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President's Message

IS POD FLAT?

Globalization profoundly shapes our lives. According to Thomas Friedman's 2005 *The World is Flat*, recent technological advances have transformed global economics and culture, creating a level playing field that allows innovators anywhere to influence the entire planet. Although critics have pointed out that resources and expertise are not as evenly distributed as Friedman contends (in the words of one skeptic, "the world is spiky"), the "flat world" thesis and concerns with globalization have become a virtual mantra among higher education leaders; the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), for example, has titled its January 2011 conference "Global Positioning," emphasizing "competitive notions of 'world class' education [and] the imperatives of changing international economic and political power."

My travels this summer have prompted me to think often about globalization in our common work. As POD president, I

traveled to Toronto for the annual conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE), a Canadian partner of POD. My university then sent me to Barcelona where I represented POD at the annual council meeting of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) and participated in ICED's biennial conference.

I connected with many POD colleagues in both places, but I also discovered a new professional world that stretched and challenged me. At STLHE, for instance, Joy Mighty and Julia Christensen Hughes facilitated a boundary-crossing preconference workshop building on their new book *Taking Stock* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010) that analyzes emerging global research on teaching and learning. At ICED, Zenawi Zerihun and his colleagues from Ethiopia presented a compelling model for teaching evaluation that made my campus's recent efforts to reform our evaluation system seem something



less than "world class."

My ICED and STLHE experiences led me to reflect on whether the "flat world" thesis applies to POD. How effectively are we learning from and contributing to innovation in our profession around the world? As a partial answer to that question, I conducted an informal research project comparing citations from the most recent volume of POD's annual *To Improve the Academy* (#28, 2010) with a similar sample from ICED's journal *International Journal for Academic Development* (3 issues, September 2008 - June 2009). Over that period of time, *TIA* and *IJAD* each published 21 articles, representing perhaps the best collection of academic development scholarship in the world.

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Notes from the POD Office

The 35th annual POD conference (November 3-8, 2010, St. Louis) is fast approaching. If you haven't yet registered, please remember to do so before October 1st to take advantage of the early-bird rate of \$450.

The conference will be held at the **Hyatt Regency St. Louis at The Arch**, St. Louis, Missouri. To make reservations, call 314-655-1234 or 800-233-1234. Mention "POD Network Group Rate" to get the group rate.

To reserve a room online, visit

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/POD2010> and select "General Block" under Guest Type.

In order to help everyone's budget stretch a bit further, we were able to negotiate free wireless internet access in *all* guest rooms and in *all* lobby/public spaces for all POD conference attendees.

We'll be holding the Vendor Exhibit again this year for three days and are offering the following options to make the Exhibit as accessible as possible for POD members:

\$150 for individual or small business conference attendees (all 3 days).

\$100 for individual or small business conference attendees (your choice of any 2 days).

\$400 for corporate attendees (all 3 days).

Please remember to stay through Sunday. You won't want to miss the Sunday Morning Anchor Session "Beyond Our Gates: Preparing for Emerging Trends in Higher Education" where Peggy Cohen and colleagues will provide an overview of many exciting new initiatives in higher



education development. Please see the Conference Team's article in this issue for more details. See you in St. Louis!

--Hoag Holmgren,

Executive Director, POD

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All 48 of the authors from the *TIA* articles reported being at North American institutions, while only 8 of 52 *IJAD* authors were. The works cited in these articles echoed the institutional affiliation of the authors. Of the nearly 250 books cited in *TIA*, some 94% were published in the United States, while 39% of the books referenced in *IJAD* were published in the United States. Journal citations followed a similar pattern. More than 400 journals were referenced in the *TIA* and *IJAD* articles that I examined, yet only 25% of those journals were cited at least once in both *TIA* and *IJAD*. Although some variation should be expected, the lack of overlap is striking.

We are doing similar work but reading and producing different scholarly literature.

If *To Improve the Academy* captures the best of POD's scholarship, which I believe it does, then our professional world is *not* flat. We have not entered a full partnership with our global colleagues. There's a world of scholarly literature and effective practice that we as POD members may not be utilizing fully to help us do our work. As an organization and as individuals, we should challenge ourselves to learn from innovators in our field, whether they are down the road or across the planet.

Of course, POD and its members also have a lot to contribute to the world. One sign of that influence

is that the new network of faculty developers in Thailand has named itself ThaiPOD. Similarly, scholarship by POD members is read across the globe, with publications by Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Nancy Chism, Dee Fink, and others, being as well known in Asia as they are in North America.

Virginia Lee, POD's president from 2008-2009, has an excellent article in the forthcoming issue of *To Improve the Academy* (Vol. 29) that explores the complexity of academic development in an increasingly international higher education environment. Drawing on insights from Australian colleagues Anna Carew, Geraldine Lafoe, and others, Lee calls for POD members to develop more "elastic practice" — an

expanded capacity to tailor our local work to reflect both a deep knowledge of our own context and an adaptive view of our profession's best practices.

As we begin a new academic year in a world (whether flat or spiky) characterized by accelerating change and interchange, elastic practice should become our mantra. What are we, alone and together, learning from and contributing to our increasingly global profession?

--Peter Felton,

President, POD

Conference News

The 2010 conference theme asks POD attendees to take a fresh look at our past, present and future as we consider new directions for our profession and our organization. A few highlights from the program include our plenary sessions with Drs. Sylvia Hurtado (UCLA) and Kristen Renn (Michigan State University), special POD-Sponsored sessions from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Faculty Development Network (HBCU), and a Sunday Anchor Session presented by POD's Professional Development Committee.

Dr. Hurtado will draw from current research in introductory science classrooms to illustrate points regarding assessment of students' skills. She will present evidence from national data on undergraduate teaching faculty administered by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute indicating a relationship between faculty pedagogy, their own values and characteristics, and institutional support.

Dr. Renn will address how the presence of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgendered (LGBT)

can provide opportunities for exploring the intersections of identity, teaching, and learning. She will address questions like, "How can faculty in any discipline create learning environments that capitalize on engagement with LGBT issues?" while challenging the audience to consider other ways that identities intersect with teaching and learning in higher education.

Dr. Ashley Finley, Director of Assessment for the AAC&U, will present data from a national survey of faculty from twenty colleges and universities regarding faculty practice and perspectives on pedagogical innovation, institutional and disciplinary cultures of teaching and learning, and the junction of high impact pedagogies with regard to promotion and tenure processes. Additionally, the study addresses the relationship between institutional reward structures and cultures of support with dimensions of job satisfaction, commitment, and mental well-being.

Dr. Henry Findley, and other members of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Faculty Development Network, will describe the origins and distinctive nature of the Network and its role in developing the faculty teaching workforce at HBCUs.



St. Louis, November 3-7, 2010, Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch

They will also share "nuts and bolts" information about how to establish and maintain such an organization. POD is pleased to announce that it will co-host the POD 2011 Conference in Atlanta with the HBCU Faculty Development Network.

POD's Professional Development Committee will present the Sunday Anchor Session, *Beyond Our Gates: Preparing for Emerging Trends in Higher Education*. Margaret Cohen and colleagues will overview emerging initiatives, including LEAP, High Impact Practices, Access to Success, VSA, Bologna, NSSE, ADP, e-portfolios, and VALUE rubrics. Using case studies, participants will clarify the trends and examine productive and nonproductive patterns of practice so that developers ask strategic questions early, align new initiatives with institutional priorities, and garner instrumental faculty support.

As in previous years, the program includes a vast array of highly

interactive sessions, engaging discussions in roundtable format, and a stimulating poster session. Other conference mainstays include the job fair, resource fair, Topical Interest Groups, and vendor exhibits.

Volunteers will be available in a hospitality area to guide attendees in getting the most out of the many opportunities the conference offers. Newcomers will undoubtedly feel the POD spirit, and long-time attendees will once again experience the unique collegiality of the organization's members.

The conference team has made a number of changes to this year's program; one of the biggest is the meal line-up. To promote collegiality and ongoing conversations, we will have three breakfasts (Friday-Sunday), two dinners (Thursday and Friday) and a lunch (Saturday). Lunch-on-your-own has been scheduled on Friday this year to allow attendees to take advantage of

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Conference News, continued from page 3

downtown restaurants that might not be open on the weekend. Saturday's conference lunch offers you the opportunity to network informally with colleagues, avoiding overlap with the plenary addresses. Long-time attendees to the POD Conference will also notice changes to the traditional

evening schedule. This year, the POD Awards Banquet will be held on Friday night. The Banquet highlights the POD spirit and community, and we hope all attendees will join us. Immediately afterwards, POD Karaoke will make its triumphant return! For those who want to take a break from

singing tributes to musical idols, you can enjoy the smooth live music of jazz guitarist Dan Rubright. Dinner-on-your-own moves to Saturday night and offers POD attendees the chance to catch up with new and old friends, take advantage of the local cuisine, and/or join others at the St. Louis Symphony or the Repertory Theater

of St. Louis.

We are truly excited about the conference and look forward to seeing you there!

--Shaun Longstreet, Conference Co-Chair

Suzanne Tapp, Conference Co-Chair

Michael Palmer, Program Co-Chair

Martin Springborg, Program Co-Chair

The Idea Center Observes 35th Anniversary

Since August 1, 1975, The IDEA Center, Manhattan, Kan., U.S.A. has quietly, efficiently and systematically gathered data and offered feedback for faculty improvement in hundreds of thousands of college and university classes. The brainchild of one psychology professor who believed that student learning, rather than student whims, should be the yardstick of faculty evaluation, the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction has spun off a suite of improvement feedback instruments currently used in 370 colleges and universities. Since 1976, the Center has processed over 25 million individual students' forms, and from 1990 to 2010, surveys from nearly 1.4 million classes have been processed.

In 1968, Donald Hoyt, Ph.D., administrator and faculty member at Kansas State University in Manhattan, began creating a faculty evaluation instrument that looked at student learning relative to

an instructor's objectives, rather than simply measuring an instructor's behaviors or popularity. Long before terms like 'learning communities' and 'learner-centered' became common, the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction measured students' perception of their learning.

IDEA focuses on student learning of 12 instructor-specified objectives, soliciting students' feedback on their own learning progress, effort, and motivation, as well as their perceptions of the instructor's use of 20 instructional strategies and teaching methods. Instructor reports provided specific results, including recommendations for improvement, to guide faculty reflection. This instrument has required revision only once in 35 years, and the model itself has not changed — strong testament to the notion that good ideas do last!

In order to make IDEA more widely

available, K-State established the Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development (rechristened The IDEA Center in 1997) in 1975, thanks to a multi-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation. The goal was to improve student learning and the quality of instruction, first at Kansas State University, then nation-wide.

Bill Cashin, Ph.D., joined the Center in 1975, became its director in 1985, and retired in 1996. Under Cashin's leadership, The IDEA Center began offering national seminars and conferences on faculty development and teaching-learning issues, as well as conferences for academic chairs. In 1981 Cashin began the IDEA Papers series which may be most familiar to POD members. Cashin wrote many IDEA Papers, brief treatises offering faculty members practical insights to improve student learning and available at www.theideacenter.org.

1997 was a transitional year for the Center. Bill Pallett, Ph.D., joined as president, having served as director of assessment at Kansas State University. Don Hoyt, who had retired from K-State as assistant provost in 1995, returned to IDEA as research coordinator and Amy Gross, Ph.D., joined the Center as vice president for integrative client services and is now vice president for knowledge management.

In 2001, The IDEA Center became a separate nonprofit entity. Since 2003, the board of directors has comprised 12 academic leaders, four of whom are faculty at Kansas State University and many who have a history with POD. Former board members who have a history with POD include Bill McKeachie and Chuck Bonwell. Currently, Larry Braskamp, Christine Licata, Mary Lou Higgerson, Peter Seldin, Jeff Seybert and Marilla Svinicki are among those

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To Improve the Academy, Vol. 30 Needs Reviewers

You are invited to shape your discipline by serving as a reviewer for *To Improve the Academy*, Vol. 30. Since all communication will be electronic, reviewers will have about six weeks (from early Dec. 2010 to Jan. 6, 2011) to evaluate 2 to 5 manuscripts. The

number will depend on how many qualified colleagues volunteer to review. To qualify, you should have at least three years' experience as a faculty, TA, instructional, or organizational developer (full- or part-time) and as a POD

member.

If you are interested and qualified, please email the Editor, Judy Miller at tia@unf.edu, and she will send you the Reviewer Self-Nomination Form as a Word file. Please return the completed form by **Friday, Nov. 12, 2010**.

You need not apply if you reviewed for the forthcoming *To Improve the Academy*, Vol. 29. Judy will contact you to confirm your interest in reviewing again. But if you cannot serve, please let her know as soon as possible.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMY, Vol. 30

Submission Deadline: Wednesday, December 1, 2010

The Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education invites submissions for the 2011 edition (Vol. 30) of *To Improve the Academy*. Since its inception in 1982, this annual publication has showcased articles demonstrating scholarly excellence in research, innovation, and integration in faculty, instructional, and organizational development.

