Another advantage of the web-based system is that it represents a visual, dynamic, "living" entity, making the data more user friendly and accessible. Finally, because the dashboards are online, they can be presented in an at-a-glance format with longer reports or files embedded and accessible through hyperlinks.

Making sense of assessment data and using them to document progress toward strategic initiatives are challenges faced by many organizations. We have met these challenges by developing an electronic theme-based program portfolio for storing and displaying our assessment data as dashboards that also document progress toward our strategic goals.

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Institutionalizing the Use of Open Educational Resources (OER): Strategies and Tactics

Erik N. Christensen, PE

The average college student spends $1,200 per year on textbooks, which can be as much as one-third the cost of attending college for a year. Institutionalizing the use of open educational resources (OER) can significantly lower costs for students, promote academic freedom for faculty, and expand access to higher education in your community.

FOR STUDENTS

Courses using OER make college more affordable and therefore open access to higher education. U.S. PIRG recently noted that a student would have to work 28 hours at a minimum wage job to be able to afford each $200 textbook. With OER, students are uninhibited by financial concerns over high textbook costs, and every student will have full access to their textbooks on the first day of class, which is a major benefit.

FOR FACULTY

Adopting OER liberates academic freedom. Uninhibited by copyright restrictions, the faculty are now free to distribute, remix, tweak, and integrate with other OER materials. This inspires the creation of flipped classrooms, online instructional videos, and customized versions of texts. Many of these materials are then freely shared in digital repositories (e.g., The Orange Grove, OER Commons, Merlot II, MIT OpenCourseWare) for others to adopt, adapt, and use. Now, the faculty members are free to develop courses based on desired student learning outcomes rather than on what is in their assigned textbook.

Multiple studies have shown that students in courses using OER often have higher grades and take more courses than students in courses with traditional textbooks.

FOR INSTITUTIONS

In addition to making college more affordable, OER are helping students be more successful in college. Multiple studies have shown that students in courses using OER often have higher grades and take more courses than students in courses with traditional textbooks. Courses adopting OER textbooks typically have increased student enrollment and persistence, and they often are the first to fill to capacity.

WAYS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE THE USE OF OER

While an individual faculty member adopting OER is effective in helping his or her students, a more profound and higher impact can be achieved by institutionalizing OER campus-wide. Providing a conducive and supportive environment that encourages the faculty to adopt OER can have a dramatic impact on enrollment and persistence as well as increase access to higher education in your community. The following suggestions can help guide you in the formation of a dedicated, strategic initiative to promote the use of OER institutionally:

1. Select an OER Implementation Team. Include faculty OER champions, librarians, academic deans, instructional designers, and bookstore representatives.

2. Get students and faculty senate to endorse and promulgate resolutions promoting the adoption of OER. A thank-you letter from your SGA to faculty adopting OER can have a big impact on encouraging faculty to explore OER.

3. Establish OER workshops to introduce faculty to OER. Focus on courses with high enrollment, high DFW, and/or high textbook costs. One-on-one meetings with individual faculty or departments are the most effective way, as you can provide discipline-specific resources and guidance. Creating an OER LibGuide for your institution can be of great assistance to faculty considering adopting OER.

4. Create a process in your student enrollment system that allows students to search for courses with low or no textbook courses. This will have an immediate impact on enrollment in these courses.

5. Establish an institutional policy that everyone must use the same textbook or OER. This will allow individual faculty to pilot and use OER rather than having to wait for the entire department to adopt the same textbook.

6. Purchase OER books and incorporate them into the library's reserves. Subsequently, create OER promotional displays around the campus for both students and faculty.

7. Establish a stipend or an award for the faculty reviewing and implementing OER. This may require finding additional funding from your foundation or an external source, but it can go a long way toward actively encouraging faculty to explore OER.

8. Incorporate OER adoption in faculty evaluations and tenure decisions.

9. Write and publish articles about student and faculty experiences with OER in blogs and campus newsletters and on social media.

10. Launch a Textbook Heroes campaign through which faculty members adopting OER are formally recognized around campus. Coupled with a thank-you letter–writing initiative by the student government association (SGA), the campaign can be highly effective in getting faculty to adopt OER.

If you are not currently using an OER textbook in your class, I encourage you to look at what is available in the many digital repositories. OER have been disruptive to the traditional textbook industry; publishers are adapting to the new reality and developing various ancillary materials to supplement OER. If you are using OER today, I congratulate and encourage you to go a step further to initiate a strategic initiative to expand the use of OER institution-wide. Your students, fellow faculty, and institution will thank you.

