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Improving Higher Education: Ways of Knowing

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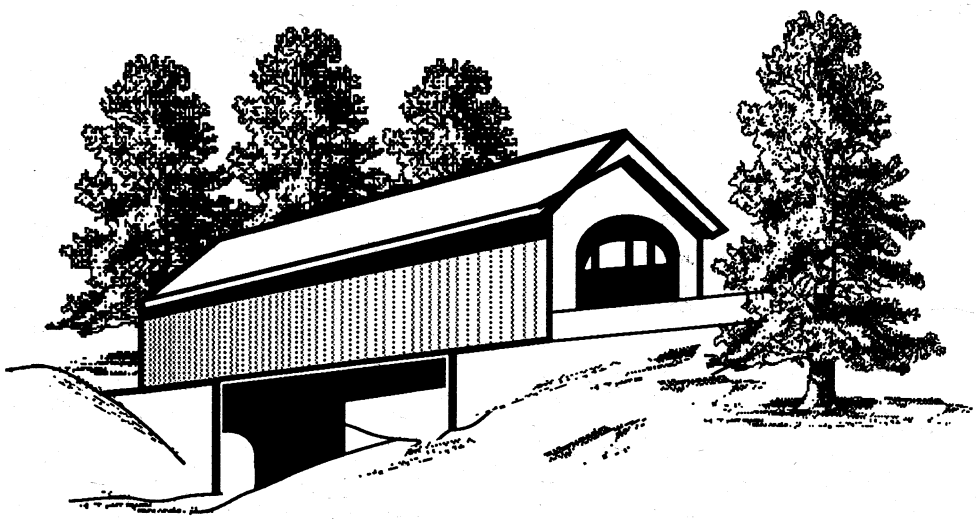
Improving Higher Education: Ways of Knowing



16th Annual Conference
October 23-27, 1991
Lakeview Resort and Conference Center
Morgantown, West Virginia

POD
The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education

POD is committed to improving higher education through faculty, instructional, and organizational development. The conference theme this year invites us to reexamine and exchange views of whether, how, and to what extent we know that our activities are contributing to improvements in higher education.

Call for Proposals

Proposal Cover Sheet
Concurrent Session
1991 POD National Conference
Improving Higher Education: Ways of Knowing

1. Session title: _____

_____

2. Organizer: _____
last name first name/initial middle name/initial

3. Institution: _____

4. Mailing address: _____

5. Telephone number: _____

6. Collaborating presenters/authors (list by name, title, institution or organization, street address, city, state or province, and zip code):

7. Major focus of session (check as many as apply):

- ☐ Faculty development
- ☐ Organizational development
- ☐ Instructional development
- ☐ Other: _____ (specify)

8. Abstract of about 50 words that would describe your session (*to appear in conference program if session accepted*):

9. Strand within the conference theme (check as many as apply):

- ☐ Research project and/or research program
- ☐ Micro-level inquiry
- ☐ Macro-level inquiry
- ☐ Self-assessment
- ☐ Concept session
- ☐ Other: _____
  (specify)

10. Type of session (check one):

- ☐ Large group
- ☐ Small group
- ☐ Other: _____
  (specify)
- ☐ Panel
- ☐ Poster

11. Time allotment requested (check one and circle Y or N to question):

- ☐ 45 minutes (Could you reduce time if necessary? Y or N)
- ☐ 60 minutes (Could you reduce time if necessary? Y or N)
- ☐ 75 minutes (Could you reduce time if necessary? Y or N)
- ☐ 90 minutes (Could you reduce time if necessary? Y or N)
- ☐ 2 hours (Could you reduce time if necessary? Y or N)

12. Equipment needed (please check one or more of the items listed below that can be provided as equip ment at the conference site):

- ☐ overhead projector and screen
- ☐ 1/2" VHS player and monitor
- ☐ flip chart and pens
- ☐ carousel slide projector and screen
- ☐ cassette audio recorder/player
- ☐ other: _____
  (specify, but may not be available at site)

Reminder: Please be sure to include your 2-3 page summary with this cover sheet. See description of summary in Call for Proposals.

