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Looking at Ourselves: A Courageous, Necessary Act

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**“Looking at Ourselves: A Courageous, Necessary Act
POD Conference, November 8-12, 2000, Vancouver, British Columbia**

Kay Gillespie and David Graf

Rationale

We can trace the beginnings of what we call “faculty development” back to about the 60s. Thus, as a field and a discipline, it is still quite young. Indeed, we might think of faculty development as an emerging discipline, a status which is evidenced by the continued calls for more research in the field and for enhanced professionalization. One of the necessary characteristics of those who would consider themselves to be members of a profession is the willingness to reflect upon that profession by examining it critically and by achieving distance from the profession itself in order to understand and, consequently, to be able to contribute positively to its constantly changing nature. By examining the “profession” of faculty developers, this session will heighten awareness of ourselves as professionals.

Statement of Objectives

The objectives of this session are as follows:

- to present new information descriptive of the position of faculty developer through an analysis of position announcements appearing over the course of a full year in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and announcements posted on either the POD network list or STLHE (Canadian Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education) network list (thus providing international analysis as well);
- to compare this descriptive analysis to data about POD members data gathered over the past several years and to other relevant research and survey reports;
- to invite participants’ reflection on the implications of this analysis and data for the enhancement of the “profession” of faculty development.
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The implications of the data and comparative analysis together with potential conclusions will be useful for those thinking about graduate programs and graduate student preparation, the POD grants program, and the minority internship grant program overseen by the POD Diversity Commission. It will also be of interest to individuals considering a career shift to full-time faculty development work, to those who may be considering job relocation, and to administrators seeking to institute faculty development programs at their institutions. Finally, the information provided and discussed during this session should be of interest to all faculty development professionals who are interested in increased understanding of their role within the profession.

Positions and Descriptors, 1999-2000¹
Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development²
Summary and Overview of Information/Data³

General Information

1. 87 institutions placed advertisements.
2. 100 positions were announced and examined.⁴
3. 4 institutions were from outside the U.S. (= 4%)
4. 5 institutions were identifiably other than public/private, non-profit single institutions, i.e., system-level positions (2), proprietary (1), private consortia/other (2). (= 5%)
5. There were no ads for part-time developers, i.e., part-time faculty directors.
6. 12 institutions were community college by name or appearance of the term within the text. (=12%)
7. 7 positions were college/discipline specific. (= 7%)
8. Only 1 position made any mention of a focus on multiculturalism/diversity, and this was for the position of "coordinator of multicultural teaching and learning services. (= 1%)
9. 16 descriptions indicated the reporting line for the unit/position. (= 16%)
10. 16 ads included salary levels. (= 16%)
11. 50% related to "technologies"

Duties (General)

Beyond the duties one might expect of such positions, the following information is noted.

1. 8 positions mentioned working with TAs. (= 8%)
2. 7 positions made reference to working with "staff" as well as faculty (= 7%)
3. 2 positions included working with part-time, adjunct faculty. (= 2%)
4. 3 positions made mention of "teaching a course". (= 3%)
5. 4 positions indicated grant writing, experience with obtaining external funding was either a duty or qualification. (= 4%)
6. Only 1 position had a focus on multiculturalism/diversity.

¹ This information was gathered from advertisements appearing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and on the listservs of The POD Network and the Canadian Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. The information covers the time period of December, 1999-September, 2000.

² Advertisements included were those with faculty, instructional, organizational, or professional development in the title or description. Advertisements not included were regular academic faculty positions within a department and those that were very narrowly media positions.

³ This material has been prepared by Kay Gillespie, CKF Associates, 2900 Tulane Drive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80525, U.S.A., e-mail: <kaygi2@aol.com>, ph: (970) 226-3731. Should it be used elsewhere, it will be appreciated if appropriate credit is given.

⁴ I do not guarantee that I found every advertisement!

Duties (Specific)

The following are noted because of the unusual or intriguing nature of the descriptor (s).

1. "Planning and coordination of a major classroom action research initiative, promoting and coordinating faculty mentorship and partnership programs and a faculty research journal (a community college advertisement).
2. Chairing a standing committee of the Faculty Senate
3. "Development and improvement of process for faculty and dean recruitment, training, and continuing professional development"
4. "Bring together faculty and student scholars, develop the undergraduate research project, and participate in the 'First Year Experience'"
5. "Expected to create new models of learning and research"
6. Promote "integrated professional development"
7. Work effectively in a "matrix organization"
8. "High energy atmosphere"
9. Counsel faculty and staff re: "career development options and personal fulfillment"
10. Develop summer academy
11. Establish teaching awards
12. Offer a "consulting portfolio" workshop
13. Pedagogical research efforts
14. Contribute to "applied research and scholarship"
15. "Promote the application of validated strategies and techniques derived from behavioral, cognitive, and constructivist theories to the solution of instructional problems"
16. PFF program (only one such mention)
17. Oversee a comprehensive program of peer mentoring
18. Participate in teaching assessment activities

Qualifications (General)

