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Abstract

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The Current Status of Faculty Development Internationally

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One of the valuable and exciting changes that have occurred in higher education in the last few decades is the steady growth in faculty development programs internationally.[1] From the first programs that were established in the mid-part of the 20th century, there are now several countries where essentially all colleges and universities have such programs.

As more and more countries become interested in having educational development programs, there has been a significant increase in the exchange of information about them across national borders. The International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) organization and conferences have been especially valuable in this regard. Faculty developers are also increasingly offering their consulting services to institutions and national organizations outside their own countries, and there is a growing body of literature that compares educational development in different countries, e.g., Saroyan and Frenay, *Building Teaching Capacities in Higher Education: A Comprehensive International Model,* 2010.

During the last ten years or so, I have had the good fortune and pleasure of leading workshops about college-level teaching in sixteen countries in nearly every region of the world. In this essay, I would like to share some observations and perspectives about faculty development based on that experience. First, I will share a typology of four levels of acceptance of faculty development within countries; second, some thoughts on the reasons for this growing acceptance of faculty development in higher education; and finally two possible directions for increasing the impact of faculty development activities.

What is Faculty Development?
Before going any further, I should describe what I see as the nature of faculty development. Over the years, I have developed the following characterization of this field of activity:

"Faculty development is…

Process:	A set of activities that engages all members of the teaching faculty in the kind of continuous professional development that …
Immediate Goal:	…enhances their ability to construct curricula and modes of instruction that…
Ultimate Goal:	…more effectively fulfill the educational mission of the institution and the educational needs of students and

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[1] The terms faculty development and educational development are both used internationally to refer to the same set of activities that are being described here. In this article, I use the term "faculty development" only because that is the dominant term in my home country of the United States.

society."

Although the specific content of these programs obviously vary, most have a core set of activities that include one-on-one consulting services for individual professors and workshops on topics related to college teaching and student learning. The workshops are often aimed at helping participants develop a student- or learning-centered view of teaching, ways of teaching other than lecturing, active learning, different ways of using small groups, effective use of technology, promoting student inquiry, etc. Since 1990 or so, some programs have gone beyond this core set of activities that focuses on changing the teaching practices of individual professors, to engage in work with institutional units, e.g., colleges and departments, in order to focus on organizational change and development that support better teaching and learning.

Four Levels of National Effort
While the total number of higher education institutions with faculty development programs is much larger today than fifteen or thirty years ago, this growth has been uneven geographically. In some countries, nearly all universities have some kind of campus-based teaching and learning center; in other countries, very few universities have faculty development programs.

As a result of the international exchanges mentioned above, it is now possible to discern some macro-patterns in the status of faculty development efforts in different regions and countries of the world. Based on my experiences, I see the following four levels of national effort.

Level 1 – <u>Little or no faculty development activity</u>. This is the current situation in most of the world, but especially in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and most of southern and eastern Europe. In these regions, some institutions have started such programs, but the percentage of all institutions doing this is very low.

Level 2 – <u>Substantial minority of institutions have faculty development activity, and faculty participation is voluntary</u>. This is the current situation in the United States, Germany, and Thailand.

In the United States, for example, 30-40% of all 2-year and 4-year institutions have an active faculty development program (Kuhlenschmidt, 2010; Helen Burnstad, former president of the professional association for staff developers in two-year institutions, personal communication). In essentially all cases, faculty participation is voluntary. At most campuses, with a few important exceptions, about 20-35% of all faculty members participate each year at a substantive level, i.e., at a level that could lead to changes in the way they practice their teaching.

In Germany, two types of HEI's [higher education institutions] account for most of student enrollment: the universities which emphasize research and the "Fachhochschulen" which emphasize pre-professional education. Most of the 100 or so universities now have teaching and learning centers, but only a small proportion of their faculty participate in the activities of these programs. And only about 10% of the 200+ Fachhochschulen have faculty development programs.

In Thailand, the national Ministry of Higher Education convened a conference on faculty development in 2006 at which I and two others from the United States presented.

Participants consisted of senior administrators from nearly all HEI's in Thailand. At the end of the conference, there was general consensus that faculty development was important. Since then, a substantial number of institutions have actively started programs but they are still a minority of all HEI's nationally.

Level 3 – <u>Nearly universal activity: participation mandated for new teachers</u>. In at least 12 countries, nearly all universities have faculty development programs. In some of these, participation is mandated for new faculty members.

The six British Commonwealth countries (Canada, England, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Australia, & New Zealand) and five countries of northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, & the Netherlands) all have a long history of faculty development. As a result, nearly all universities in these countries currently have a faculty development program.