The audience for *To Improve the Academy* includes faculty development and organizational development professionals, administrators and consultants, all of whom work to improve the climate for teaching and learning in higher education. Manuscripts should focus on informing and helping these professionals with their work. They may be research-based, programmatic, or

reflective pieces, but those describing new approaches and programs must include evaluative information.

Manuscripts must be well written. You are strongly encouraged to ask (a) colleague(s) to review your manuscript before submission.

Submission Requirements

- Maximum length of articles is **20 double-spaced pages** in 12-point type, Times New Roman, standard margins (1" on all sides). Each chapter should be 4,375-5,625 words (approx. 17.5-22.5 double-spaced pages) including references, tables and figures.
- Manuscripts **must** be prepared according to the guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Sixth Edition (e.g., include running head and page headers; headings not

numbered; correct reference format).

- Compose a title (up to 12 words) that clearly informs the reader about the content.
- Include an abstract of 100 words or less.
- Do **not** use footnotes.
- **Electronic submissions only.**

Submission Process

Please submit **two copies** of the manuscript as email attachments in MS Word or rich text format:

- **one complete copy** with a title page that includes the names (in the order in which they should appear), mailing addresses, telephones, faxes, and emails of all authors; and
- **one "masked" copy** without author name(s), institution(s), or contact information. Identifying information in the text of the article should also be "masked."

Name the two files starting with the last name of the lead author, e.g.: Smith CompleteMS, Smith MaskedMS.

Email submissions by **December 1, 2010** to: Judith E. Miller, Editor, at tia@unf.edu.

Manuscript submissions will be acknowledged within two working days. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please inquire.

Interested in learning more about submitting a manuscript for publication in *To Improve the Academy*, Vol. 30 or reviewing for it? Judy Miller, Editor, and Jim Groccia, Associate Editor, will facilitate an informational roundtable session, "Getting Your Article Published in *To Improve the Academy*," at the upcoming POD conference on Friday, **November 15, 2010**, from 2:15 to 3:30 PM. Please check the final conference program for the location.

Guest Column

Continuing our series of international exchanges, our guest column is by Geoffrey Crisp (University of Adelaide), President of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA).

Should a Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Learning and Teaching be Mandatory for Academics?

Geoffrey Crisp

David Gosling recently published an article in SEDA's (Staff and Educational Development Association) magazine *Educational Developments* (1) on the extent to which Post Graduate Certificates in Higher Education learning and teaching (PgCerts) had become mandatory requirements for many new university academics in the UK. The UK has been particularly proactive in having policies requiring completion of a PgCert as a condition of continuing academic employment. In Australia, most higher education institutions (HEIs) would have a mandatory professional development requirement for new academics and would provide access to a formal qualification equivalent to the UK PgCert, although only a small number of institutions have made completion of the PgCert a requirement for continuing employment. Many Australian HEIs provide free or subsidised access to PgCerts to a limited number of their own academics. David pointed out that a number of countries have embraced the idea of

mandatory professional development for new academics, including the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Japan and Sri Lanka; whereas other countries, such as the USA, have been reluctant to move down this path. In the USA, more significant emphasis is placed on the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) rather than newly appointed Faculty, as GTAs are seen as the pool from which future academics will be drawn. David posited that the move towards embedding a mandatory component of professional development for the teaching component of an academic's practice probably has more to do with government regulatory requirements on HEIs, rather than a recognition of the inherent merits of PgCert programs.

The nature of PgCert programs can vary between countries and indeed between institutions; in the UK SEDA plays a key role in maintaining standards around these programs through a formal

recognition process; the Professional Development Framework provides recognition for the professional development programs of UK higher education institutions and the individuals who complete those programs. In Australia, there is currently no formal national recognition process for academic's professional development, although informal benchmarking frequently takes places through the activities of the Foundations Colloquium (2) and CADAD (Council Australian Directors of Academic Development) (3).

The move to mandating professional training in educational practice through PgCerts is a recognition that completing a PhD in a core discipline and undertaking discipline-based research is not necessarily the most appropriate training for teaching; especially when that teaching might involve large classes with students from diverse cultures or social backgrounds. The issue of standards and the quality of teaching in HEIs is

sometimes a controversial topic, especially when the discussion includes stakeholders outside of the specific discipline being investigated. How is teaching quality measured in HEIs and what would an acceptable standard of educational practice look like in each discipline? In Australia, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) (4) has commissioned a major program of consultations with the higher education sector in order to define academic standards in the disciplines in preparation for the work of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. These standards will include higher education learning and teaching. The ALTC has already sponsored a major project on Teaching Quality Indicators and the project proposed a set of indicators for recognising and rewarding quality teaching (5).

