Faculty Development As An Organizational Process

C. Edward Kaylor Jr.

J. William Smith

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad

Part of the Higher Education Administration Commons


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 by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.
Faculty Development As An Organizational Process

C. Edward Kaylor, Jr. and J. William Smith
Medical University of South Carolina

Background

In recent years, essays which focus on the management of the university as a complex, multi-layered organization have proliferated. Several of these have begun to consider the reciprocal effects between the development of such an organizational structure and the development of a faculty. As applicant pools, enrollment, research funds and other opportunities for growth have constricted, the relationships between organizational and faculty development have increased. This situation is neatly summarized by Cyert (1980) in his article, "The Management of Universities of Constant or Decreasing Size." Miller (1983), more specifically, addresses the interrelationships between institutional planning processes and organizational development in "Strategic Planning as Pragmatic Adaptation." Of special interest is his bibliographic list of references of other publications on the subject.

Wergin, Mason, and Munson (1976) reflect upon the university as an organization in which both the personal and professional goals of faculty members must be fulfilled in their article, "The Practice of Faculty Development." Finally, a major research resource in this area is the 1983 volume of papers published by the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education. Essays such as "Long-Range Planning and Faculty Development" (Gaige, 1983), "The Relationships of Institutional Planning and Institutional
Research to Faculty Development” (Paul, 1983), and “Intervention: Moving University Units Toward Organizational Effectiveness” (Whitcomb and Whitcomb, 1983), are examples of an important trend in current thinking about organizational development. That is, they underscore the importance of participatory organizational planning and its impact on faculty development.

Two Forms of Faculty Development

Faculty development is a process which can be, at least initially, divided into two forms—disciplinary/pedagogical and organizational. Disciplinary and pedagogical development refer to the professional growth of a faculty member in his or her area of academic specialization, and in teaching skills. The organizational form cannot be defined quite so easily. Whereas the first type of development relates directly to a faculty member’s obvious functions as scholar and teacher, the second type involves his or her position as a member of a complex, often large, organization. That is, a faculty member is not only an academician, but an institutional employee and department member as well.

As such, a faculty member is concerned about compensation and benefits, employment security, working conditions, and institutional policies which affect his or her professional activities. Faculty development must address both professional growth and the need for a faculty member to assume some measure of self-determination and also acquire a sense of “place” within the organizational structure of the university.

The two forms of faculty development described above ultimately converge because both are, in part, determined by administrative policies and the institutional environment they create for the university. Thus, a faculty member can grow personally and professionally only within a university which has a management committed to growth and excellence and willing to foster an atmosphere of participation and “shared purpose.” This last phrase comes from Torbet’s (1978) essay on the creation of “liberating structures”. As Torbet (1978, pp. 112-116) maintains, “The complex interrelation of purpose, process, and task in the life of an organization—is not ordinarily recognized
by its members... The theory of liberating structure challenges the leadership as well as the membership of an organization to inquire more and more precisely into its particular purpose, boundaries, and ecology... A final quality of liberating structure... is a leadership committed to... seeking, recognizing, and righting personal and organization incongruities". Although these brief excerpts do not fully reveal the challenging nature of Torbet's concept of "liberating structures", they indicate the type of environment necessary for the growth of an organization and its members.

At the Medical University of South Carolina, four separate programs have either been completed or are ongoing, which, when taken together, reflect the "community of inquiry" found in a liberating structure. Further, these institutional programs can be linked by the faculty development functions they can serve. For instance, through the development of goals and action plans, faculty have the potential to achieve a greater sense of engagement and accomplishment. Thus a management process can be promoted and perceived as an opportunity for faculty input and development through direct involvement in the determination of institutional goals. The four programs are:

1. Private Sector Management Task Force Study
2. Academic Task Force/Faculty Needs Assessment
3. Planning for Excellence Program
4. Faculty Incentive/Reward Program

The descriptions of these programs which follow will show that management techniques and evaluation procedures provide opportunities for faculty development at the organizational level. Such techniques and procedures, it will be asserted, can do much to promote a sense of "shared purpose" for the faculty of a college or university, and provide an environment in which the disciplinary/pedagogical form of faculty development can flourish.

