

SWAP SESSION NEWSLETTER

No. 7

For 5-11-98 Swap Session

TOPIC- Faculty Support for Teaching and Learning

Dr. Ann Stalheim-Smith opened the session by providing a review of the swap sessions held during the year. These include the following:

1. "Active Learning in Lecture" Presented by Dr. Janice Swanson, Dr. Larry Scharmann, and Dr. Larry Weaver
2. "Active Learning in Small Classes, Studios, Labs, Seminars, and Recitations" Presented by Dr. Buddy Gray and Dr. Steve Trautwein
3. "Active Learning- Creating Excitement in the Classroom" Presented by Dr. Charles Bonwell
4. "Levels of Learning: Memorization and Beyond" Presented by Dr. Gail Shroyer and Dr. Steve Thien
5. "Assessment and Evaluation of Learning" Presented by Dr. Vicki Clegg and Mr. Allan Goodman
6. "Blurring Boundaries between Academics and Student Life outside the Classroom" Presented by Dr. Pat Terenzini

Next, Dr. Stalheim-Smith provided two questions for small group discussion:

1. Is there a need to continue activities such as these to enhance our teaching and learning?
2. Are there other ways you would like to see learning and teaching enhanced?

RESPONSES/ REACTIONS TO QUESTION NUMBER ONE INCLUDE:

* Yes, there is definitely a need to continue activities to enhance our teaching and learning. These sessions promoted cross-disciplinary discussion.

* Through the Swap Sessions, issues could be discussed in a non-threatening atmosphere.

* This was a chance for faculty to talk to one another on a mutual respect basis.

* Swap Sessions provided the opportunity to keep up with current research and information, even that information which is external to one's own field or primary discipline.

* It was effective having panelists who were also peers.

RESPONSES/ REACTIONS TO QUESTION NUMBER TWO INCLUDE:

* Vary times and days that the Swap Sessions are offered.

* Have departmental support for faculty to go to other universities to shadow other department's practices.

* Departmental support for activities, such as the Swap Sessions, is important.

* One department is already including teaching and learning activities in their portfolio for annual review. (Sends a strong message of support for teaching and learning.)

* The University of Nebraska has a paired program where two faculty members work together to evaluate and help one another develop improvements in courses.

* Teaching circles where multiple faculty members get together on a regular basis to talk and to problem solve is beneficial.

* Structured mentoring programs can be very helpful.

* GTA's should be encouraged to attend Swap Sessions.

* Critical non-faculty who advise and teach should be invited to the Swap Sessions.

* Have mini-sessions that address specific topics such as enhanced lectures, group dynamics, and resource materials.

* We could offer the same Swap Session twice a month.

* Hold a workshop and then conduct a follow-up session (discuss what worked, what did not)

* Have a special interest follow-up session after the general topics are introduced in the Swap Sessions.

Following the discussion of the questions, Dr. Stalheim-Smith talked about three universities that have institutionalized programs established by their faculties to support teaching and learning.

1. At the University of Arkansas there is a faculty-generated center with three co-directors who are selected from the university faculty. The co-directors' terms are for 3 years. The Center is under the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Center is part of the Vice Chancellor's budget.

Some activities conducted by the Teaching and Faculty Support Center include:

New faculty luncheons once a month which allow for connections to be made between recently hired faculty and experienced faculty; programs on teaching and learning on a variety of topics; a four-day retreat in the summer; and informal book clubs that meet every two weeks.

2. Iowa State University has an organization that started in the Mechanical Engineering department. Dr. Howard Shapiro, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs in the College of Engineering connected with a professor in Education, Dr. Barbara Lickleder, to develop an on-going organization for supporting teaching and learning. There are two professors who serve as co-directors and two graduate students who assist. The money for the organization comes from the university and the legislature.

The grass roots beginnings were with discussion groups. The groups consist of 15-20 people and a facilitator. They meet every two weeks. The facilitator often models the different teaching and learning strategies. There is no evaluative component. The faculty members use their activity in the group and in their classrooms as evidence for scholarship of teaching.

Four key components of the group meetings are:

- a. Engagement techniques: The facilitator tries to give the participants something practical that they can take into their class and use.
- b. Questioning: Bloom's taxonomy is used to log different types of questions.
- c. What are your objectives?
- d. Assessment and evaluation of learning

3. The University of Missouri has a faculty program called Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. The faculty involved with the program are on full-time appointments. The budget for the program is under the Provost.

Activities of the organization include the following:

off-campus retreat for new faculty, off-campus retreat for untenured faculty, support for teaching with technology, faculty mentoring program, programs on learning technology and pedagogy (held during summer and winter breaks), support for international students and faculty, brown bag workshops on campus, a multicultural education series, and presentations to departments on the topics they request.

Dr. Stalheim-Smith ended the session by making the following points about the possible implementation of a similar teaching and learning program at K-State.

- * We need to have support to do this.
- * We need to decide what our priorities are.
- * It will take progressive stages to get where we want to be.
- * We need to set up a mechanism by which this could be sustained over time.



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Web page address: <http://www.ksu.edu/biology/scholar>
2. Watch for future announcements about Swap Sessions.