We have become accustomed to the almost universal use of student feedback as a proxy measure of teaching quality, and at the same time, we have witnessed research questioning the

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ability of this feedback to validly and reliably quantify teaching quality. Some institutions have reworded their documentation around the use of student feedback to make a clear distinction between students' perceptions or experiences of the teacher and the teaching environment, and the evaluation of the teacher or the teaching environment, which is usually undertaken by peers. Peer evaluation has become more popular, but mostly for formative or developmental purposes and more reluctantly for the summative purposes of promotion and annual reviews. The main issues still preventing a more widespread adoption of summative peer review include the need to offer acceptable professional training for peer reviewers to ensure validity, reliability and fidelity to evaluations

and the workload issues for both reviewer and reviewed.

Despite all this activity in “professionalising” higher education teaching, a question still posed by senior administrators is whether there is a direct, causal correlation between academics completing a PgCert and the quality of their teaching? I am sure all universities that offer PgCerts can provide evidence that there is a positive correlation for their programs; the bigger question is how do we explain the high quality teaching delivered by a large number of academics who have never completed a PgCert? Completing a PgCert is no guarantee that high quality teaching will result, yet the majority of academics who do complete a PgCert will likely apply their new or affirmed learnings to their educational practices.

Even academics who have not completed a PgCert can be positively influenced by their own readings of the educational literature and the activities of their colleagues who are engaged in the scholarship of learning and teaching. Should we expect all academics to complete a PgCert or should we require all academics to provide evidence of professional development that has enhanced the quality of their educational practice? Ignoring professional development associated with one's practice is not an acceptable path for academics, so the issue may be more about finding appropriate mechanisms to offer a range of development or enhancement activities that cover the breadth of academics' needs, rather than mandating one type of activity that will not

necessarily cover all the aspects of an academic's work?

References

- (1) Gosling, D. (2010). *Educational Developments*, SEDA, Issue 11.2; <http://www.seda.ac.uk/publications.html>
- (2) Foundations Colloquium; <http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/foundations/colloquia/>
- (3) CADAD; <http://www.cadad.edu.au/>
- (4) <http://www.altc.edu.au/standards>
- (5) <http://www.altc.edu.au/teaching-quality-indicators>

Geoffrey Crisp is the President of HERDSA. He is the Director of the Centre of Learning and Professional Development and Director, Online Education at the University of Adelaide. Contact: geoffrey.crisp@adelaide.edu.au

Publications by POD Members

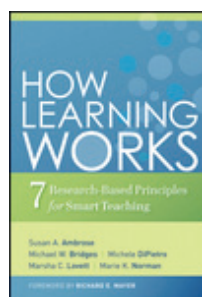
John Zubizarreta

(2009). A passion for excellence. In M. Wolfensberger (Ed.), *Honours in the global world: Searching for excellence* (Foreword). Omslag: Hanzehogeschool Groningen.

(2010). Class size: Is less more for significant learning? *To Improve the Academy* (Vol. 28, pp. 193-207). Ed. L. B. Nilson and J. E. Miller. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

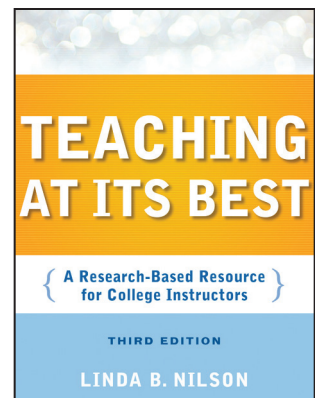
Ambrose, S., Bridges, M., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M., and Norman, M.

(2010) *How learning works: Seven research-based principles for smart teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Nilson, L. B. (2010). *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Among the many updates and additions to the 2nd edition are sections or whole chapters on millennial students, cognitive psychology, visuals as learning tools, inquiry-guided learning, SCALE-UP classrooms, multiple true-false test items, “maps” of the learning process, methods

for achieving given outcomes, the latest technologies from blogs and clickers to vodcasting and wikis, and more.