Management, Leadership, and Missions. Theoretically, anyone engaged in any part of the university can truthfully claim that his or her principal purpose is the education of young men and women. From the faculty's perspective, this is traditionally narrowed slightly to focus on the three major missions of a university: teaching, research,
and service. And, as we all know, each of these missions is a major organizational effort in and of itself. Within the university, professionals of various disciplines vie for limited resources. For these various constituencies to achieve a sense of shared purpose, an integrated process of management, leadership and motivation must be implemented which can reflect the university's diverse, but essential, missions.

Again, it is our thesis that the development of a vital organizational context is a necessary prerequisite for an effective program of faculty development. Indeed, the central administration of a university needs to engender a sense of involvement and cooperation among the faculty in the very creation of such an organizational context. Peters and Waterman (1982, p, 85) in In Search of Excellence quote a passage from a 1957 book entitled, Leadership and Administration. The passage goes like this: "The inbuilding of purpose is a challenge to creativity because it involves transforming men and groups from neutral, technical units into participants who have a particular stamp, sensitivity and commitment....The art of the creative leader is the art of institution building, the reworking of human and technological materials to fashion an organism that embodies new and enduring values...To institutionalize is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand...Whenever individuals become attached to an organization or a way of doing things as persons rather than as technicians, the result is a prizing of the device for its own sake. From the standpoint of the committed person, the organization is changed from an expendable tool into a valued source of personal satisfaction...".

The Medical University of South Carolina has developed and is currently developing several other mechanisms which, we believe, will serve to encourage a shared sense of commitment. For example, a Private Sector Management Task Force Study was recently completed at our institution. The purpose of the Task Force was to "review the management procedures as well as overall structure of the Medical University...(and) to recommend during the process...steps that could be undertaken to reduce the cost and increase the efficiency of the operation" (Wellman, 1983) of the University. The members divided into groups which focused on: academic affairs; clinical affairs; ad-
ministration; and, finance. Thus the Task Force, through its own design, could direct attention to the principal missions of the institution and their inevitable interrelationships.

The Private Sector Management Task Force is also important as an example of the importance of process as well as product, of form as well as function in both organizational and faculty development. That is, the participatory process of administrative and academic evaluation can often be a beneficial product in and of itself. The Task Force members held extensive interviews, with groups of administrators, academic leaders (deans, and department chairmen), clinicians, and the heads of the various academic support services (e.g. the library). The summative report was a composite of the input from these Medical University individuals. The recommendations reflected the perspectives and perceptions of a cross-section of individuals who direct the mission-related functions of the institution.

A good example of a management area which cuts across the missions of teaching, research and service is that of Information Resources Management. It is a discrete area which was formed as a result of the Task Force, and which serves a supporting function for the research, instructional, and administrative areas of the University. Our point is that, in this case, management’s decision to establish the Office of Information Resources Management arose, in part, from the perceptions and expressions of need from individuals directly involved in mission-related activities. Such an office is part of the Medical University’s efforts to provide an institutional context which is responsive to the needs of all segments of the institution.

Other specific recommendations of the Task Force include:

1. Expand faculty evaluation systems to encourage setting of individual goals congruent with University goals.
2. Study faculty time/effort in relation to attainment of institutional goals.
3. Redefine the University’s mission statements to strike a satisfactory balance between sound business operations and the patient care model required for a productive educational environment.
To Improve the Academy

These recommendations reflect the necessary link between individual efforts by faculty members and the missions and goals of the total university. The last one indicates that the mission statements should integrate managerial and educational perspectives. The development of appropriate mission statements is perhaps the first step in creating an organizational context for faculty development. The next step is opening lines of communication in order to allow faculty the opportunity for making their thoughts and feelings known.

Faculty Involvement as Development. The nature of the organizational/personal form of faculty development necessarily involves the need for faculty members to express themselves regarding their environment. Opportunities for such expression can occur at various levels of the organization and in many different formats. These can include: informal conversations; departmental meetings; meetings of the Faculty Senate; and, formal gatherings of the general faculty. The fundamental criterion for the worth of these forms of communication for faculty development purposes is, of course, their reception by the administration. Faculty members need to feel that they are somehow engaged in the process of determining the direction of their university's development. Indeed, any member of an organization wants to feel that he or she is an integral component of the institution and that his or her personal opinions and needs will be taken into consideration by the ultimate decision-makers. Because this concept was taken seriously and the successful Private Sector Management Study served as a ready methodological model, the Academic Task Force Study was launched at the Medical University. Importantly, the Academic Task Force was a recommendation of an individual faculty member and the subject of a formal resolution by the Faculty Senate. The point is that the administration was receptive to the faculty and supported their attempts to communicate their perceptions and attitudes about their institution.

