

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

To Improve the Academy: A Journal of  
Educational Development

Professional and Organizational Development  
Network in Higher Education

---

2003

## Introduction. Volume 21 (2003)

Catherine M. Wehlburg  
*Stephens College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad>



Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), [Higher Education Administration Commons](#), [Higher Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

---

Wehlburg, Catherine M., "Introduction. Volume 21 (2003)" (2003). *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development*. 485.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad/485>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# Introduction

The chapters in this volume of *To Improve the Academy* reflect the current practice of faculty development in higher education and highlight the need to be aware of our continuously changing world. The events of September 11, 2001, have affected all of us in so many ways, personally and professionally. The role that faculty development plays can become even more important to our campus communities as the connections between real life and the classroom emerge.

Section I: Faculty Development and Its Role in Institutional and National Crisis explores not only the events of September 11, but also the bigger picture of the changing face of higher education in the United States. Edward Zlotkowski's chapter reminds us of the critical importance of civic engagement in higher education. He discusses the role that faculty development could play in the promotion of connecting learning to real-world problems and concerns. No longer can we assume that learning for "its own sake" is sufficient.

In Chapter 2, Michele DiPietro describes the results of a faculty survey he conducted following the events of September 11, 2001. The results of this survey will benefit all as we look to find the teachable moment. The events of September 11 are just one example of how the real world affects higher education and demonstrates how important it is for faculty to be able to tie information from their relatively narrow field of study to broader concerns.

Deborah Dezure's chapter looks at how faculty developers need to reflect on global competencies as becoming an even more important part of higher education as we continue to move into the 21st century. Her call to action is one to which we should all listen.

Section II: Faculty Focus in Faculty Development addresses issues that are central to the "faculty" part of faculty and organizational development. This section contains chapters that range in topics, but all focus on what a faculty member might need for enhanced development. The first chapter in this section, by Edward Nuhfer and Delores Knipp, describes the knowledge survey. This type of survey has been used successfully to understand a student's mastery of course learning objectives. By learning what students already know at the beginning of a course, the instructor can better provide information during the course to increase student learning and student satisfaction. This proactive method of understanding student learning can also be used at the end of a course for a more direct assessment of student learning.

Another faculty development tool described in this section is that of a teaching academy which affects faculty development at the organizational level. Patricia Kalivoda, Josef Broder, and William Jackson describe the process of developing and implementing a Teaching Academy at the University of Georgia in Chapter 5. In addition to the academy development process, other faculty recognition tools are described.

Faculty development does not always involve workshops and brown bag lunches. Barbara Millis encourages us to use cooperative games with faculty in Chapter 6. Not only does she discuss the educational purpose of using games as a learning tool, she also describes two games that have been used for faculty development: the faculty scavenger hunt and Bingo. Using games with our faculty may bring back some of the joy of learning and be a new way to present material and engage faculty.

In Chapter 7, Milton Cox discusses the faculty learning community as one tool for faculty development. Not only can faculty enjoy the company of their peers outside the traditional disciplinary lines, but they can actually discuss pedagogy and learn from each other. This chapter outlines the faculty development tools that have been developed over the last 23 years that led to the successful connection between the scholarship of teaching and learning and faculty learning communities at Miami University.

Of course, faculty development does not just focus on full-time, fully de-greed faculty members. Many in faculty development work with teaching and research assistants. In Chapter 8, Kathleen Smith describes a teaching assistant (TA) support program at the University of Georgia and the longitudinal case study assessment of this program. The results of this assessment helped to identify and enhance the program. The knowledge gained concerning the job market for TAs is useful to all those in faculty and organizational development.

The final chapter in this section describes a cooperative venture between a large university and a smaller community college. Laurie Bellows and Joseph Danos created an online workshop on syllabus construction that was available to faculty at both institutions. This online workshop was asynchronous and had 103 faculty members participate during one of the four presentations of this three-week workshop. This chapter discusses what worked and what did not in using an online instructional development workshop. Their results will benefit many faculty developers as technology becomes more and more a part of how information is delivered.

In Section III: Student-Centered Faculty Development, the teacher-student relationship and the crucial (but sometimes forgotten) role that students play in the teaching/learning process is discussed. Individual differences among

students make teaching a challenge, as we all know. Looking at these challenges as opportunities for growth is crucial to the field of faculty and organizational development. In Chapter 10, Sheryl Burgstahler's article has a focus on the professional development needs of faculty concerning the accommodations made for students with disabilities. Faculty developers are faced with offering options for faculty working with students with disabilities and this chapter can help us to educate members of our institutional communities.

Douglas Robertson's chapter looks at learner-centered teaching and the inherent risks to educational integrity that are a part of this concept. The contradictory demands that are placed on instructors (trying to both facilitate learning for the student and also evaluate the student) are not always identified in an explicit manner. This can undermine the integrity of the educational process for both the teacher and student.

Even though there is risk in teaching with a student/learner-centered approach, the benefits are extraordinary. Richard Tiberius, John Teshima, and Alan Kindler explore pivotal moments that can occur in a teacher-student relationship. These moments can have a powerful educational affect. However, teachers do not often know how to recognize these moments when they occur and so a potentially meaningful opportunity is lost. Discovering how to recognize them and, even more important, how to create these moments are certainly an important part of faculty development and of higher education.

These powerful moments of meeting do not just occur between a teacher and a single student. The increasing use of learning communities points to the effectiveness of creating and using these moments in small groups. Candyce Reynolds discusses how the use of learning communities can affect student learning. Specifically, student mentors are used at Portland State University to encourage students to connect with other students as well as with faculty. In addition, the mentor process has helped faculty to better understand student perspectives and issues since students are more likely to share personal information with another student. The feedback to faculty from the student mentors has enabled the faculty at Portland State University to make better educational decisions about assignments, course structure, and overall student learning.

The final chapter in this section also discusses student perspectives. Mara Chen, Ellen Lawler, and Elichia Venso conducted a study to discover students' opinions about college teaching and learning. The results of this survey can be generalized and used on most campuses to encourage faculty to reevaluate their current teaching strategies and take into consideration student input. Some of the findings are eye-opening and create the opportunity for rich discussion about what we think we know about students.

The final section, Section IV: Philosophical Issues in Faculty Development, contains chapters that move our focus from specific faculty and organizational development tools to the bigger picture. Deborah Lieberman and Alan Guskin discuss the role that faculty development plays in higher education. How those in the field of faculty, instructional, and organizational development deal with new educational environments, budgetary concerns, and accountability issues will certainly impact higher education. How this plays out is yet to be seen, but the issues raised by Lieberman and Guskin are thought-provoking and will lead to much discussion in the future.

Some of these issues will take creativity and imagination to solve. Chapter 16, by Michael Anderson and Virginia Baldwin, encourages us to look more closely at how we define “teachers” and involves a creative collaboration. Their chapter is a case study involving collaboration among faculty development professionals and information specialists. These types of collaboration may be one way to stress the importance of faculty development by involving more of the campus community.

Given the recent shift from a teacher-centered model to a student-centered model, how often have we really asked faculty to think about their role, not just in terms of behavior but in terms of values and beliefs? Carolin Kreber discusses the role of the belief system and the critical importance of life-long learning in Chapter 17.

In the final chapter in this section, Laura Bush, Barry Maid, and Duane Roen connect Boyer’s classic work on the scholarship of teaching with Glassick, Huber, and Macroff’s work on assessing scholarship. Using the frame of e-learning, the model that they discuss can be used in most teaching contexts in higher education, and this is useful in and of itself. However, the application of this model to the use of technology gives even more focus to the bigger picture and the future of faculty and organizational development in higher education.

The connection between what happens in the classroom and real-world experiences is becoming even stronger. The grounding of academic theory must occur in the context of experience. Faculty and organizational development must continue to play a crucial role in developing the many kinds of scholarship that will benefit not only higher education but the broader society as well.

Catherine M. Wehlburg  
Stephens College  
Columbia, Missouri  
April 2002