For additional information, visit the following website: **https://goo.gl/kC3HDB.**

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Engaging Faculty in Efficient and Effective Faculty Development

Donna M. Qualters, PhD

Popular myth refers to faculty development as “herding cats.” This image captures the qualities of faculty identified in the literature that make it interesting and challenging to engage colleagues in their development.

Faculty members are often characterized as being independent, isolated, and inflexible and as people who often operate with unexamined assumptions about their practice. Additional research by Schuster and Wheeler (1990) shows that faculty loyalties lie in four areas: discipline, students, department, and university, in that order. Thinking about this in terms of faculty development, we realize that many development activities do not seem connected to the discipline or even to students but rather to a university goal.

Additionally, the academy conceives of teaching and leadership in an experiential education model. Dewey’s idea of “learn by doing” has been the predominant method for faculty to learn to teach or lead. But why then isn’t everyone who teaches or is in a leadership position an inspiring practitioner? The answer is obvious: while it’s true that learning to lead and teach in higher education is experiential, it is not experiential learning. The elements of learning are missing: reflection; continuous, ongoing targeted feedback; and mentoring. This is what faculty development provides.

The reality is that most faculty members genuinely want to be good in teaching and leading.

But even when some of those elements are available, we still see some faculty resistance. The reality is that most faculty members genuinely want to be good in teaching and leading. So why does engaging them seem so difficult? We hear reasons such as time, rewards, or tenure benefits, and they are certainly part of the reason. But looking at it from another perspective, engaging in development is about *change*, not generic change but very particular individual change.

That is why approaching faculty development from a theoretical perspective is helpful in designing activities and venues that will appeal and engage. Perspective theory tells us that we rely on heuristics (or shortcuts) to make decisions that are often unconscious and biased and can result in faulty decisions. A subset of this is loss aversion heuristics (Levin, Irwin, Schneider, and Gaeth 1998), which state that individuals are more motivated to avoid loss than to see potential gains. In other words, people don’t really resist change; they resist the loss that change creates. So what do faculty members lose when they are asked to try something new in teaching or to strengthen their leadership ability?

Here are some suggestions to consider:

1. **Loss of the role of expert.** We are never experts doing something new the first time, and our confidence is shaken when we are in uncertain waters.

2. **Loss of the belief in their role.** If faculty members believe their role is supplying knowledge and skills and we ask them to engage in social–emotional learning or experiential education, it collides with their personal belief system.

3. **Loss of respect/friendship.** in their departments, faculty members who advocate for change could be challenging long-held beliefs and assumptions and thus be viewed in a different way by colleagues.

Adding a layer of complexity is remembering that faculty members have an individualistic approach to their role and must be addressed at that level as well. Prochaska, Di Clemente, and Norcross's (1992) change theory outlines the stages individuals go through as they try to adopt something new. Without consideration of what it takes to move through these stages, the danger of relapsing into old habits always exists.

We know that many of our colleagues are precontemplative. That's the first and most difficult stage to address. This is the stage where a compelling reason to change often does not exist. We tell ourselves, my teaching is fine as my student evaluations demonstrate, my department runs great, my colleagues are happy. Yet the truth is these are *not* the only assessment measures we need to judge our effectiveness. This stage requires exploring assumptions to validate or challenge our tacit beliefs, which is not easy.

But a few interventions do exist and have been incorporated into faculty development that focus on the raising of assumptions. The first, but often most neglected, is reflection. Department meetings, committee meetings, or any faculty gathering can have a reflective component. These meetings can be run in a dialogue model (Schein 1996; Qualters 1998; Senge 1990) where assumptions are identified around topics in a way that respectfully probes personal beliefs. Taking a department through an exercise to identify its teaching philosophy often generates in-depth discussions and opens the possibility of thinking differently as different perspectives are raised and explored. The exercise called affinity diagramming (Shafer, Smith, and Linder 2005) is also a valid way to raise belief systems and probe assumptions in a more anonymous fashion. Posing a question about a department's goals allows all voices to be heard anonymously and promotes a discussion on values that have been identified.

Contemplative stage: This is the time when people are starting to question their beliefs and practices and "thinking about change." In this stage, activities such as journal/book clubs, brown bag discussions, and experienced faculty panels begin to allow people who want to change to see some of the alternatives, making the change less overwhelming.