The Academic Task Force will, like the Management Task Force, ultimately consist of prominent individuals from outside the university. In this case, academicians, scientists, and administrators will be invited to participate. A preliminary or developmental stage is already underway. This stage involves an internal Faculty Needs Assessment which has been developed by a committee consisting of the executive
committee of the Faculty Senate, the director of the Office of Planning and Institutional Studies, and a member of the staff of the Office of Educational Services. A survey instrument, with a Likert scale format, will be sent to each faculty member to determine what he or she feels are the priority issues which need to be addressed. Some examples of the sixty-four issues are: "Review incentives for excellence in teaching", "Assess support for innovative teaching"; "Review faculty retirement benefits"; and "Assess need for policy covering allocation of academic space". It is important to note that the specific issues to be included in the questionnaire were solicited from all of the various faculty constituencies. Thus the process of the Academic Task force, and similar efforts, can often be as important as the product in promoting effective faculty development. This convergence of process and product is a vital ingredient in the faculty development components of all four of the programs discussed in this paper.

The results of the needs assessment will establish the agenda for the actual Academic Task Force. The faculty, in a very real sense, have controlled the direction which the Task Force will take through the mechanism of the needs assessment. Also, this assessment will be a valuable part of the planning process recently established at the Medical University. Keller, (1983, p. 37) however, contends that "although the ideology of the professoriate posits a collective and continuing concern for their institutional homes and workplaces, the reality is that collectivity is increasingly rare and faculty and staff concerns are seldom for the well-being of the entire college or university or for the integrity of academic affairs of their universities, their schools, or even their departments". The involvement of the faculty in the determination of institutional priorities and directions at the Medical University can serve to develop a wider perspective in the professors and foster a concern for the well-being of the university as whole.

Planning for Excellence Through Participation. The medical University has initiated yet another program which should do much to establish a sense of "shared purpose" between the faculty and the administration. The basic purpose of this program, "planning for Excellence," is to gather information about the goals and projected resource needs of the academic, administrative, and clinical units of
To Improve the Academy

the university. Such information, when compiled, analyzed, and dis­seminated, can:

1. Ensure that the goals of the units reflect the goals and missions of the institution
2. Provide a basis for the measurement of productivity, thus increasing incentives and the potential for a sense of accomplishment and recognition.
3. Project the need for additional resources and increase the “cost consciousness” of both faculty and staff.
4. Promote a spirit of institutional identity and teamwork.

A definition of excellence which perhaps best reflects the objectives of the Planning for Excellence Program is—"the consistent attainment of one’s goal in the most effective and efficient manner, while remaining poised to take advantage of new opportunities." In this definition of excellence in a university, the accomplishment of academic, as well as management goals are promoted. The academic functions of a university (teaching, research, and service) can be effectively realized only within a viable organization. The departments and colleges must have the support of and access to various resources and support services, including salaries, equipment, physical plants, libraries, and an administrative superstructure. Keller (1983, p. 118) contends that “Colleges and universities...are realizing that they must manage themselves as most other organizations in society do; they are different and special but not outside the organizational world. Money, markets, competitors, and external forces matter as well as traditions, academic freedom, devotion to ideas, and internal preferences.”

The basic mechanism used in the Planning for Excellence Program consists of two forms: 1) “Statement of Goals and Action Plans;” and 2) “Projected Needs for Additional Resources.” The first form asks each department to list its goals, in priority, for the next three fiscal years. Under each goal, an action plan is given which lists the various steps to be involved in the accomplishment of the goal. These goals and action plans provide obvious criteria for the measurement
of a department's productivity, and can also serve as motivating factors.

The second form requests a projection of any new resources, over current levels, which may be required to accomplish a particular goal. This process can contribute to faculty development because it establishes a method for the allocation of resources according to productivity and quality work. That is, rather than year-by-year budgetary incrementalism, resources are used to accomplish stated and measurable goals and objectives. The total development of the faculty, as a principal group of an organization, should include an increased awareness of the costs (measured in all the "expendable" resources of a university) involved in establishing and maintaining academic programs. Indeed, on Smith's (1972, p. 37) list of "obstacles to meaningful change" in a university, is the general trend for a faculty to lack any sense of cost consciousness. For these reasons, and because organizational communication is enhanced, planning can assist directly in the development of an atmosphere conducive to faculty development and advancement.