1. 14 ads indicated the Bachelor's degree as a minimum requirement. (= 14%) All of these, except 2, were in the areas of instructional technology and instructional design. The two exceptions were for a system director and a private association seeking a "trainer."
2. 42 ads indicated a minimum of a Master's degree with the majority indicating a higher degree was preferred. (= 42%)
3. 16 positions indicated the Ph.D./Ed.D. as preferred over the Master's level. (= 16%)
4. 17 positions indicated the Ph.D., Ed.D., or "doctorate as a minimum requirement (= 17%).
5. 10 advertisements used the terms "higher degree", "graduate degree", or "advanced degree as a minimum requirement. (= 10%)
6. Specific Fields mentioned for the doctorate were: faculty development (1), cognitive science (1), cognitive psychology (1), management information systems (1), education (1), discipline "other than history (1), "in an academic discipline" (1), and curriculum and instruction (1).
7. 53 ads indicated "experience" was required (teaching, administrative, faculty/instructional, relevant, related, or other such descriptors). (= 53%) Others indicated experience was required or expected by indirect wording and descriptors. When precisely indicated, as little as 1 year and as much as 10 years experience was specified.
8. 11 positions indicated faculty or instructional development experience was required. (= 11%)
9. 24 positions required teaching experience (as compared to a general statement that "experience" is required. (= 24%)
10. Only 1 ad indicated past tenure was required – "hold or have held tenure at the rank of Associate Professor or above. (= 1%)
11. Only 5 positions required submission of documentation above and beyond what has been

- traditionally expected: “an essay on philosophy and approach to implementing faculty development programs” (1), teaching evaluations (1), statement on how technology relates to teaching and learning (1), professional portfolio from candidates to be interviewed (1), 1-page teaching philosophy. (= 5%)
12. 4 positions indicated eligibility for a full-time faculty appointment/academic rank appointment was required. (= 4%)
 13. 50 positions made mention of responsibilities and activities specifically related to technology. (= 50%)

Qualifications (Specific)

The following are noted because of the unusual or intriguing nature of the descriptor (s).

1. “Ability to overcome obstacles with diplomacy and tact”
2. “Ability to lead equally in technical and instructional decisions”
3. Knowledge of the teaching of foreign languages desirable
4. Interest in the scholarship of teaching
5. Appointment at the “level of Assistant Professor of the Practice”
6. “Grass-roots” experience in faculty development and teaching improvement
7. Must have an “appropriate post-secondary technical education philosophy”
8. Bilingual skills an asset
9. “Platform and strategic planning skills”
10. “Proven ability to forecast trends in training and education”
11. Have knowledge and experience in the Americans with Disabilities Act
12. Experience with K-16 collaborative efforts
13. Exceptional organizational skills with an “eye for detail”
14. “Experience in making presentations at professional meetings”
15. Experience with the accreditation process of the ... Association of Colleges and Schools

Other Information of Interest

- 1 One affirmative action statement included the terms” visible minorities, aboriginal people ..., gay men and lesbians.”

Implications, Thoughts, and Possible Conclusions for Discussion

1. The high number of institutions indicating experience as required has implications for faculty/instructional development training programs and for the importance of the POD Diversity Internship Grant program.

Possible conclusion: Training programs should include experiential components, not just coursework.
2. Clearly, understanding of current educational technologies (computer technologies) is very important, which likewise has implications for career preparation.

Possible conclusion: Training programs should include coursework and experience with the technologies.
3. There was virtually no mention of “organizational development” activities, as we understand them generally within the mission of POD, e.g. chair/leadership development other than one

position which included “dean development” within the title and one position seeking a Director of Organizational Development. The latter seemed more a description of a human resource position.

Possible conclusion: While a number of persons within POD are working in and with what one can consider organizational development activities, the importance of such activities is not apparent in the advertisements. In particular, there appears to be virtually no emphasis on chairperson or leadership development. This, in turn – whether rightly or wrongly, appears to indicate no need.

3. Only 2 positions specifically addressed a professional development focus beyond teaching effectiveness. One referred to “integrated professional development” but without definition of how that might be understood. Another mentioned counseling “faculty and staff regarding career development options and personal fulfillment.”

Possible conclusion: The perception gleaned from these advertisements is that only teaching and learning is of importance. This reflects an absence of attention to the commonly accepted tripartite function of university/college professors – teaching, research, and service. Moreover, it reflects no interest in the faculty member as a “whole” person. There are some, albeit a small number, existing programs that have this multifaceted perspective.

4. There were some apparent disparities between title/duties/level of responsibility and listing of qualifications. Examples of such seeming disparities are provided below.

Possible conclusion: This sense of disparity may speak to the importance of crafting a position announcement appropriate for the description of responsibilities and expected and reasonable qualifications – in fairness to potential applicants.

5. There was virtually no mention of diversity issues within duties, responsibilities, activities, or programs.

Possible conclusion: While one could conclude that this absence reflects an absence of interest in diversity within faculty and instructional development, this is unlikely to be the case. However, as diversity is an important emphasis in most, if not all, faculty and instructional development efforts, it would be appropriate to make mention of this within the description of duties of many of the positions. Again, this speaks to the crafting of position announcements.