Members on the Move

Michele DiPietro is the new Executive Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Associate Professor of Statistics at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, GA, U.S.A. His new contact information is mdipietr@kennesaw.edu.

POD Partners With Epigeum

POD recently has partnered with Epigeum, a British publisher of online faculty training courses used by academic institutions around the world. POD members, and POD member institutions, benefit from this partnership from a 5% discounted rate on all Epigeum courses. POD will also be able to offer free licenses to a select group of POD members, and POD member institutions, to pilot test new Epigeum courses. To inquire about these pilots, contact Hoag Holmgren, Executive Director at podoffice@podnetwork.org or look for an announcement on the POD member's email list.



Graduate and Professional Student Development Committee Award to Provide Conference Funding for Graduate Students

The Professional Organizational Development Network in Higher Education's Committee of Graduate and Professional Student Development announces a Reduced POD Conference Registration Fee Award for four (4) advanced graduate students across disciplines and professional schools to attend the annual conference. The four awardees would receive a reduced conference registration fee of \$50. (Several meals are included in this fee.) All other travel and hotel fees will be born by the student or his/her sponsoring university. Awardees will be expected to attend the GPSD Breakfast at POD, which takes place 7:00-8:45 a.m. on Saturday, November 6, 2010.

Call for Self-Nominations: POD Core Committee

POD members who have been members for at least three years are invited to submit their name as a candidate to the POD Core Committee. The Core Committee is the primary governing body of POD and functions as its board of directors. Each member serves for a period of three years, beginning in the fall after the Core Committee election has occurred. Members are

Each applicant will be judged on demonstrated commitment to teaching and learning, and relevance of conference to future career plans.

Interested graduate students should submit the documents listed below via email attachment to Mary Wright, mcwright@umich.edu, current Chair of the GPSD Committee, by **Friday, October 8, 2010, 5 pm EST**. Award winners will be contacted by Monday, October 18, 2010, 5 pm, EST.

1. Name and Contact Information
2. Curriculum Vitae (with expected date of graduation and degree indicated). Please attach your C.V. to email in a separate document. It should include all of your

relevant work on teaching and learning (e.g, classes taught, professional development around teaching).

3. List of two references with contact information included (either from a member of the degree-granting department or from staff of your central teaching office)
4. A brief cover letter (1-2 pages) articulating particular interest in attending the 2010 conference, including its application to your future career. In the event that you are already planning to participate in either a session or poster display at the conference, please also describe the presentation. For questions, please contact Mary Wright.

expected to attend all of the six meetings that occur during their term plus the spring Core meeting in 2011 (March 18-19), for a grand total of seven Core meetings.

To nominate yourself, send your candidate's statement to the POD office at podoffice@podnetwork.org with "Core Self-Nomination" in the subject line. Statements must be received by **November 10, 2010**. Your

statement should include: Name, title, institution; background in professional and organizational development; and response to the question: What would you like to see POD accomplish over the next three years? Statement should not exceed 750 words. Contact the POD office or the chair of the POD Nominations and Elections Committee, Mike Theall, mtheall@ysu.edu, with any questions.

Digital Case Stories Now Available

The MERLOT ELIXR Initiative – <http://elixr.merlot.org> – is pleased to announce that their full set of 78 digital case stories for faculty development are now available. These stories can be used freely in faculty development programs and also accessed by individual instructors.

The MERLOT ELIXR Initiative is a multimedia case story repository that features discipline-specific stories of faculty engaged in exemplary teaching practices. All the case stories are brief, applied, and focus on a particular teaching strategy and offer faculty vignettes, course artifacts and interactive resources.



Photo from First Day of Class suite of stories

For example, the popular First Day of Class – <http://elixr.merlot.org/case-stories/course-preparation--design/first-day-of-class/goals-for-first-day-of-class7> – stories highlight how six professors engage with their students from day one, resulting in an effective foundation for learning and engagement for their courses. With many of our stories,

faculty development resources, such as a Workshop Guide, are included for context about the teaching topic.



A Geosciences professor demonstrates how she uses the Just-in-Time Teaching Method in her "Introduction to Geology" class and explains how the students have responded to this innovative teaching method.

Two examples of how you can use ELIXR digital case stories in your faculty development efforts include showcasing story elements during an event to demonstrate a point and/or lead into an exercise and sending new faculty links to case stories relevant to New Faculty Orientation.

Independent evaluation data underscore the positive effect of these ELIXR case stories for faculty developers and faculty. Additionally, our ELIXR fellows who gathered evaluation data reported that the stories provided “added value” to their faculty development efforts. ELIXR’s faculty development website page – <http://elixr.merlot.org/faculty-development-resources> – details other

ideas and includes access to an article, “Using Multimedia Case Stories of Exemplary Teaching for Faculty Development,” that will be published in *To Improve the Academy* in Fall 2010.

The creation of this online repository is a result of involvement from teams at thirty higher education institutions in

the United States. For more information contact Dr. Thomas Carey at tcarey@projects.sdsu.edu.
--Dr. Thomas Carey, Visiting Senior Scholar, Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education, San Diego State University

– IDEA Center, continued from page 4

who serve on The IDEA Center’s board. More recently, Tim Johnson, vice president for innovation and technology, joined the Center in 2007 and Steve Benton, Ph.D., joined IDEA in 2008 as senior research officer, mining the vast amount of data for information such as whether students rate their learning higher in online classes or face-to-face classes, or whether chairs in different disciplines vary greatly in their perceptions of what their most important duties are. In September 2010, Shelley Chapman, Ph.D., formally from Southern Wesleyan University and Johns Hopkins University, became vice president for client services. The IDEA Center currently employs 17.

In addition to the student ratings instrument, the Center has developed other ratings instruments over the years, including IDEA Feedback for Deans, IDEA Feedback for Administrators, and

IDEA Feedback for Department Chairs. In January 2011, the IDEA Center will also begin to offer a department chairs coaching service. Experienced higher-education leaders (Dan Wheeler, Al Seagren, and Delivee Wright) will provide various levels of support to improve chairs’ performance.

In 2004, The IDEA Center began collaborating with then POD president Dee Fink to develop a series of papers that address both teaching methods and learning objectives – the POD-IDEA Center Notes. These are some of the most widely accessed and highly regarded resources from the Center’s website.

Thank you to our POD colleagues who have contributed to IDEA publications and facilitated the good use of student feedback to improve teaching on your own campuses. We look forward to future collaborations!

--Amy Gross and Bill Pallett,
The IDEA Center

POD Essays on Teaching Excellence

Toward the Best in the Academy Vol. 20, No. 1, 2008-2009

We continue featuring a selected POD Essay on Teaching Excellence in each issue of the POD Network News. The essay series is available by subscription, and reproduction is limited to subscribers.

Beyond Student Ratings: “A Whole New World, a New Fantastic Point of View”

Ronald A. Berk, *The John Hopkins University*

You know that professor: the one the students rave about, who always has a huddle of students surrounding her after class, asking questions and chatting, or a line of students outside her door extending along The Great Wall waiting in hope of simply talking to her? The students worship the tile this professor walks on. How do you measure her teaching performance as well as that of all other professors?

Unfortunately, student ratings have dominated as the primary and, frequently, only measure of teaching performance at colleges and universities for the past four decades (Seldin, 2006). In fact, the evaluation of teaching has been in a metaphorical cul-de-sac with student ratings as the universal barometer. Only recently has there been a trend toward augmenting those ratings with other data sources to broaden and deepen the evidence base (Arreola, 2007; Berk, 2006b; Braskamp & Ory, 1994; Centra, 1993; Knapper & Cranton, 2001; Seldin, 2006).

A Whole New World

One model is a time-tested, industry standard: the 360° multisource feedback (MSF) model, which was developed in management more than half a century ago. Since then, it has gained wide acceptance and over 90% of Fortune 1000 companies use it for formative feedback and summative appraisal decisions (Boyd, 2005).

It works like this. An employee's job behaviors and outcomes are rated anonymously by persons who are most knowledgeable about his or her work (those hierarchically above, below, and on the same level as the employee) to furnish different perspectives (Edwards & Ewen, 1996). This approach taps their collective wisdom to provide a more balanced, complete, and accurate assessment than the traditional single-

source, top-down, supervisor-only method. The ratings are compared to self-ratings to give precise feedback to the employee so he or she can plan specific improvements in his or her job performance. The research on and experience with this 360° MSF approach, first used in management and then in healthcare, can be adapted for use in the academy (Berk, 2006, in press). The approach can be easily used for formative and summative decisions about teaching performance and can serve as an appropriate evaluation model for accreditation.

