Preparing and Developing Faculty Through Faculty Development Initiatives

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Universities and community colleges bring together persons from many disciplines with divergent viewpoints. These institutions value the exchange of creative ideas and stimulate intellectual conversation. They value research and the procurement of grants to support that process. They value service to the institution and to the community, and some of these institutions value skillful teaching. Faced with challenges of the 21st century, faculty members are expected to adapt to an increasingly diverse student population, apply new teaching methods, integrate complex technology into their curricula, conduct research and pursue scholarly endeavors, engage in service activities, and develop curricula that respond to multifaceted professional issues and academic reform. How are new faculty members prepared and supported to pursue these challenges? How are experienced faculty members further developed and supported? When, how, and from whom do faculty members learn the principles of instructional design or course management? From whom do they learn the rigors of research? How do they learn to balance the demands of teaching, research, service, and practice? When and with whom do they debate the ideals of academe and the realities of practice?

The issue of how faculty in higher education learn to teach has long been discussed. Many believe that "college teaching is probably the only profession in the world for which no specific training is required. The profession of scholarship is rich in prerequisites for entry, but not that of instruction" (Milton & Shoben, 1968, p. xvii).

Schön (1983) described the concept of "knowing in action"—the way in which effective practitioners in any area of practice possess knowledge that they cannot name or identify. Occupational therapy practitioners often find that they "know" a great deal about educational theory and application, although they had never identified it as such, and that the application of assessment in academe is not dissimilar to the application of assessment in other practice areas (Qualters, 1995). Concepts presented in this special issue of *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy* (*AJOT*) relate not only to academic faculty members, but also to occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants who educate clients or students in fieldwork, regardless of practice area.

The professional education of occupational therapy practitioners and future faculty must encompass more than training. It must also be linked to scholarship that includes research and teaching. Present and future faculty members become students of teaching by reflecting on the practice of teaching and on educational research. Lee Seidel, PhD, Director of the Teaching Excellence Program at the University of New Hampshire, stated, "A successful transition into the professoriate begins when faculty do not assume that teaching is effortless and without standards...and, instead, approach learning how to teach efficiently and effective-

ly by considering research" (personal communication, May 24, 1998). Faculty members across disciplines are taking the scholarship of teaching as seriously as the scholarship of research and are changing their approach to their multiple roles.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has attempted to broaden the concept of academic roles by examining multiple aspects of scholarship. If the transformation of American institutions of higher education is to succeed, new faculty and experienced faculty must accept an expanded view of scholarship. In *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate,* Boyer (1990) proposed four components of scholarship. He discussed the scholarship of *discovery* (research), the scholarship of *integration* (service), the scholarship of *application* (whereby scholars use knowledge from their fields to benefit society), and the scholarship of *teaching.* Each area of scholarship has rigorous standards that should be useful to committees who support and evaluate faculty work. Boyer emphasized that implementing this new way of looking at scholarship will include incorporating faculty preparation into all graduate programs. Along with this shift in defining scholarship to include teaching, the importance of socializing graduate students into the scholarship of teaching is being recognized (Boyer, 1990; Ronkowski, 1993).

In a national program called Preparing Future Faculty, graduate education is reshaped to prepare students for the range of faculty roles of teaching and service in addition to research. Begun in 1993 and sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts, Preparing Future Faculty reflects a collaboration between the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Council of Graduate Schools. The program represents a col-

laboration among 108 colleges and universities organized into 15 clusters, each led by a doctoral institution. Each cluster has a different approach to the program, but all of them give graduate students a broad scope of what being a faculty member means. Program activities for graduate students include courses on college teaching, faculty or academic governance meetings, learning from a teacher or mentor, development of a portfolio that documents expertise in research, teaching and service, and discussions that highlight the mission and academic culture of different institutions (Gaff & Lambert, 1996).

Persons recruited for faculty positions in professional and technical occupational therapy programs need such faculty preparation and support. Practitioners are often hesitant to give up day-to-day practice for fear of losing what initially attracted them to the profession; they wonder what it means to be a faculty member (Brayley, 1996). Potential faculty members may be intimidated by the academy and its emphasis on scholarly endeavors, such as research and publishing, for which they are unprepared. Even after accepting a faculty position, new faculty members are usually left alone to socialize into their new environment, the academy.

