

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES RESULTING FROM SEMESTER CONVERSION

CHARLES C. JACKSON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY.

RICHARD D. CRONK, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT, AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY.

HOLLY J. THORNTON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT, AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty development is a critical concern of most institutions of higher education. Institutions of higher education in the state of Georgia have given particular attention to the twin issues of cultivating and nurturing junior faculty and strengthening the skills and scholarship opportunities of senior faculty. The College of Education at Augusta State University has identified faculty development as a critical area of concern. The College of Education has the task of not only training future (and current) educators, but also the additional task of establishing and nurturing a relationship with the public school system. Consequently, the need for faculty development becomes a critical link in the success of both the College of Education and the public school system which it serves.

In the College of Education's preparation to convert from quarter to semester hours the Intellectual Vitality Committee (IVC) was assigned the task of assessing the collective needs (and concerns) in the area of faculty development opportunities. Additionally, the IVC was asked to put together an "implementation plan" that would specify in some detail how particular opportunities for faculty development would emerge. The implementation plan resulted in nine distinctive areas that would be addressed differentially as the College of Education moved to semester conversion. The nine areas consisted of 1) Faculty Role Model 2) Support for Conferences/Presentations 3) Brown Bag/Framework Seminars 4) Teaching and Learning Summit 5) Faculty Biographies 6) Action Research 7) Co-teaching 8) Student Forums/Perspectives and 9) Graduate Student Organization. Some areas took priority over others. It was understood that some areas could be completed with little difficulty while others would not only be more difficult, but would be on-going. This was a unique opportunity to assess those critical areas of needs and concerns and to help establish the criteria for the constitution of an effective faculty role model.

Implementation Plan—The implementation plan was essentially the guide for directing the efforts of the IVC. The initial charge was the full implementation of the faculty role model. Consequently, a decision had to be made about what constitutes faculty development. The IVC argued that faculty development is "a structure that provides opportunities for faculty to enhance and develop competencies in teaching, curriculum design, scholarship, leadership, student advising, and collaborative enterprises."

These were considered critical if faculty were to be effective and remain at the College or University level.

The faculty role model was both a concept and an instrument for measuring faculty productivity. The instrument was circulated throughout the University and was intended as an objective instrument for measuring the output and effectiveness of faculty. It provided for a detailed description of faculty responsibilities and established a range of percentage of the total responsibility for each faculty. The aggregate percentage for each faculty should total 100. Interestingly, each faculty member was afforded the opportunity to determine how their faculty responsibilities would be apportioned (with the range established by the model). For example, teaching would constitute 45 - 70 per cent of each faculty's primary responsibility. Service to the University would constitute 10 - 30 per cent. In each instance the faculty could determine their per cent of effort regarding responsibility in each area.

Increasing Support for Conferences Presentations—Support to attend and participate in professional conferences and seminars typically generate concern on most college and university campuses. The culprit tends to be the method in how state colleges and universities are funded. There never appears to be adequate financial resources for such endeavors. However, given the fact that faculty is expected to generate scholarship in the form of research, journal articles, books, and conference presentations it is reasonable to assume that funding will be available (at least in part for) for these endeavors. Particular attention was given to conference presentations and/or conference attendance because financial support typically comes from sources internal to the institution. The argument presented by the IVC was that the administrations in the Departments, Schools, and Colleges of Education across the state should exercise greater effort in assisting faculty to attend conferences, especially those that represent areas of expertise or associated with "learned societies." Two suggestions were submitted regarding the limited resources for conference attendance. The first proposed that faculty be allowed to attend conferences on a rotating basis. Every other year faculty would be pretty much guaranteed funds for attending a conference of their preference. The second proposed that the Departments, Colleges, and Universities seek external funding. In-state and regional conferences were also suggested as ways to mitigate the tremendous cost sometimes associated with conference attendance. In other

words, additional consideration might be given to in-state and regional conferences rather than national and international conferences. This idea appears contradictory, given that greater prestige and recognition is associated with national and international conferences.

Brown Bag/Framework Seminars—The Brown Bag/Framework Seminars is an outgrowth of the preceding area of concern (i.e., Support for Conferences/Presentations). This represents opportunities that Departments, Colleges, and Universities of Education can generate for themselves in terms of presentations and seminars. The Brown Bag/Framework Seminars afford faculty the opportunity to present current research efforts, discuss recent publications, share information about how to pursue grants, or provide strategies for team-teaching. The first Brown Bag/Framework Seminars was successful in bringing together the Departments of Clinical and Professional Studies and Teacher Development to share ideas on Innovative Practices in Reflecting the Conceptual Framework in the College of Education. The first Monday of each month at 12:00 noon was tentatively established as the meeting time for the Brown Bag/Framework Seminars. The tentative dates provides faculty with timelines in which to adequately prepare for possible presentations.

