Full Circle: Utilizing Assessment to Guide Faculty Development Initiatives

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University 101 at the University of South Carolina
- 80% of first-year class enrolls annually, capping sections at 19 in fall 2012
- 3 credit, letter graded course
- Taught by faculty, staff, and administrators
- Extended orientation with academic skills component
  - Foster Academic Success
  - Help Students Discover and Connect with Carolina
  - Prepare Students for Responsible Lives in a Diverse, Interconnected World

Definition of Faculty Development

Faculty development is both a comprehensive term that covers a range of activities ultimately designed to improve student learning and a less broad term that describes a purposeful attempt to help faculty improve their competence as teachers and scholars.

--- Eble & McKeachie (1985)
**Definition of Faculty Development**

An instructional process which seeks to modify the attitudes, skills, and behavior of faculty members toward greater competence and effectiveness in meeting learner needs, their own needs, and the needs of the institution.

--Francis (1975, p. 720)

**3 Areas of Faculty Development**

- Individual Development
- Instructional Development
- Organizational Development

A common goal: the development of the fullest potential of existing institutional resources and structures by viewing and using them in creative ways.

--POD Network, 2011
--Groccia & Hunter, 2012

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**University 101 Programs Annual Professional Development Plan**

- Faculty Meetings
- Faculty Development Plan
- Instructional Development Plan
- Building Engagement (Rel)
- Summer Workshop (Optional)

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**Compliance Reporting**

1. Define Problem
2. Design and Implement Program/Process
3. Analyze and Interpret
4. Collect Data

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**Friedman, 2012**
Assessment Methods

- Faculty Survey
- End of Course Evaluation
- First-Year Initiative Survey
- Direct Measures
- Qualitative Methods

Faculty Survey

- Administered to all instructors who teach the course.
- Focuses on instructor perceptions of support, faculty development events, and resources
- Asked questions regarding:
  - Current faculty development efforts
  - Course textbook and supplemental texts
  - Effectiveness of peer/graduate leader

End of Course Evaluations

- Administered in class to all students enrolled in the course.
- Questions regarding satisfaction with:
  - Instructor
  - Course
  - Peer/Graduate Leader
End of Course Evaluations

- Summative Feedback
  - Understand the student experience
  - Drives areas of focus and improvement efforts
- Quality Control
  - From the results we are able to create a factor that allowed us to identify our lowest and highest performing sections.

First-Year Initiative Survey

- National benchmarking instrument
- Measures effectiveness of first-year seminar
- 15 factors, such as: study skills, usefulness of course readings, engaging pedagogies, and connection with faculty and peers.
- Administered at end of fall semester
  - Online
  - Each instructor receives customized report
  - Comparison of sections

First-Year Initiative Survey

- Informs whole model and gives insight on areas for future focus
- Building Connections Conference
  - Keynote & plenary session
  - Breakout sessions
- Identify top performers to submit materials for Faculty Resource Manual and SharePoint

Priority Matrix – National Findings
Predictors of Effectiveness – National Findings

### Assessing Educational Methods

- Compare methods to determine if one approach is better than another

#### Direct Measure of Information Literacy
- Based on ACRL standards
- Developed with campus partners
- Distributed to random sample of sections
- Shared pre-test data to customize teaching
- Overhauled FRM chapter

#### Qualitative Feedback
- Student Advisory Council
- Former Student Survey
- Task Forces and Committees
- Faculty Meetings

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Improved Knowledge of Library Policies</th>
<th>High Predictor</th>
<th>Medium Predictor</th>
<th>Low Predictor</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>P-value</th>
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<td>Course Improved Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>Course Required Out-of-Class Engagement</td>
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<td>Course Improved Knowledge of Collections</td>
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<td>Sense of Belonging and Acceptance</td>
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<td>Course Improved Academic and Invasive Skills</td>
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<td>Course Improved Knowledge of Academic Services</td>
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Lessons from the Road

• Enlist the help of campus experts
• Triangulate your data
• Assessment and faculty development should focus on the things that matter most and make the largest impact
• Can’t do everything all of the time
• One size doesn’t fit all

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Teaching Experience Workshop: Required as a prerequisite to teaching University 101, this 3-day workshop provides the prospective instructor valuable insights into the development of a University 101 syllabus, the fundamental areas of instruction for the course, strategies for active learning, the various campus resources designed for student success, and the unique opportunity to hear from other University 101 instructors as they share their experiences and recommendations for teaching within the program. The Teaching Experience Workshop is offered in January and May when classes are in recess.

Syllabus Preparation Workshops: These workshops provide an opportunity for instructors, peer leaders, and graduate leaders to determine and share effective strategies for achieving the common goals and learning outcomes. Important assessment information is shared about factors leading to a successful seminar experience, and new policies, requirements, or recommendations are discussed. Attendees begin developing their syllabus while exchanging ideas and resources with colleagues. Additionally, these workshops are a time for co-instructors to begin developing teaching relationships and planning for their fall responsibilities.

Building Connections Conference: This annual one-day conference, held in May, serves as the major faculty development effort for all University 101 instructors. We recognize that faculty need ongoing and regular opportunities to learn new strategies for achieving course outcomes, to share ideas and best practices, and to place their work in a larger context. Content for this conference is based on the results of fall course evaluation and assessment results.

Summer Workshop Series: Throughout the summer, individual workshops are held on topics of interest to UNIV 101 instructors. Many of these workshops are repeated from the Building Connections Conference so that instructors who could not attend during the conference have the opportunity to attend additional sessions.

Faculty Meetings: These meetings, held throughout the fall semester, provide an opportunity for instructors to share ideas and learn from each other. It is also important for the University 101 staff to meet regularly with our faculty to provide important announcements, communicate and clarify expectations, and to discuss emerging issues.

Lessons from the Road Workshop Series: These workshops are held twice a semester to introduce instructors to active learning strategies and engaging lesson plans available in the Faculty Resource Manual, with the goal to assist instructors in enhancing their facilitation skills and adding new activities/lesson plans to their toolbox. Facilitators bring activities and lesson plans to life by demonstrating how to effectively facilitate the activities/lesson plans in the UNIV 101 classroom.

Colleague Clusters: Small groups of 5-6 instructors serve as a support team for each other and share ideas, successes, and resources with the team. Groups might review syllabi and make recommendations for improvements, prepare for First-Year Reading Experience by hosting a book discussion prior to the event; meet regularly to share ideas, assignments, lesson plans, etc; discuss difficult classroom situations and successes; observe each other’s classrooms for ideas and feedback; and interpret evaluation results.

SharePoint: This intranet provides a forum for discussion, a place to share resources, and a mechanism for distributing information. Instructors can access electronic course materials, such as videos, PowerPoint presentations, etc. We also provide an electronic version of the Faculty Resource Manual, which allows instructors to make changes to activities and handouts to customize for their needs. Other features of this site include a discussion board for sharing ideas and a comprehensive calendar, with important University 101 dates (faculty meetings, workshops, etc), academic calendar (drop/add, semester breaks), and USC dates (involvement fair, etc).

Faculty Resource Manual: Designed by the University 101 staff and campus partners at the University of South Carolina, this resource manual provides instructional faculty with a how-to guide for designing, managing, teaching, and evaluating student work in the first-year seminar. The manual includes a detailed discussion of course management that offers suggestions for working with first-year students, designing a syllabus, establishing grading policies, building community in the classroom, and working with a peer leader. Chapters on topics and outcomes common to first-year seminars offer resources for students and suggested assignments and classroom activities.