Preparation stage: This is when the individual is seriously committing to making a change. In this stage, it's helpful to have small grants, form learning communities, or start teaching squares. This helps to reinforce that change is needed and that there is a community of support.

Action stage: Now, individuals are ready to *do something*. Here, a series of workshops on a topic; longitudinal institutes, such as course design; teaching fellows; and academic leadership programs are useful. These programs are concentrated efforts over time that allow new ideas to incubate, form, and receive feedback. Notice that we are speaking of a series of workshops. A workshop may excite people, but it's the rare individual who will follow through with support and guidance beyond a one-time effort.

Maintenance: This is the stage we think least about, yet it probably is one of the most important to ensure that the change is successful and sustained. Think of a time you went to a conference and got really excited about an idea. When you returned your campus, it was rare that you had the time to implement new ideas. Even if you did, you were in the novice stage, and without support and targeted feedback, you probably relapsed into old habits even if they were only partially effective.

To create change, we need to have reinforcements, support, and community when we decide to do something new. Ideas can be as simple as a follow-up email to check in after the experience or something more complex, such as semester gatherings of all individuals who participated in a program to share their experiences, monthly emails about the topic that they participated in to keep the learning in the forefront of their mind, or having resources that are confidential and available when the change is challenging.

For real and sustained engagement in faculty development that creates change, you need to think strategically within the frameworks of change and have a multipronged approach to engage individuals at different stages to help them progress with confidence to new practices.

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Between the Lines: Course Evaluations and Misaligned Definitions of Rigor

Lolita Paff, PhD

Students frequently ask questions about assignments, tests, and course policies as they try to determine what the teacher wants and how much effort a course will require. One can't blame them for trying to predict which courses will be run well and whether the hard work will be worth it. Not too long ago at the end of the first class meeting, a student asked: Is this class an easy A? I didn't handle the question well. Reflecting on the exchange, I began to wonder: What are the implications for programs when faculty and students are not on the same page about rigor?

Draeger, del Prado Hill, and Mahler (2015) find that "faculty perceived learning to be most rigorous when students are actively learning meaningful content with higher-order thinking at the appropriate level of expectation within a given context" (216). *Interactive*, *collaborative*, *engaging*, *synthesizing*, *interpreting*, *predicting*, and *increasing levels of challenge* are phrases faculty members use to describe rigor. In contrast, "academic rigor" is an uncommon expression among students. They describe challenging, or hard, courses "in terms of workload, grading standards, level of difficulty, level of interest, and perceived relevance to future goals" (215). For students, course quality is "a function of their ability to meet reasonable faculty expectations rather than as a function of mastery of learning outcomes" (216).

> ***If teachers, administrators, and students hold different definitions and expectations about rigor and learning, the academic process falls short.***

These material differences affect students' perceptions about workload and course difficulty, thereby affecting enrollment and retention, as students vote with their feet. These perceptions also affect end-of-course evaluations. Some teachers attempt to manage expectations to more closely align students' perceptions of rigor within the context of instruction. But ad-hoc solutions fall short when the issue is systemic. Effectively managing conflicting views of rigor requires combined effort by faculty and academic leaders in three ways: focusing on learning and the quality of the educational experience in course feedback, interpreting feedback through the lens of educational research, and visibly integrating student feedback.

Course evaluations and learning. Gather samples of student comments for exploring alternative interpretations. Comments about frivolous assignments or excessive pair-and-share activities may signal issues related to instruction. But they may also reveal misaligned definitions and expectations about how learning occurs, what the goals of instruction are, and the roles of teacher and student. Academic leaders can facilitate conversations with students through roundtable discussions and focus groups to expand students' definitions and expectations about learning, across courses, sections, and programs. Viewing course evaluations through the lens of student conceptions of rigor shows faculty that the value of course evaluations goes beyond summative ratings.

Research-based feedback interpretation. There are distinct differences among students' perceptions about workload across variables, such as in and out of major, survey and introductory courses, semester standing, major, teaching behavior, academic preparation, and course policies and characteristics. Academic leaders should consider how these differences affect students' impressions of their academic experience. Administrators can also help students become better at providing meaningful feedback. Consider carefully the questions being asked in the evaluations. Hodges and Stanton (2007) suggest emphasizing the learning experience by asking students about the following:

- The usefulness of the problem sets
- The quality of the teacher's feedback
- The effectiveness of the class format
- How their thinking about the content has changed
- How the course helped them develop as thinkers

Visibly integrate students' feedback. If students' comments and feedback produce no changes, there's less motivation to provide them. Academic leaders should publicize the ways their program is responding. There are numerous means to achieve this, such as town hall sessions, program newsletters, informal gatherings with students, and social media announcements.