Conference Theme

At the 1990 annual conference, POD sessions highlighted many exciting ways in which participants are addressing concerns vital to higher education. These concerns, for example, include assuring instructional quality while not sacrificing commitments to research and public service; responding to the needs of student diversity while maintaining a coherent curriculum; finding effective ways to both document teaching quality and use diagnostic feedback for teaching improvement; and helping faculty to continue their development and productivity throughout different career stages.

As we explored these and other issues of paramount importance to higher education, a second set of questions arose: How do we know what needs improving? How do we know what to do for improvement? How do we know if what we do actually results in improvement? Each of these questions suggests an inquiry process and evidence to back up our assertions. Do we have the necessary evidence? Do we have inquiry processes in place to generate and use such evidence?

For these reasons the theme for the 1991 POD Conference is *Improving Higher Education: Ways of Knowing*.

Scope of the Theme and Strands within It

Proposed topics for conference sessions may focus on any one or a combination of activities for faculty development, instructional development, and organizational development. *(An informational brochure that describes these activities can be obtained from the Teaching and Learning Center, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588, or from any current POD member.)*

Five strands, or areas of emphasis, are also established within the conference theme; sessions would be proposed and offered within these strands. The common element among them is a "reflective" component, that is, data (quantitative and qualitative) from observations and experiences are used within some systematic assessment process. The strands and an example of each are:

1. ***Studies designed as research projects and research programs*** to extend knowledge about teaching, learning, curriculum, and organizational effects in higher education (e.g., a study of strategies used in mathematics instruction and their effect on students with different learning styles).

2. ***Inquiries that occur as part of an activity or interaction at the micro level,*** such as a workshop, individual consultation, instructional development project, or other specific improvement-oriented activity (e.g., needs for and effects of a workshop on computer-assisted instruction).

3. ***Inquiries that occur as part of a program or effort at the macro level,*** such as a coordinated program or unit within an institution (e.g., documenting and communicating the cost-effectiveness of a small grants program for faculty development).

4. ***Self-assessments that occur in the context of professional growth experiences and careers*** (e.g., assessing your personal attitudes toward gender or race and implications for professional practice).

5. ***Concept sessions*** on the nature of our work, teaching and learning in higher education, or future directions (e.g., changes needed in graduate education for accommodating a broad view of scholarship that includes teaching).

While it is expected that most sessions will fall within one of these five strands, proposals are also accepted for sessions that cross one or more of the strands.

Kinds of Sessions

Sessions are intended to be highly interactive; audience involvement and "active learning" are recommended at each session. Sessions have used a variety of formats, such as focus or discussion groups, case study critiques, "town hall" meetings, posters, etc. The session proposer(s) should determine which format best fits the activities they wish to emphasize for active involvement.

Criteria for Evaluating Proposals and Sessions

Each proposal will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

Clarity of the need or problem to which the session is addressed in the context of the 1991 conference theme.

Importance of the session objective(s) or intended outcome(s) for the specified audience, especially with regard to new learning.

Appropriateness of the planned activities in view of the session objective(s), the intended audience, the time requested, and the promotion of active involvement.

Qualifications of the proposed presenters.

The program chair will review each proposal for completeness and then assign it to be reviewed by two or more reviewers. The proposal reviewers will use the above criteria in assessing each proposal and in making a judgment about its overall merit and worth. The program chair is responsible for making the final selection of conference sessions, based on the judgments of proposal reviewers and the mix of sessions at the conference. Each organizer will be notified of the outcome of the review process and will receive reviewer feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

Proposal Materials to Submit

Each proposal should include the following materials:

- **Proposal cover sheet** (included with this call for proposals)
- A two- to three-page, double-spaced typed **summary** that includes–

  (a) *statement of the topic*, which defines a particular need or problem within the context of the theme for the 1991 POD conference (*clarity* criterion);

  (b) the *objective(s)/intended outcome(s)* of the session, which identify the audience and response(s) for addressing the defined need or problem (*importance* criterion);

  (c) the *activity(ies)* that will occur as part of the session (*appropriateness* criterion); and

  (d) *background and interests* of the proposed presenter(s) as related to the objective(s) and activity(ies) of the session (*qualifications* criterion).

Four copies of your complete proposal should be postmarked by April 30, 1991 and sent to:

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