Promoting professional excellence for faculty and graduate students

Compiled by Emily O. Gravett, Teaching Resource Center, University of Virginia, 2013

WHAT EXACTLY IS FACULTY DEVELOPMENT?

The field of faculty development is relatively new—the the first center was started at the University of Michigan in 1962—and there are several terms, often used interchangeably, to describe what it is that faculty developers do. The most common terms used include faculty development itself, instructional development, organizational development, and educational development. Diamond (1998, 2002) provides helpful definitions of these, often referred to under the general umbrella of "faculty development":

> "Faculty development focuses on the improvement of the individual instructor's teaching skills; instructional development on students' learning by improving the course and curriculum experience; and organizational development on the interrelationship and effectiveness of units within the institution; finally, educational development refers to the overall interaction resulting from the three prior efforts." (Quoted in *A Guide to Faculty Development*, 2nd edition)

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IF:

- You are curious about how people learn
- You are interested in learning more about higher education
- You care about teaching and how to teach well
- You appreciate working with others, both one-on-one and in collaborative groups
- You enjoy creating and giving interactive workshops and presentations
- You are interested in helping others develop in their teaching, scholarship, service, etc.

WHAT SERVICES DO FACULTY DEVELOPERS TYPICALLY OFFER OR PROMOTE?

Faculty development can be found in many different structures at institutions of higher education. Sometimes the work of faculty development is housed in a centrally located center for teaching and learning (or "CTL"), sometimes it appears as a part of a committee run by faculty, and sometimes it is the services that a single administrator or faculty member is able to provide. The types of services vary and they depend on the institution and the center's size, student body, financial resources, mission, and so forth. Common services offered by faculty developers may include:

- Workshops, panels, and/or presentations
- Individual faculty and/or graduate student consultations
- Classroom observations
- New instructor orientations
- Teaching-related grants programs
- Faculty fellows programs
- Teaching awards
- Faculty learning communities or reading groups
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning support
- TA training and other graduate student professional development programs

(Adapted from Lee, "Program Types and Prototypes," *A Guide to Faculty Development*)

WHERE CAN YOU GO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT?

- UVa Teaching Resource Center (http://trc.virginia.edu/)
- POD Network website (http://www.podnetwork.org/ faculty_development/definitions.htm)
- *Guide to Faculty Development* (first and second editions; anthology)
- *Journal of Faculty Development* (journal; print only)
- *To Improve the Academy* (journal; print only)

WHAT ARE SOME SKILLS THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF YOU CHOOSE TO PURSUE A CARREER IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT?

- Familiarity with faculty development work
- Knowledge of the literature on teaching and learning (e.g., theories of motivation, research on student learning or teaching methods, discipline-specific pedagogies, scholarship of teaching and learning, etc.)
- Knowledge of recent pedagogical innovations and instructional technologies
- Knowledge of assessment methods
- Ability to conduct consultations and design workshops
- Strong interpersonal skills and interest in collaborating across an institution
- Ability to organize and manage complex projects
- Ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing
- Understanding of where centers fit within a larger university or college structure

(* Adapted from a 2012 POD handout)

WHAT ARE SOME EXPERIENCES THAT WILL MAKE YOU AN STRONG CANDIDATE FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT POSITIONS?

- Earned Ph.D. or Ed.D.
- Teaching experience in higher education
- Work in faculty development and/or at a center for teaching and learning
- Attendance at an annual educational development conference (e.g. POD Network)
- Presentation at a teaching and learning conference
- Publication of teaching-related work (especially SOTL)
- Use of technology in the classroom
- Course design experience
- Training and supervising others
- Collaborating with others

WHERE ARE SOME PLACES YOU CAN GO TO FIND OUT ABOUT OPEN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT POSITIONS?

- POD Network listserv (http://www.podnetwork.org/listserv.hml)
- POD Network annual conference
- Chronicle of Higher Education – Job site (http://chronicle.com/section/Jobs/61)
- Chronicle of Higher Education – Print version
- HigherEdJobs (http://www.higheredjobs.com/)