> Sometimes expectations and preferences might be responded to by moving to meet the students' expectations or preferences. Other expectations or preferences that the students might have could well be unrealistic. In such cases, it would be more appropriate to sensitively manage these expectations or preferences to more appropriate levels. In either event, the student has been listened to and responded to, which is, in our view, the real purpose of accessing student expectations and preferences in the first place. (Sander et al. 2000, 322)

If teachers, administrators, and students hold different definitions and expectations about rigor and learning, the academic process falls short. Combined efforts by academic leaders and faculty are more likely to align definitions of rigor than efforts by faculty alone. The purpose is not to water down courses, make grading easier, lower expectations, or reduce standards. The goal is to manage expectations and align definitions throughout the academic proc thereby improving learning and increasing retention.

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Stepping Out of Silos: Building Trust between Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness

Monique Baucham and Tanjula Petty, EdD

If academic departments are to work together to achieve student success, they cannot operate in silos. Academic affairs (AA) and institutional effectiveness (IE) are necessary functions of a college that help the institution accomplish its mission. It is crucial to the success of the institution that the efforts between the two units be streamlined to create a culture of collegiality and productivity. AA oversees a variety of academic areas and focuses on curriculum and instruction. Additionally, AA develops and maintains professional development activities and recommends the implementation, continuance, or discontinuance of instructional programs. This office is also responsible for faculty hiring and promotion; support for faculty, teaching, and learning; and the administration of all academic departments and programs, the library, and offices within the AA division.

IE has the primary responsibility of supporting the demands of meaningful assessment, resulting in continuous improvement campus-wide. Additionally, as assessment occurs, effective strategic planning ensues. IE centralizes and leads the planning efforts. Both assessment and planning are rooted in comprehensive data collection and analysis spearheaded by IE. Finally, IE ensures compliance with accreditation and state and federal requirements to safeguard stakeholder interests in the institution.

Often, there is limited coordination between the two divisions of the institution, making it more difficult to address the full spectrum of the continuous improvement of academics. Coming from a combined background to include AA and IE, we offer six tips to help AA and IE professionals reach common ground to foster a culture of collegiality and collaboration.

1. Gain the trust of others
2. Conduct a needs assessment
3. Maintain accreditation and regulatory compliance
4. Engage in campus-wide strategic planning with all stakeholders
5. Facilitate team-building exercises
6. Overcome the barriers to success

To gain trust, you must be strategic, focused, and flexible, which helps to reduce confusion and misunderstandings among team members. The root cause of the absence of trust is team members' inability to be vulnerable and open up to each other. When team members have misgivings about each other, trust is never established. When teams are able to trust, they are able to ask for assistance, which creates a more productive and efficient team.

Further, the ability to communicate with a wide-ranging audience will enhance your efficacy. The functions of these offices are not carried out by one person, and the ability to collaborate with others will foster a more collegial environment and increase the productivity of departments.

Conducting a needs assessment is essential to strategically align priorities. Although it may appear that most campus constituents have contending priorities, closer examination reveals that the priorities are the same. After you make this realization, you will understand the power of collaborative thought.

Both divisions aspire to ensure that quality educational programs are offered, that budgets are aligned with planning, and that compliance with all accreditation and regulatory standards is maintained. These priorities may appear to be conflicting; however, everyone's primary goal should be student success. When that message is clearly communicated and understood by all campus stakeholders, collaborative thought supervenes.

When collaborative thought is foremost in the minds of campus constituents, agreement is readily reached and progress is achieved. To assist in advancing this cause, IE should develop an IE calendar. This keeps the campus community informed about various assessment-, planning-, and compliance-related activities. The AA calendar should be aligned with the IE calendar to ensure that critical assessments that include programmatic and student learning outcomes are being conducted in a timely manner. Finally, a data matrix should outline all campus data collection efforts, including dates, departments responsible, and the expected use of the data. This may seem like a herculean effort initially; however, it will save time and effort later.

Team-building exercises are an effective method for establishing a rapport with other divisions. Departments across campus can have their own vernacular. Unknowingly, we can place the onus of understanding on others when the responsibility of ensuring messages are received is on the originating department. Team-building exercises help create a neutral atmosphere that reduces defensive postures and increases the reach across AA and IE lines. These activities highlight the importance of everyone at the table and produce an atmosphere where voices can be heard.