England and the five Nordic countries [Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands] also have mandated programs of substantial professional development for all beginning college teachers. They are "mandated" in the sense that junior professors must complete these programs before they are eligible for promotion to a higher rank. "Substantial" is frequently defined as involving 175-200 hours of work. This time is generally applied to taking courses on teaching & learning, attending workshops, and/or developing teaching portfolios.

In addition, the Ministry of Higher Education in Japan issued a mandate in 2008 that *all universities must establish a faculty development program*. This has happened. The directors of these programs are still at the start of their effort to identify and create the resources and activities that will enable them to provide meaningful assistance to faculty members on their campuses, but the national effort has started.

Level 4 – <u>Continuous faculty development expected of ALL postsecondary instructors</u>. In almost all countries around the world, continuous faculty development that engages all faculty and teaching assistants remains nothing more than an ideal, only a dream in the minds of some faculty developers.

However it can happen, as indicated by one unusual and special case at Lund University in Sweden (Olsson and Roxå, 2013). In the College (or Faculty) of Engineering at Lund, anyone wanting to be promoted to full professor must show evidence, not only of being a good teacher, but evidence of long-term activity of: (1) informing oneself through familiarity with ideas in the scholarship of teaching and learning, (2) critically analyzing the overall quality of student learning in one's own courses, (3) reflecting on one's own teaching in light of the scholarship of teaching and learning and of student learning in one's own courses, (4) working continuously to find new and better ways of teaching, and (5) sharing what one has learned about teaching with others and helping younger teachers find better ways of teaching (mentoring).

How did this unusual situation happen? Starting in the 1990's, the College (or Faculty) of Engineering at Lund began working steadily at building an organization that valued a dynamic, learning-centered and scholarly-centered approach to teaching and learning. During that initial decade, it established a center for teaching and learning that began offering courses on college-level teaching for its professors. In addition, the idea of having a Pedagogical Academy was proposed and accepted. The Academy would be something

that professors would apply for admission to by creating and submitting a portfolio. The criteria for assessing their portfolios were intentionally defined as involving more than "being a good teacher"; the criteria focused on "*pedagogical competence*" which was defined as involving:

- A focus on student learning in one's work as an educator
- Clear development over time
- A reflective (scientific) attitude

During the next decade, the idea of the Pedagogical Academy led to two major developments. First, the Pro Vice Chancellor made evidence of pedagogical competence a requirement for becoming a full professor. This was a major development. This meant that professors who were only good at research would not be promoted, and that promotion also required more than simply being a good teacher. It would require a portfolio and a history of working at becoming learning-centered in one's teaching and contributing to the scholarship of teaching with formal presentations of research and/or serious engagement in local discussions of teaching and learning.

The second major development during this decade was the decision to allocate financial resources in relation to the Pedagogical Academy in two ways. First, any professor who was accepted into the Academy would be rewarded with a permanent salary increase. Second, departments in the College of Engineering would receive a budget increase for each professor who was so rewarded. This means the College was rewarding both individual accomplishment and organizational accomplishment.

The reasoning behind these two developments was that the College of Engineering wanted to be – and to become known as, a college where high quality teaching and learning occurred as well as high quality research. The organizational leaders saw the idea of the Pedagogical Academy, with its associated criteria focused on continual, learning-centered development, as a mechanism that could be used to support the type of faculty culture needed to achieve this goal.

Reasons for the Growth of Faculty Development
What accounts for this steady growth of faculty development internationally during the last few decades? There seem to be several factors that, in combination, have persuaded higher education leaders that these are important programs to have.

People have been conscious for many decades of the odd fact that we require extensive preparation for people to teach in primary and secondary schools but require no preparation whatsoever for teaching in higher education. There have been efforts from time to time to provide such training (Gray, 1930; Blegen and Cooper, 1950) but such efforts initiated in the first half of the 20th century were not able to sustain themselves.

When such training is not provided, professors generally resort to the centuries-old tradition of teaching the way they were taught. In higher education, this means a large percentage of class time consists of professors presenting their understanding of the subject [i.e., lecturing], supplemented in the sciences and engineering with lab work, and in the humanities with whole class discussions.

In recent times, evidence has been accumulating of the ineffectiveness of this traditional way of teaching: it only supports lower levels of learning (understanding and remembering); students do not retain even this knowledge very long; they are unable to use it in new situations; and they do not develop important affective outcomes such as curiosity and being self-directing learners (Fink, 2003, p. 3; Blaich and Wise, 2011).