The three obstacles most often faced by new faculty members are the lack of collegiality, absence of knowledge of teaching methods and strategies, and poor writing skills (Boice, 1992). Too many faculty members never overcome these obstacles. The responsibility of instilling in faculty the requisite knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, and skills for effective teaching and learning rests on colleagues, deans, department chairpersons, teaching enhancement committees, and faculty development professionals.

Who Are Faculty Development Professionals?

Persons involved in faculty development (faculty developers) come from many different fields and have varied backgrounds. Some hold a faculty appointment in a discipline-specific department (e.g., occupational therapy) and manage a regular teaching load in addition to conducting faculty development activities for that department or for faculty across the institution. Or, faculty members may rotate

the responsibility for coordinating faculty development activities according to individual and departmental need. Or, a department may form a faculty development committee whose members plan activities for department faculty. Faculty development initiatives may also be conducted by committee at the college or school level by departmental representatives who define common needs and activities.

Alternatively, faculty developers may be based in a dedicated center for teaching and learning (e.g., an office of teaching effectiveness and innovation, an institute for faculty renewal, a center for faculty development, educational research, or professional development). These faculty developers may have a part-time or full-time administrative appointment and focus solely on activities for faculty members within a college or across the institution. They may also hold a faculty appointment and teach a course or two each year. These faculty developers generally report to a vice president of academic affairs or to the provost. Institutional faculty developers may have an advisory committee appointed by the dean or elected by the faculty governing body. This advisory committee may help the faculty developer set policy or develop and implement programs throughout the year. Whatever the venue, faculty development efforts are most successful when identified, planned, and implemented through a team rather than through the unilateral effort of one individual.

Faculty development programs move the institution toward a coherent vision and mission related to effective teaching and learning. Faculty developers work with department chairpersons, deans, provosts, and senior staff members, all of whom share the ability and the responsibility of creating a climate that fosters support and rewards for teaching. Faculty developers facilitate an environment that values teaching.

Roles and Functions of Faculty Developers

The primary function of the faculty developer, whether as faculty member, chairperson of a departmental faculty development committee, or faculty developer for the institution, is

> to make sense of all the bits of scholarship that exist in the faculty teaching experience,

and to weave those bits into a model of what a successful faculty member looks like...to maximize faculty effectiveness by helping each individual achieve a productive balance among Boyer's four modes of scholarship. (Kristensen, 1996, p. 15)

Faculty developers may help structure a faculty recruitment and selection process. This may include not only the requisite research presentation, but also a pedagogical colloquium designed to assess a candidate's teaching abilities (Hutchings, 1997). Whether for recruiting new or experienced faculty members, the pedagogical colloquium presents candidates with scenarios related to professional philosophy, course content, instructional design, or classroom management. During the colloquium, candidates discuss how they would structure course content or address other academic issues. Also incorporated into the on-site interview might be discussions on how candidates see themselves contributing to campus life, performing interdisciplinary work, or applying their knowledge to community service (Coye, 1997).

Faculty developers are often generalists whose objectivity is helpful when working with faculty members in examining concerns related to instructional delivery, instructional design, content expertise, evaluation, or course and classroom management. Faculty developers excel in processing knowledge, whereas most faculty members excel in content knowledge. Faculty developers ask such questions as: How is material being covered in a course or program? What are the hot issues in the field? How effectively are students learning course content? How effective are approaches to teaching and learning, and why? How are teaching and learning outcomes evaluated?

Faculty developers disseminate information about effective teaching and learning in many ways. Of all the activities used to improve teaching, one of the most effective seems to be teaching consultation services (Levinson-Rose & Menges, 1981). Assuring confidentiality in all interactions, faculty developers confer with individual faculty members to identify areas of concern and areas for growth. Faculty developers may observe a faculty member teach, or they may videotape the faculty member teaching a class. Observations and feedback are shared at a later meeting. In addition to reviewing their own teaching, faculty members may

attend classes taught by peers to observe their teaching or classroom management style.

Faculty developers assist faculty in connecting instructional objectives to course content and evaluation methods. This can be done through individual consultation outside the classroom or via classroom observation. Faculty developers assist faculty in implementing formative and summative evaluation of teaching and learning. Classroom assessment techniques (CATs) are useful as a formative measure to show how and what students are learning in addition to the summative standardized course evaluations. CATs assess students' academic skills and intellectual development, their self-awareness, and their reactions to teachers and teaching methods, course activities, and assignments (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Cross & Steadman, 1996).