The Planning for Excellence Program is a dynamic participatory process rather than a static product. As Eisenhower said, "Plans are nothing. Planning is everything" (Keller, 1983 p. 99). We believe that this program can become a very effective organizational cohesive, a kind of flexible guideline, as well as a communication device between the administration and the faculty. A coordinated, formalized planning effort can bring the management and academic functions of a university in the common effort of achieving the institution's current goals and fundamental missions.

Incentives and Personal Recognition. The Private Sector Management Study, the Academic Task Force, and the Planning for Excellence Program are similar in that all of them ultimately focus on the policies and resources of the Medical University as an organization. However, we have shown that each of them also, in one way or another, provides opportunities and develops the institutional context necessary for faculty development. Some other programs are being established this year which will promote the individual efforts of faculty members. These programs, the Health Sciences Foundation Fellows and the Health Sciences Foundation Distinguished Profes-
To Improve the Academy

sors, will attempt to motivate the disciplinary/pedagogical form of faculty growth. As the chairman of IBM once wrote, “the real difference between success and failure in a corporation can very often be traced to the question of how well the organization brings out the great energies and talents of its people” (Peters and Waterman, 1982 p. 280). The final formats for these two programs are being decided upon by a committee under the Dean of Graduate Studies, but the descriptions below will indicate their basic design and purpose.

The Health Sciences Foundation Fellows Program will recognize faculty efforts in the specific mission areas of teaching, research, and service. Each year three University Fellows will be named. The faculty of all colleges at MUSC will be eligible. Giving these three categories equal weight will serve two functions. First, it will allow the faculty of all colleges to be competitive (e.g., teaching and service are more appropriate to the College of Allied Health Sciences than research). Second, these categories obviously reflect the fundamental missions of the University and, thus will help create that sense of shared purpose, and institutional commitment mentioned earlier.

Each University Fellow will receive a small grant for supplies, or travel, as well as a medal and certificate. The awards will be made to the new Fellows at a banquet for them and their families, with the president, vice presidents, deans and department chairpersons of the six colleges. (The banquet itself can promote intercollegiate cross-fertilization on campus.) In certain cases, release time in the form of a reduced teaching load may be appropriate. During his or her Fellowship year, each Fellow may give an open lecture on the nature of his or her work.

The second program, the Health Sciences Foundation Distinguished Professors Program, will reward faculty members who have developed significant bodies of work at the Medical University. At any one time the Medical University will have only six Distinguished University Professors. The recipients will receive supplements to their salaries for the duration of their respective tenures at the Medical University, as well as commemorative medals at an appropriate ceremony. The central requirement, however, is that the accomplishments of the Distinguished Professors reflect creativity and excellence.

Nominations may be made by a department, school, or college,
and the procedures used for selecting a nominee can vary according to the unit involved. For each nomination, a summary of the nominee’s principal work will be submitted along with a rationale for why it is considered outstanding. This justification may include reviews, citations, and invited presentations; funding by external agencies, while not essential as independent criterion, may be cited as an important indicator of peer evaluation in fields where such funding is the norm. Other evidence of the impact of the work upon its field, beyond this campus, will be cited.

Hopefully, these two programs will stimulate the faculty and provide recognition for jobs well done. In this period of fiscal constraints, Toll (1980, p. 9) maintains that, “many American colleges and universities will concentrate on increasing the quality of their programs and faculties...such faculty characteristics as creativity, inspired teaching, excellent basic research, and dedicated, applied scholarship will almost certainly be sought after and rewarded highly”. Rewards and motivating recognition must be considered important factors in all forms of faculty development.

**Conclusion.** At the Medical University of South Carolina, we have tried to create a bridge between management processes and academic functions through participatory institutional evaluations and planning. Attempts are also being made to recognize the professional pursuit of excellence in individual faculty members. Hopefully, the result of all of these efforts will be the development of faculty members that are not only more productive in their various disciplines, but also more personally engaged and satisfied by the institution. Quality and excellence on both the individual and the organizational levels can be achieved only when conditions exist which allow for the coexistence of teamwork and self-determination. Such are the characteristics of true faculty development.

**References**


Gaige, Frederick H. “Long-Range Planning and Faculty Development,” *To Improve the*
To Improve the Academy

Academy, (California: Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education). 1983, pp. 73-78.


Wellman, John G. quoted in MUSC Private Sector Task Force: Summary Report, Medical University of South Carolina, 1983.