In 2007, Derek Bok wrote a very influential book about "*Our Underachieving Colleges*". He did a meta-analysis of studies on how well undergraduate students achieve eight specific kinds of learning, learning that most people would see as possible and desirable, e.g., learning to communicate, learning to think, preparing for citizenship, preparing for a global society, preparing for a career, etc. With all eight kinds of learning, his conclusions were the same: students are achieving some of that kind of learning – but nowhere near the level that is desirable and possible. Hence the sub-title of his book: "*A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More*".

At the same time that people have been seeing evidence of the problems with traditional ways of teaching, others have noted the need for new and different kinds of learning in the 21st century. In 2005, Thomas Friedman published a book, called "*The World is Flat*", about how the world has become increasingly interconnected at the beginning of the 21st century. One of the implications of this is that the level of education needed to understand and act in this new, highly connected world, is not primary or secondary education but higher education (p. 289). And not only do individuals and society need citizens with this level of education, but students who attend college need new and better kinds of learning from their institutions of higher education.

Just having a good foundation of disciplinary knowledge is not sufficient. People need information literacy, an understanding of the interactions and connections among different kinds of knowledge, an ability to work with others, especially on a team and especially with people different from themselves, and perhaps most importantly, they need to know how to continue their own personal, professional and social learning.

As business and university leaders have gradually realized the need for a new kind of higher education in today's world, they have generated growing pressure for change in higher education.

The first implication of this pressure for change is that the faculty members in colleges and universities must start teaching in a new and different way. That means that the current generation of professors must break this centuries old way of teaching – and create a new way that is different and better.

And this means they need to acquire new ideas about teaching and learning, and this means they need to either (a) acquire these ideas in a special program in graduate school or (b) acquire them "on the job" while being employed as teachers. Since the vast majority of graduate programs still do not provide the training there, colleges and universities realize they need to provide it themselves, for the professors they hire. This is the realization that often leads to the establishment of some kind of center for teaching and learning.

The other major piece of good news is that, when such centers are established, there are now numerous, powerful ideas about teaching and learning that are capable of generating better learning among students. Since 1990, the number of books with such ideas has

grown rapidly and continues to grow. This of course is the result of intense work by SoTL scholars over many years. I have a list of the books on college-level teaching and learning that have influenced my teaching in major ways, and it has over 50 titles on it. A short list of the topics on this list includes the following [Note: The terms in italics are all titles of books.]:

A. **How Learning Occurs**
   - *How the Brain Works*
   - *How Students Learn: 7 Principles*
B. **Designing Powerful Learning Experiences**
   - Integrated Course Design
   - Constructive Alignment
C. **What Students Might Learn**
   - Taxonomy of Significant Learning
   - Deep Learning
   - Critical Thinking
D. **More Powerful Learning Activities**
   - *Student Engagement Techniques*
   - *Active Learning*
E. **Assessment**
   - *Educative Assessment*
   - *Classroom Assessment Techniques*
F. **Teaching Strategies**
   - *Team-Based Learning*
   - *Problem-Based Learning*
G. **Special Topics**
   - *Engaging Large Classes*
   - Dealing with Student Diversity
   - Teaching with Contemporary Technology

Also, fortunately, the idea of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) has grown in popularity about this same time. This encourages professors to use their own teaching efforts as the subject of research. The published results of their research have shed much light on what is needed to increase student engagement and improve student learning.

One conclusion is quite clear from all this scholarship: We can do better, much better, with these new ideas if we use them properly, than we can if we continue with traditional ways of teaching. We need to change – and that means learning about these new ideas, not just once but on a continuing basis throughout our career as professors because new ideas are created and made available, every year, every year.

Directions for Greater Impact

During the latter decades of the 20th century, the majority of activities in faculty development programs were focused on providing one-on-one consulting and group workshops; at least in the US, this was the case. About 1990, more and more faculty developers realized that this effort, although valuable, was going to be limited in institutional impact unless we also worked on changing the organizational climate of faculty development, i.e., we needed to work on organizational development as well.

There are two possible developments linked to this trend that, in my view, represent important possible directions for program directors to consider.

1. **<u>Teaching Certificate Programs for Junior Faculty</u>.**
   In the countries where faculty development has become universal, as noted above, and at some institutions in the United States, faculty development programs have offered a specific set of activities, usually intended for junior faculty, that when completed, lead to the awarding of a teaching certificate. The program consists of a set of activities, often a seminar or set of workshops, being observed in the classroom, incorporating new ideas into one's teaching, and/or generating a reflective essay in the form of a teaching portfolio. The seminar or workshops provide ideas about what I would characterize as the "Fundamentals of good teaching", and the other activities try to move the participant into using and reflecting on these ideas.