Teaching portfolios are often used as a tool for faculty improvement. Through conversations and discussions with a mentor, faculty members review their experiences and include those reflecting their best work. Assembling a portfolio can be a transforming experience best accomplished by working with a mentor or a group of colleagues sharing thoughts and insights in a respectful, cooperative manner (Seldin, 1997).

Other faculty development activities include discussions on such topics as developing a course syllabus, honing teaching techniques, advising students, and identifying and implementing cooperative learning strategies. Faculty may learn how to use computer-based instruction or the World Wide Web for teaching and research, address difficult behaviors in the classroom, give and receive feedback, or write exams. They may learn to balance their multiple faculty roles while teaching and developing a research agenda. Faculty development activities are important in bringing persons of different ages, academic ranks, and disciplines together. These activities give faculty members time to think about the practice of teaching and learning, which is crucial to reflective teaching. If those in leadership positions within institutions of higher education encouraged faculty members to share their teaching experiences and insights, it is the belief of some that good teaching would flourish (Palmer, 1993). Such conversations might include critical mo-

ments in teaching and learning, images and metaphors of the teaching process, and reflection on great teachers (Brookfield, 1995; Palmer, 1993).

Faculty development activities encourage networking and reduce the isolation so typical of higher education. These collaborative sessions provide structured learning opportunities for faculty members from across disciplines to think and talk about their teaching. To further foster interdisciplinary work, faculty members at many campuses develop capstone courses that cut across majors, disciplines, and departments to connect central themes and issues. Content such as that relating to professional communication, ethics, statistics, or research might be appropriately built into capstone courses (Coye, 1997).

Faculty developers help socialize new faculty into an academic system or further develop experienced faculty through mentoring programs. Junior faculty members are paired with an experienced (e.g., tenured) faculty member in the same or different department (Cox, 1997; Nolinske, 1994). Because colleges and universities can no longer mandate the retirement of tenured faculty on the basis of age alone (Franke, 1993), many faculty members in their senior years share their insights and experiences with a junior colleague or teaching assistant (Hammond & Morgan, 1991). In planning any faculty development activity, it is crucial to remember that faculty members need different things at different stages of their career.

Faculty developers may disseminate a newsletter to colleagues with updates on legislative issues affecting higher education, copyright laws, internal or external funding opportunities, teaching tips (e.g., how to use small groups in large lecture halls), faculty accolades, and new resources on teaching and learning. A newsletter or campus bulletin board may also publicize such faculty development events as brown bag lunches, technology demonstrations, journal clubs, and faculty orientations.

Incentives To Participate in Faculty Development

The findings of one study indicate that most faculty members do not perceive a need to improve their teaching because they tend to have a high sense of self-competence in their teaching skills (Blackburn,

Pellino, Boberg, & O'Connell, 1980). This same study showed that most faculty members place high value on their teaching role and perceive the need for improvement only in their peers.

So how does the faculty developer at the department or institutional level foster faculty growth? Incentives may be used to attract more or different faculty members to faculty development activities because participation in such activities is usually voluntary. Faculty developers might award selected faculty members with internal grants to provide them the resources and opportunity to improve or rework a course (Emery, 1995). Faculty members might be nominated for an award to recognize outstanding teaching. Participation in faculty development activities might be factored into salary increases or might tip the scales in promotion or tenure decisions.

By fostering an environment in which faculty members across the institution feel comfortable coming together and holding conversations about teaching, faculty developers allow faculty members to learn from each other and to share concerns and solutions. This process results in a more knowledgeable and reflective faculty rather than one encouraged to teach in isolation and "publish or perish."

Institutional Environment

For any one faculty development activity to be effective, faculty development initiatives must be supported from the institution's top administrator on down. It should be clear by looking at the room setup, room temperature, available resources, and faculty–student interaction that teaching is valued by everyone from the president to college deans, department chairpersons, faculty members, graduate assistants, and support staff members. Students need to believe that teaching and learning are acknowledged as primary missions of the institution.

Faculty development initiatives need not be demanding of time or money. Institutions of higher education, whether a community college or a research university, have a wealth of resources that should be available to *all* faculty members. With that support, faculty developers facilitate faculty members helping faculty members. For faculty development initiatives to have sustained impact, consistent institutional, human, financial,

and material resources must be provided. The institutional environment sets the tone for what can ultimately be accomplished.

