Industrial and Management Systems Engineering Faculty Publications

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Developing and Integrating a Campus Program for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Initiatives

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Welcome

Project History

- Started in 1995
- A faculty-led program - our 5th year as leaders
- Over the past 5 years, over 125 faculty from 28 different departments and 8 different college have participated in the project (approximately 15% of the faculty on the campus)
- From 1999-2004, we shared our model with five universities: Texas A&M, Kansas State University, Indiana University–Bloomington, University of Michigan, and University of Kansas
- Have successfully transitioned from external funding to permanent institutional support

Exploration

Our Peer Review Model

Investigating a vision of peer review of teaching which combines:

- inquiry into the intellectual work of a course

- careful investigation and documentation of student understanding and performance

- faculty reflection on their teaching effectiveness

Collaboration

How our project differs from other SOTL efforts

Many faculty are interested in becoming *scholarly teachers* but do not want to become *educational researchers*

Our campus program is designed to help faculty become scholarly teachers structured around the development of course portfolios

Challenge

Why Course Portfolios?

Course portfolios help faculty *transition* from a "teaching" paradigm to an "assessment of student learning" paradigm without viewing their students as research subjects.

Unlike a teaching portfolio, a course portfolio is a *brief* reflective investigation of how course structures, teaching techniques, and assessment strategies enhance or detract from student learning. It highlights what worked and what did not, and showcases the student learning that resulted.

Why not focus on writing a publishable paper?
Many faculty do not know the vocabulary, relevant literature, approaches for assessment of student learning and techniques for documentation their teaching

Different Types of Course Portfolios

Benchmark –offers a snapshot of an entire course.

Inquiry –explores a specific question in a course.

Concept –investigates a practice or issue in a course in terms of larger pedagogical conversations (e.g., general education, writing across the curriculum, problem-based learning).

Comprehensive –presents a holistic overview of the iterative development, evolution, and continuous refinement of a course.

Learning

Elements of a Benchmark Course Portfolio

Articulation of course goals

Discussion of teaching techniques

Evaluation of student learning

Reflection at every step of the process: why did you choose those goals, those techniques, and those examples of learning?

Example of a course portfolio

Improving

Advantages of a Course Portfolio

It puts the focus on student learning

It is relatively brief and reader-friendly

It encourages intra- and inter-disciplinary discussion of teaching

It can be adapted to a variety of uses: formative, summative, more formal scholarship of teaching and learning

Enhancing

Portfolio Uses and Repository

Faculty have used their portfolios for institutional purposes such as accreditation reviews, teaching award applications, annual reviews, promotion & tenure portfolios, and department curriculum reforms.

International Repository of Course Portfolios:
www.courseportfolio.org

Over 200 course portfolios written by faculty from 14 different schools so that the work can be shared, used, and reviewed by other faculty

Project Outcomes for Faculty

1) Reflecting upon, developing, and writing a course portfolio for a specific course,
2) Identifying common teaching and curricular issues with disciplinary peers,
3) Becoming skilled as a reader of a course portfolio,
4) Engaging in discussions about teaching & student learning,
5) Developing a common vocabulary about how to discuss the intellectual effort and/or scholarship of teaching, and
6) Joining a faculty group who can create and advocate for campus teaching policies.

Impact

Example of Impact

Christine Marvin
Associate Professor

Special Education and Communication Disorders

Not only a successful researcher, but an excellent teacher (numerous teaching awards, member of UNL Academy of Distinguished Teachers)

"Through my participation, I was amazed and embarrassed to discover that I had course objectives I never taught, I had course objectives I taught but never assessed, I had course objectives I assessed and never taught, and I had material I taught and assessed but never listed as a course objective. By reorganizing the goals of my course, developing rubrics for evaluating student work, and assessing my classroom activities, I now have a focused approach for linking my teaching to my students' learning."

Challenging

Our project consists of three separate faculty programs

first-year fellowship program supports faculty as they write a *benchmark portfolio* that represents a snapshot of students' learning within a particular course. Runs from August to May. Learn vocabulary, assessment strategies, and documentation techniques. Work in disciplinary pairs and cross-disciplinary group meetings.

advanced program supports faculty interested in revising their existing course portfolio (based on a subsequent offering of the course), writing a new benchmark portfolio for a different course, or creating an *inquiry course portfolio* that examines a specific aspect or question concerning their teaching. Runs from November to May. Work in small cross-disciplinary teams.

scholarship of teaching and learning program assists faculty as they develop a journal-length article or book-length manuscript that emerges from their teacher research/inquiry into their classrooms and/or their students' learning. Runs from October to May. Work in writing circles.

Assessment

How does a campus get started?

Invite core group of faculty on campus to externally review existing course portfolios Over 200 faculty course portfolios from 14 different schools on our project website: **www.courseportfolio.org**

Have this core group start writing local examples of course portfolios

Invite outside speaker(s) to come to introduce the concept to the campus, create a campus plan, and meet with administrators

Who is going to run the project?

Faculty led

or

Professional organizational development office (for example, teaching and learning center, center for teaching excellence)

or

A combination of the two

Each has advantages and disadvantages

Achievement

Funding a Project

stipends to support project leaders

stipends to pay faculty participants

money to pay a support person

funds to provide each participant a project notebook

money to support development of a website to post information
materials and/or completed course portfolios

money to buy teaching-related books for faculty participants

money for providing refreshments at group meetings

travel money for project leaders to attend conferences and events

travel money for project participants to present their work at teaching
and disciplinary meetings

Potential Sources of funds

provost's office

university foundation

a local, regional, or national foundation

campus teaching and learning center

individual college deans

campus faculty teaching council

Our Big Expense

$1000 for completing our first-year fellowship program
$500 for completing the advanced program
$500 for completing the SOTL program

Pay? **Shouldn't evaluating and exploring one's own teaching and students' learning be part of the job of a teacher?**

Developing a course portfolio and participating in project discussions of teaching are beyond the traditional level of reflection and assessment in which teachers typically engage. Also, participants feel that the university administration backs their efforts to improve their teaching in a way similar to that by which research is rewarded through merit evaluations

Successful Strategies

- Project starts in the fall and focuses on a spring course
- Faculty participate in disciplinary pairs
- Participants engage in disciplinary and cross-disciplinary conversation through regular group and team meetings
- We hold three retreats/workshops over the year (two Saturdays and the Monday after the end of the spring semester) as focused time to write and to discuss the impact of peer review on teaching:
    - *What is student learning in my course?*
    - *Am I achieving it?*
    - *How do I document it?*

Enhancing

Project website and repository of course portfolios:
www.courseportfolio.org

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank You