

## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

What university wouldn't want to invest in faculty development? Most professors are experts in their discipline, and let's face the fact that publication is the main criterion for tenure and promotion. However, few, if any faculty before they are hired have ever had an opportunity, guided by an expert in teaching or curriculum, to engage in conversation about their own views of teaching or—to put it more directly—to learn how to teach. Typically a novice professor enters college or university teaching without the essential tools to teach effectively. As a result, that novice is likely to resort to teaching the way that he was taught, repeating the pattern of his own teachers, an inevitable strategy, or lack of one, given the circumstances. It is surely ironic that university teaching is the only level of the educational profession where you don't need to go through any actual training in what is a rich, complex, and demanding craft!

This lack of formal training in teaching has significant consequences for students who assume their teachers are skilled in guiding them in that vital trinity of life skills: thinking, speaking, and writing. Without a place to learn and model their own craft, educators unwittingly rob their students in developing their ability to think critically and write effectively, twin needs that national testing has repeatedly demonstrated are not being met. Educating students for a dynamically changing world places new requirements on the educational process.

Universities should support the instructional quality of faculty by providing opportunities for faculty development. From the novice to the veteran professor, the practice of educating students requires lifelong learning on the teacher's part. The goal of faculty development is to empower faculty members to excel in that lifelong role. When

faculty development is grounded in a theory that involves learning how to teach, it can promote profound changes in the ways that professors think about, plan for, and provide instruction.

University administrators need to embrace the notion that continual growth is central to the quality of teaching, that developing faculty as teachers whose research then only enhances what they do in the classroom is an ongoing investment which requires resources. Making faculty development a priority can foster habits that model, encourage, and reward lifelong learning. When faculty members think about their field of expertise as well as their teaching, students benefit. Given these gains, the question and its obvious answer remain: what university wouldn't want to invest in faculty development?

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