6. Only 5 institutions indicated an expectation in application materials beyond the usual, e.g., portfolio, teaching evaluations, statement of philosophy.

Possible conclusion: We are not yet at a point where our application procedures have become very imaginative, incorporating what we know to be good practice for career assessment and development.

7. Degree fields mentioned were primarily from disciplines from within the field of education.

Possible conclusion: A significant number of current faculty development practitioners have degrees from outside the disciplines of education, i.e., in the “academic disciplines” (the

language of the advertisements). Thus, the degree field requirement predominant in the advertisements would seem to exclude such persons from eligibility for a good number of the positions.

Examples of Apparent Discrepancies in Responsibilities and Qualifications?

1. A system-wide “senior director” position (a very large system) indicates only a Bachelor’s degree as required (advanced degree preferred). Also required are 10 years of experience.
2. A “director position” for a center of instructional technology at a university lists only a Bachelor’s degree as required with no statement about “advanced degree preferred” and only 1 year of related experience required.
3. A college-specific position at a very large research institution required a Master’s degree, “doctoral degree preferred”, 2 years of prior work, and 7-10 years experience in curriculum development and evaluation in a medical setting plus grant writing skills, at a salary of \$45,000-55,000.
4. Another director’s position for a faculty and staff development center, college-specific, in a university setting in an expensive urban area listed only the Bachelor’s as required (M.A., Ph.D. preferred) together with a requirement of 5 years experience and “proven ability to forecast trends in training and education.”
5. Another major research institution in a large urban area sought a “teaching consultant” with a Master’s required (Ph.D. desired), 2 years teaching experience, and full-time experience in faculty and TA development for a top salary of \$35,000.

Titles of Positions (56 titles in total)

Number in parenthesis = number of times the same title appeared if more than once.

Activity Director

Advisor on Teaching and Learning

Assistant Director (3)

Associate Dean of the Faculties for Professional Development

Associate Director (6)

Associate/Assistant Director (2)

Associate Provost for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development

Campus Instructional Officer

Consultant

Coordinator

Coordinator of Multicultural Teaching and Learning Services

Coordinator, TA Program

Curriculum Designer

Dean of Instructional Affairs

Dean of Instructional Services

Director (17)

Director of Academic Technology Development

Director of Faculty and Dean Development

Director, Faculty Development Programs

Director of Faculty Evaluation

Director of Instructional Technology

Director of Instructional Training

Director, Organizational Development
Director of Technology Enhanced Learning
Director, Writing in the Disciplines

Educational Technologist
Executive Director (2)

Faculty Consultants (2)
Faculty Development Consultant
Faculty Development Specialist

Graduate Student Development Specialist

Head

Instructional and Professional Development Consultant
Instructional Consultant (4)
Instructional Design Specialist (2)
Instructional Designer (10)
Instructional Developer
Instructional Development Coordinator
Instructional Development Specialist (2)
Instructional/Faculty Designers
Instructional Officer
Instructional Specialist
Instructional Support Specialist
Instructional Technologist (4)
Instructional Technology Consultant
Instructional Technology Specialist (4)
Instructional Technology Support Specialist

Learning Technologies Support Specialist

Project Coordinator

Senior Director of Systemwide Professional Development
Senior Instructional Designer (2)
Senior Instructional Designer/Evaluator

Teaching Consultant
Trainer

Web Instructional Design Specialist
Web Instructional Technologist

Names of Units

Not all ads included the name of the unit within which the position was located.

Center for Academic Development
Center for Academic Excellence
Center of Academic Excellence
Center for Effective University Teaching
Center for Faculty Development
Center for Faculty Excellence
Center for Innovative Teaching, Technology, Learning, and Evaluation
Center for Instructional Services
Center of Instructional Technology
Center for Instructional Technologies
Center for Research on Teaching and Learning
Center for Teaching and Learning (7)
Center for Teaching and Learning Services
Center for Teaching Excellence (2)
Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology
Center for Teaching, Learning, and Writing

College of Business
College of Dentistry
College of Extended Learning
College of Osteopathic Medicine
College of Pharmacy

Department of Information Resources

Faculty and Staff Development Center
Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

Human Resources Division

Information Technology Services
Instructional Consulting Office
Instructional Development Center

Instructional Technology Center (2)
Instructional Technology Services

Office of Instructional Resources and Technology
Office of Teaching and Learning

PBL Learning Center

Teaching and Learning Center (2)
Teaching Center
Teaching Effectiveness Program
Teaching, Learning, and Technology Center

University Teaching and Learning Center

University Teaching Services

Units of Reporting

Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School

Assistant Vice President

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Programs

Associate Vice Chancellor

Chief Information Officer

Chief Technology Officer

Dean of the Library/Educational Technology

Department of Computer Services

Division of Academic Affairs

Instructional Research Computing Director

Provost

Vice President for Academic Affairs (2)

Vice President for Information Services

Vice President for Information Technology

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