Implications for Faculty in Occupational Therapy

Although the proliferation of academic programs at both the professional and technical levels demonstrates growth of the profession, it creates a demand for qualified faculty that has yet to be met. This growth of academic programs leads to concerns about not only attracting qualified candidates, but also preparing them for multiple faculty roles and responsibilities.

Occupational therapy practitioners must realize that being a competent practitioner in a nonacademic setting (e.g., hospital, day care, hospice, rehabilitation, mental health) does not automatically guarantee competence as a faculty member in an academic program, nor should it. Occupational therapy practitioners prepare diligently to learn theories, apply frameworks to practice, and administer methods of evaluation and strategies for intervention. After entry-level competence is achieved through academic study and fieldwork experiences, learning continues on the job. Practitioners of occupational therapy seem to have developed a systematic approach to professional competence in every area of practice except that of higher education.

Why has there been so little *sustained* support for the preparation and development of faculty members in the occupational therapy profession? Why do not more occupational therapy faculty members publish outside of occupational therapy literature in the areas of educational research, teaching, and learning? Why not establish a central or formal network through which faculty members can share teaching strategies and resources? Why not initiate a *sustained* faculty development effort through the American Occupational Therapy Association, American Occupational Therapy Foundation, or associated committees? Why not support the practice of education?

Faculty members play an important role in the development of future practitioners. They engage students in meaningful activities, stimulate problem solving and critical thinking, and instill requisite

skills, behaviors, and attitudes. Faculty members motivate future leaders of the profession. Being a faculty member is *not* about vacations or summers off. Being a faculty member is another way to practice in the profession of occupational therapy, defining that area of practice as education.

It is incumbent on faculty and occupational therapy practitioners to define entry-level requirements for faculty in academic programs. This information is outlined in the revised educational essentials, renamed the *Standards for an Accredited Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist* and the *Standards for an Accredited Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant* (Essentials Review Committee, 1998a, 1998b). These Standards define minimum requirements for academic programs, including resources, faculty–student ratios, qualifications for department chairpersons and faculty members, program content, and evaluation. The extent to which each academic program complies with these Standards determines its accreditation status.

The Standards require that each faculty member teaching at least one course have a written plan for professional development to ensure current knowledge in assigned areas of teaching. This document and its mandates become meaningless, however, unless department chairpersons and program directors enforce such professional development plans. Core faculty must be proficient in curriculum design, content delivery, and program evaluation. If new or experienced faculty members are lacking in these skills, they must acquire them.

This issue of *AJOT* on preparing and developing faculty members through faculty development initiatives cuts across the professions and addresses concerns and issues common to faculty in all academic institutions. This special issue discusses considerations for making a transition from clinician to academician and offers strategies to balance competing academic responsibilities. It identifies ethical responsibilities of faculty members and guides the reader through the application of numerous cooperative learning strategies. It offers advice on developing a research career. It presents the importance of developing a teaching portfolio to improve teaching, provides multiple

resources for teaching and learning, and presents a plan for developing a systematic approach to faculty evaluation. Occupational therapy practitioners who are not faculty members can apply the principles, concepts, and resources from this special issue to their own area of practice.

Fulfilling one's faculty professional development plan means more than attending the annual professional conference. It means grappling with issues of reform in higher education. It means learning how to prepare and use a course syllabus as a contract and how and when to use audiovisual equipment. It means learning how to facilitate teamwork, apply cooperative learning strategies, and conduct formative evaluation in the classroom.

Faculty development is about department chairpersons and program directors holding faculty accountable to professional development plans. It is about department chairpersons and their deans agreeing to offer tuition reimbursement to full-time *and* part-time faculty members. It is about offering incentives for participation in faculty development initiatives. Faculty development is about talking with faculty members in other disciplines, sharing ideas, and raising awareness about the profession of occupational therapy. It is about faculty members forming alliances with other faculty members at a state, regional, or national level. It is about preparing future faculty by providing experiences for graduate students to do academic fieldwork or an internship with a master professor. It is about developing and supporting faculty members, augmenting their professional content knowledge by giving them the requisite skills in teaching and learning. Faculty members need to realize that who they are is as important to their teaching as what they teach and how they teach it (Banner & Cannon, 1997). Is this not compatible with the core philosophy of occupational therapy? ▲

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