Do these programs "work", i.e., do they make a difference in the teaching behavior and mindset of people who complete these programs? I recently posed that question to members of an international higher education group on LinkedIn. One faculty developer in Australia responded with the following comment:
   "When we work with staff around the university, it is abundantly clear who has completed a graduate certificate (whether with us or elsewhere) and who has not. Participating in an in-depth program gives staff greater clarity in thinking about teaching and learning, as well as opening up options for teaching approaches."

A university in the United States, Minnesota State University – Mankato, started a very successful teaching certificate program in 2004. A few years later the provost made the comment that that program had in fact "changed the culture of our institution". From the very beginning, a large percentage of all junior faculty members voluntarily chose to participate in the program. As a result of the very positive experience of these initial participants, word got out that this program was "very worthwhile." Hence participation rates have continued at a high level. By this time, approximately two-thirds of the faculty has participated in the Certificate Program. And they continue to participate in other faculty development program activities in subsequent years. Hence, as the provost indicated, the culture of the faculty at that institution now embraces the idea of "spending time learning new ideas on teaching and learning". With that kind of culture, the teaching capabilities of the faculty will make remarkable progress.

2. **<u>Make Continuing Professional Development an Expectation for All Professors</u>?**
Earlier this year, I requested information about Teaching Certificate Programs from an international discussion group on teaching and learning in higher education. Several respondents commented positively on this idea but then raised the question of whether this learning should continue, even with senior professors?

This seems like an obvious extension of the Certificate idea, given the fact that there is now a large number of ideas about teaching and learning available that can make a difference in the quality of student learning. What would this require?

It would require several conditions. First, it would require institutional and national leaders who see the need for new and better kinds of teaching and learning in higher education as a high priority. Second, it would require people who could see a way to make this happen. That is, someone needs to identify the sequence of activities and resources (human, intellectual and financial) that would enable this kind of change to occur. Courses have to

be offered; policies have to be developed; budget allocation procedures need to be re-examined; and so forth. Third, it would require a level of courage in the kind of decision-making that would necessarily be involved, e.g., denying tenure or merit-raises to well-known researchers or even well-known teachers because they had not really engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning. This latter situation was exactly what happened at the afore-mentioned College of Engineering at Lund (Roxå, personal communication, 2013).

Are there benefits that can occur, if institutional leaders do make this kind of commitment? The evidence gained at Lund indicates that the benefits are extensive. Olsson and Roxå (2013) compared data from 2003 [early after their Academy was established] and 2010 [after faculty had participated for several years]. They found:

1. The student ratings of professors admitted to the Academy were definitely higher than those of other professors within the college.
2. A significant number of senior professors had applied for and been accepted into the Academy, e.g., one-third of the admissions were full professors.
3. Over time, the portfolios submitted had become more reflective, e.g., the later ones built fuller and clearer linkages to student learning.
4. There was more and better sharing of lessons about teaching within the campus: there were more arenas for such exchanges (campus conferences, newsletters, journals), more references to student learning, and a more integrated reference to relevant research on teaching and learning.

5. The College had become known as a leader institutionally, nationally, and internationally: three other colleges at Lund have subsequently adopted similar reward programs; 5 other Swedish universities have created similar programs; and a number of universities in other Nordic countries are considering such programs.

What these observations suggest is that it is both possible and beneficial to start moving in the direction of making continuous faculty development an expectation for anyone who teaches in higher education.

Concluding Comments
When we take a global and long-term view of higher education, it is clear that faculty development has become well established and has grown into a semi-mature activity within higher education internationally. It is widely or at least moderately established in nearly all countries that have advanced economies. In addition, the whole profession now has a strong base of powerful ideas about teaching and learning in higher education, stronger than at any time in the past. This of course exists because of the many contributions made to and by the scholarship of teaching and learning.

But there is also serious work to do in the future. Program leaders need to find ways to lay the foundation for having a wider impact on faculty teaching practices. One way of doing this is by establishing teaching certificate programs such as those described above.   The other major work that lies ahead, not addressed here, is deciding how to adjust to the coming structural shift in higher education prompted by online teaching and learning.

For those of us who work in the field of faculty development, we can face these challenges with some confidence because of the momentum that has been developed during the past several decades. And we look forward to the time, perhaps fast approaching, when people

will naturally say: "Why would we allow anyone to teach in the important field of higher education without the perspectives and skills that are available and necessary to do the challenging work of college teaching well?"

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