360° MSF on Teaching Performance

Critical reviews of strategies to evaluate teaching behaviors suggest a variety of possible raters, including students, self, peers, outside experts, mentors, alumni, employers, and administrators. Furthermore, we can identify 14 potential sources of evidence (Berk, 2005, 2006a, 2006b): (1) student ratings, (2) peer ratings, (3) external expert ratings, (4) self-ratings, (5) videos, (6) student interviews, (7) alumni ratings, (8) employer ratings, (9) mentor's advice, (10) administrator ratings, (11) teaching scholarship, (12) teaching awards, (13) learning outcome measures, and (14) teaching portfolio.

Unfortunately, there is no objective measure of teaching performance; all sources of evidence are fallible. Almost all quantitative and qualitative sources are derived from the 'informed' judgments of students and those persons with whom a professor works. The 360° model hinges on the specific decisions about teaching behaviors. The professor is the hub of the ratings. The raters/sources may vary for each decision and change over time as new sources or better instruments are added. For illustrative purposes, a suggested combination of raters and sources will

be presented here.

Formative Decisions

Among the 14 sources identified above, which ones would you select to improve your teaching? Which ones provide the most accurate information to pinpoint your strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions on how to improve? Five of the best sources you could use are: mentor (a level above), peer ratings and video with self/peer feedback (at the same level), student ratings and student interviews (at a level below), plus self-ratings. Different rating scales would be given to the mentor, peer, and students. The professor under review would also complete each of those rating scales. Discrepancies between his or her ratings (self) and those of the other three raters can yield a profile of strengths and weaknesses to pinpoint specific classroom behaviors needing attention. The 360° MSF model with these six sources of evidence is shown in Fig. 1 (360° MSF assessment of a professor (formative decisions about teaching):



Fig. 1

The characteristics of this model are as follows:

1. Professor selects raters and sources of evidence for each;
2. Raters are familiar with professor's teaching behaviors;
3. Those behaviors may be different for each source;
4. Sample group of raters may be large,

including students, one or more peers, and a mentor;

5. Different ratings scales with appropriate response options are developed;
6. Quality of many homegrown scales varies from very good to poor but commercial student rating scales are better;
7. Administration of the student rating scales are online or on paper;
8. Data from the different sources are collected at different times during the semester;
9. Feedback from mentor/ peers and from student interviews is immediate (or within days, and from student ratings it can follow in less than two weeks;
10. Professor tracks changes in teaching performance across semesters.

Summative Decisions

Drawing on the 14 sources discussed earlier, which ones would you pick for your department chair or associate dean to determine your annual merit pay or for contract renewal? Which sources provide accurate information on teaching performance, and also collectively converge on a decision that is fair and equitable? Remember: Your teaching career is on the line. Interestingly, the “best” sources in this instance are almost identical to the ones chosen for formative decisions. They include department chair and mentor ratings (above), peer ratings (optional) and video (optional) (same level), student ratings (below), plus self-ratings. The use of peer and mentor ratings and video feedback for summative decisions should be determined at the discretion of the faculty member; otherwise, it could be a breach of confidentiality (Berk, Naumann, & Appling 2004). The 360°MSF model for this type of summative decision-making is shown in Figure 2:



Fig. 2

The salient characteristics of this model are as follows:

1. Faculty and administrator(s) determine the raters and sources of evidence;
 2. Multiple raters are chosen for their expertise and to minimize rating bias (Berk, 2006b);
 3. Teaching behaviors for each source may differ;
 4. Sample group of raters includes the students, one or more peers, mentor, professor (self), and administrator;
 5. Separate peer observation reports, different in content and scope from the one shared with the professor, may be submitted to the department chair (Berk et al., 2004);
 6. Feedback to the professor by department chair occurs face to face at the end of the year;
 7. Department chair tracks changes in teaching performance longitudinally.
- There are also summative decisions about promotion and tenure that are often handled very differently than what I am advising in this essay. The department chair may recommend a faculty member for promotion, but the actual analysis of the multiple sources of evidence rests with a committee. The primary source for evaluation would be a teaching portfolio with a variety of elements, including a description of teaching responsibilities, reflective analysis, and artifacts of teaching. These artifacts contain evidence from the aforementioned 14 sources plus examples of course materials and students' work.

Conclusions

Although much has been learned over the 60-year history of faculty evaluation and the 50-year history of the 360° MSF model in management, a lot of work is still necessary to realize the true meaning of “best practices” in measuring teaching performance. The model described in this essay is one strategy institutions can use to improve their procedures for rendering fair and equitable decisions.

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