Teaching and Learning Summit—The fourth area of concern was an extension of areas two and three. The long range goal of providing additional opportunities for faculty development in the area of conference presentations and seminars culminated in the decision by the College of Education to sponsor its own conference. The focus of the proposed conference would revolve around teaching strategies. The call for papers would not only be directed at college and university faculty across the state, but would also target public school teachers, graduate students in teacher preparation programs, and interested community representatives (e.g., civic organizations). The Teaching and Learning Summit ideally would lead to greater collaboration among teacher preparation institutions across the state, but more importantly for the greater Augusta area, an improved working relation with the public schools.

Faculty Biographies—The Fifth area of concern was how to potentially generate more interaction and productivity among colleagues across the University in general, and within the College of Education in particular. One step was to collect Faculty Biographies from each faculty member. The intention was not merely to assemble a collection of curriculum vitae to be stored in some obscure out of the way place, but to circulate to faculty for their perusal. The biographies were to include areas of research interest, recent publication, and presentations. In addition, the lists are being organized to be placed on to the College of Education webpage. This will afford anyone who has similar interests to communicate and potentially expand opportuni-

ties for collaborative research and publication efforts. Such information would be accessible across the entire state.

Action Research—Action Research represents area six of the implementation plan. It is directly tied to area five (Faculty Biographies). With serious attention given to faculty collaboration, Action Research is believed to be a logical outcome of such efforts. Such research would be directed at solving problems experienced by local educators. Engaging in such research would help create stronger bonds between the University and the public schools.

Co-Teaching—Faculty in the College of Education have actively been investigating the possibility of multiple faculty members co-teaching a course together. Once again, the move to semester hours afforded the middle grade specialists the opportunity to restructure how instruction was to occur at that level. The most serious threat to such an enterprise has been the inability to balance the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) faculty load through the computer. The current soft-ware was not designed to accommodate multiple faculty teaching the same course. Who should receive credit for a course taught by more than one faculty? The solution, at least in part, was to offer more than one section. If the course was taught by two faculty members, then two sections would be offered giving credit to each faculty for his/her own section thus, allowing for teaming to occur. This is especially critical for the middle grades courses, where team teaching should not only be emphasized, but should be modeled.

Student Forums/Perspective & Graduate Student Organization—The last two components of the implementation plan dealt with student involvement. Both involve participation from graduate students and would be on-going activities. Given, that most graduate students are educational practitioners it appeared reasonable to the members of the IVC that they should be included in much of the programming carried out by the College of Education. The strategy was to involve them in the Brown Bag/Framework Seminars. This would afford public school teachers and opportunity to interact with the College of Education faculty and would ostensibly put them in the role educating university faculty. Inverting roles would serve to help each appreciate the other. Additionally, there would be opportunities for university faculty to collaborate on research (particularly action research), conduct surveys of student interest, interact with graduate student organizations, and serve as student advisors.

Summary—The statewide initiative among institutions of higher education to convert from quarter hours to semester hours has afforded the College of Education at Augusta State University the opportunity to access its goals for nurturing junior faculty and enhancing the skills of its senior faculty. Faculty development emerged as one

of the more critical concerns of the faculty. The Intellectual Vitality Committee was given the responsibility for creating a plan (implementation plan) to address the issues of faculty development. Nine areas emerged, some building on the foundation of others. What eventuated was a new way of viewing faculty responsibility, not only in relation to collegiality, but in terms of teacher preparation and the kinds of relationships that should be carried with the public schools. The faculty role model has been placed at center of faculty responsibility and serves to be the yardstick for measuring faculty effectiveness. *

AT KSU . . .

MASTER TEACHING PROGRAM RECIPIENTS OF 1998-1999 AWARDS

The Master Teaching Program encourages, recognizes, and rewards faculty who demonstrate effective and innovative teaching and have the leadership qualities necessary to develop solutions to complex issues facing KSU in the area of teaching and to guide others in the implementation of those solutions.

Master Teaching Awards are selected based upon demonstrated excellence in teaching, demonstrated leadership, and the design of a project that addresses institution-wide concerns. The program focuses on the development of innovative teaching methods addressing widespread issues such as the effective use of technology in teaching, successful strategies for teaching large classes, alternative teaching strategies, and the development of applied experiences. The projects selected must have an impact beyond the individual course, classroom or department.

World Literature Database, Barbara Stevenson, Associate Professor English—Under semester conversion I will teach a newly-developed course for the revised English Major entitled “World Literature Before 1800.” For this new course I wish to attempt a unique approach to world literature based upon the ideas of Gerald Graff advanced in *Teaching the Conflicts* and to incorporate an innovative approach to student research assignments and classroom technology modeled after George Landow’s Intermedia Project at Brown University. The major purpose of and product from this proposed master teaching project will be a world literature database created by the class and published on the web. Such a database could be a useful research source for students and faculty interested in world literature. Moreover, other professors could follow my course model and have their students’ work placed on the database also. The success of this database—as with any website—can be measured by the number of visits and links established to the site. In the past I have done workshops on campus and presentations at profes-