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1998

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Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education

Mission Statement

The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD) fosters human development in higher education through faculty, instructional, and organizational development.

POD believes that people have value, as individuals and as members of groups. The development of students is a fundamental purpose of higher education and requires for its success effective advising, teaching, leadership, and management. Central to POD's philosophy is lifelong, holistic, personal and professional learning growth, and change for the higher education community.

As envisioned by P.O.D., faculty development encompasses activities that focus on individual faculty members first as teachers—as professionals engaged in fostering student development. A second theme in faculty development focuses on faculty members as scholars and professionals, and involves such tasks as career planning and development of various scholarly skills. A third area of faculty development addresses faculty members as persons, and involves activities that enhance a person's well-being such as wellness management, interpersonal skills, stress and time management, and assertiveness training.

Instructional development strives to enhance individual faculty members' and their institutions' effectiveness by focusing on courses, the curriculum, and student learning. Instructors serve as members of a design or redesign team, working with instructional design and evaluation specialists, to identify course or curriculum strategies or processes appropriate to achieving stated outcome goals.

Organizational development focuses on the organizational structure and processes of an institution and its subunits. Organizational development seeks to help the organization function in an effective and efficient way to support the work of teachers and students. Leadership training for department chairpersons; effective use of group processes; review, revision, and active use of the mission statement; implementing organizational change processes; and institutional governance are representative topics that fall within the purview of organizational development.

The three purposes of POD are:

- To provide support and services for its members through publications, conferences, consulting, and networking;
- To offer services and resources to others interested in faculty development; and
- To fulfill an advocacy role, nationally, seeking to inform and persuade educational leaders of the value of faculty, instructional, and organizational development in institutions of higher education.

POD provides a number of programs, products, and activities for members. These include:

- an annual conference designed to satisfy professional and personal needs; to nurture growth, innovation and change; and to enable people to exchange ideas and broaden their professional network;
- an annual membership directory and networking guide that identifies those who share others' experiences, needs, and interests;
- a newsletter from the Executive Director that communicates P.O.D. business, and informs members of other professional development opportunities;
- *To Improve the Academy*, an annual sourcebook which offers a range of materials on teaching and learning written by P.O.D. members;
- *A Handbook for New Practitioners* that provides concrete, practical, "how to" information on the gamut of faculty, instructional and organizational development activities;
- *Teaching Excellence*, an annual series of eight essays written by scholar-practitioners on topics of interest to college teachers. A subscription provides the subscriber with rights to unlimited reproduction and distribution at the subscribing institution. *Teaching Excellence* aims to inform, stimulate, and inspire its readers to strive for the very best in the noble—and ennobling—profession of college teaching.
- Occasional publications such as the Bright Idea Network, a collection of innovative ideas generated by conference participants.