Remember to gain trust. Don't allow team-building exercises to be futile. Become vulnerable with your peers and allow others to be vulnerable. It will increase accountability, reduce conflict, and increase results. Barriers can be overcome; they must be addressed one step at a time.

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Finding Your Unicorns: Creating a Data-Informed Culture

Richard L. Riccardi, ScD

"Higher Education's Data Experts Are at a Crossroads." This is the title of a recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that was meant to examine the changing profile of institutional researchers. Akin to the movie *Ghostbusters*, historically they were the people you called on for help when making decisions that required data. One could argue that in this era of self-serve business intelligence, there is an expectation that *all* academic leaders and their staffs will be *data experts*, finding the answers they seek with just a click of a mouse or a swipe of a finger. It is an admirable goal and something that sellers of this type of software will tell you is achievable because you just "plug it in and it works." In our reality of "more with less," academic leaders struggle to manage the demands of their day-to-day operations; dedicating time in their busy day to the complexity of data analysis is just not an option. Turning to their support staff for assistance yields mixed results, as many in these data-related jobs have never been trained in the nuanced world of data analysis, assuming that these software solutions will magically provide the Holy Grail of answers to all their problems. Adding the ingredients of increased accountability, accreditation demands, and competition among schools for a declining high school graduate population results in a perfect storm of analysis paralysis. We know we need good data to make good decisions, but we lack the internal resources to make those strategic and operating decisions. As resources become scarcer, one of the most important decisions a university makes is whom to hire. Those hiring opportunities are few and far between, so it is important to identify the expertise desired in our prospective employees. In the *Chronicle* article, Randy L. Swing, former executive director of the Association for Institutional Research, speaks of institutional researchers, but he could be speaking about all our future hires when he states that "It's a new day, and people will need new kinds of skills."

Demand for data scientists is projected to be 50 to 60 percent greater than supply by 2018 in the United States, resulting in a shortage of around 150,000 people.

So when it comes to data and this new skill set, what are we looking for? A data scientist. *Harvard Business Review* called it the "sexiest job of the 21st century" and *Information Week* defined it as the "unicorn" of skill sets. The job title was coined in 2008 by D. J. Patil and Jeff Hammerbacher, then the respective leaders of analytics efforts at LinkedIn and Facebook. Demand for data scientists is projected to be 50 to 60 percent greater than supply by 2018 in the United States, resulting in a shortage of around 150,000 people. With starting salaries projected to be close to the six-figure range, it is no wonder that this job is one of the hottest in all industries, making these individuals difficult to hire and retain. They are a rare breed, a true blending of art and science. They can coax treasure out of messy data and communicate it effectively, a powerful combination. Many of the data scientists employed in business fields today were formally trained in mathematics, computer science, or economics, but they can materialize from any field that has a strong data and computational focus. But having just that foundation is not enough, as a data scientist also needs the social skills to analyze problems creatively, collaborate with his or her colleagues to understand the business strategy involved, and present the findings visually and even artistically. The key characteristics are summarized below:

- **Technical expertise**: typically have deep expertise in some scientific *discipline*.
- **Curiosity**: have a desire to *go beneath the surface* and discover and distill a problem down into a very clear set of hypotheses that can be tested.
- **Storytelling**: can use data to tell a story and be able to *communicate it effectively*.
- **Cleverness**: can look at a problem in *creative ways*.

With so many colleges and universities feeling the bitter cold of hiring freezes and frozen budgets, we must turn to our own internal resources, so the question is: Who are your unicorns on campus? Where do they live? Every campus is different, but odds are you will find them in one of these areas: institutional research, institutional effectiveness, or information technology. And there has historically been overlap in these three areas, so one question to consider is: Do they play well together in the sandbox? At many institutions, they do. But when areas overlap, sometimes toes are stepped on, so you need to be conscious of the dynamic between these three groups when requesting assistance from them. You also may find unicorns outside of these traditional areas. Maybe it's someone in the registrar's office or financial aid. Maybe it's a person in student affairs or someone in your fundraising division. They are truly diamonds in the rough and worth seeking out.

These unicorns will help you drive the much-needed change to a data-informed culture, a world that relies more on the facts and less on intuition, experience, or anecdotes. They will help you establish one centralized source of truth, turning data into information and institutional knowledge through analysis and interpretation. They will help you build relationships across departments, educating colleagues about the value of data and the importance of reporting on outcomes that are life changing to your students, faculty, and staff. They will help you find the difference that makes a difference.

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