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The Development of Faculty as Teachers: A Multi-faceted Approach to Change

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The activities of an instructional development program seldom follow a neat, linear sequence from problem to development. The faculty member is a person with needs so complicated that no single approach to instructional development is likely to provoke lasting change. By providing a wide range of activities and entry points for faculty, an instructional development program can strengthen the most powerful motivators and lessen the obstacles to positive change and, in so doing, induce patterns of development that follow the unique needs of different instructors. This paper describes a program now in place at the University of Vermont, which uses a multi-faceted approach to engage faculty in an ongoing process of development. Each of the elements of the program is intended to be highly motivational, and all of them have the broad aim of improving instruction. Each addresses a different group of faculty needs, and the program as a whole is designed to address the broadest range of instructional development objectives, given available resources.

The Problem

The instructional development movement in higher education has its roots in the "ancient services," such as moving projectors from

room to room or designing formats for overhead projection (Buhl, 1978). Today, however efforts in the realm of activity termed instructional development may range from the banal (splicing a broken film) to the sublime (exploring with an instructor the intricate interaction between teaching style and the instructor's goals and values). As the movement has matured, scholars have distinguished *instructional development*, the application of expertise and resources to the solution of teaching problems, from *faculty development*, a broad-based emphasis on the enhancement of faculty knowledge, skills and values, and *organizational development*, the alteration of the structure, climate and processes of a college or university (Gaff, 1975). One consequence of this historical process of elaboration and rationalization has been the tendency of many development programs and their staffs to specialize in only one realm of the field (instructional, faculty or organizational development) and to address only one or two faculty needs on the vast continuum of interacting needs. This pattern is reinforced by financial structures which often present the temptation to satisfy granting agencies and administrators. Many external agencies and university administrators ask for quick, simple solutions to what are essentially long-term, multivariate problems.

As an example of this tendency to focus narrowly, some instructional development programs have adopted a "doctor-patient" model of faculty development and tried to fix faculty flaws in the same way we would repair successive splits in a worn film. This model may thrust a few willing teachers into a sequence of structured consultation sessions or into several noon-time workshops, with the expectation that they will emerge transformed. Elsewhere, programs have exaggerated the significance of technology, treating a video tape recorder with a deference usually reserved for museum pieces or pairing up computer terminals and faculty in a marriage of surprising ardor. The thesis of this paper is that, to the extent that we restrict our roles, methods and conception of change, we risk misperceiving the needs and problems of faculty. Further, we risk alienating the very people we most need in order to improve teaching—the faculty. Educated by the experience of facing students on a daily basis, faculty distrust simple solutions to complex problems.

Programs designed to improve the quality of instruction must

recognize the wide range of potential influences on faculty and provide sufficient developmental opportunities to accommodate the faculty member's unique needs and situation. This perspective assumes that instructional development and faculty development, as defined above, are inextricably tied and move along together in time (Lindquist, 1978). If developmental initiatives are to occur, the various techniques of instructional problem-solving must contain activities and strategies tailored to the special characteristics of each faculty member. Finally, since each campus environment is different, it is important for each campus to shape how instructional and faculty development intersect with greatest effect and to conceptualize a framework for analyzing and evaluating subsequent activities.

Toward a Theory of Change

An approach that recognizes the uniqueness of each faculty member and endeavors seriously to respond to that uniqueness sets the stage for a theory of educational change. The starting point for describing such a theory is a set of assumptions about human development and the responsibility for change. First, there is evidence that, just as there is no best way to learn, there is no single best way to teach (Mann, 1970; Axelrod, 1973). The imposition of a particular theory or approach defies the idiosyncratic constellation of values, skills and capacities that each faculty member brings to teaching. The educational process must allow for a wide range of variation in the activities of teachers and learners. Second, the key factor and decision-maker in the development process is the faculty member. A political reality on most campuses is that the faculty member is the final arbiter of what occurs in the classroom and is in a position to choose what, if anything, he will adopt from the campus instructional development program. Also, as a tactical matter, we know that commitment to change is stronger when the goals, choices and activities of change are those of the person engaged in change (Havelock, 1973). Third, faculty are neither baser or more pure than other human beings. As such, they respond to experience in a distinctly human fashion. For example, they like to succeed, be told that they succeeded, solve difficult problems, be excited by what they do and see that what they

do has an attractive future (Havelock, 1973). Change programs need to accommodate these human needs and emotions.

These assumptions—the need for individualized paths to change, the need for faculty control over change, and the need to address emotional needs—form a backdrop for developing a systematic theory of development. However, it is important to recognize that, for most of its history, the instructional development movement has lacked a discrete literature or an encompassing theoretical framework. On many campuses, instructional development coalesced in the practice of a small number of professionals who drew from instructional technology, the traditions of pedagogy, evaluation and measurement methodology, and educational research. More recently, instructional development on some campuses has relied on the literature of planned change. This latter area holds promise for improving the theoretical foundation of instructional improvement activities.

The predominant thrust of the change literature is the diffusion and adoption of innovations. Research on the adoption process shows that change in any realm depends on the modification of a vast number of interacting forces which align themselves differently in different times and situations. A compendium of case studies by Mathew Miles (1964) testifies to the complexity of the change process. Miles identifies a number of crucial elements of initial change efforts, including cost, technological accessibility, appropriate materials, support in the local environment, congruence with the larger system, linkage among resources in the change process, and ongoing evaluation. Additional forces have been identified by Gross, Glacuinta and Bernstein (1971), who show that change efforts fail when participants lack clarity about the intended changes, when they lack the ability to take on new roles, when the organization fails to produce needed resource arrangements, or when staff motivation wears down in confusion and doubt. Even when a vast number of influences on the change process have been accommodated, the process of change may veer from its intended specific outcome and catalyze in as many disparate directions as there are participants in a project (Shipman, et al., 1974). In sum, the literature on organizational change suggests that a narrow view of change is unlikely to achieve sure results or lasting improvement. In

addition, it is apparent that no intervention will achieve exactly what is intended.

Kurt Lewin (1951), one of the early theorists of planned change, is useful in analyzing the multiple influences on the change process in any organization. Specifically, force field analysis, first applied to faculty development by David Jenkins (1961), provides a framework for looking at improvements in instruction. Working from the knowledge that most faculty think of themselves as teachers first (Ladd, 1979) and sincerely want to improve their teaching (Centra, 1978), force field analysis is a way to display the *forces* toward improvement and those working against change (constraining forces), producing a hypothetical equilibrium that can be called the current level of effort, or *status quo*. According to Lewin and Jenkins, change can only occur when a driving force is strengthened, or when a constraining force can be weakened or eliminated from the environment. Figure 1 represents a model of the forces which drive and the forces which constrain improvement of teaching on many college campuses. While the list of forces has developed from our experience, we believe it is generalizable to other settings.

In this conception of change in the teaching process, a number of constraining forces conspire to hold back sincere change efforts. These include insufficient *resources to support the change process*; insufficient *time* to invest in improving teaching; insufficient *encouragement* for improved methods; insufficient *recognition* and rewards from the peer community, insufficient *autonomy* and control over the change process; insufficient *feedback* on progress; and insufficient *information* lending direction to the change process. The constraints, often voiced by faculty on our campus as well as many others, suggest an array of driving forces which, when strengthened, can alter the status quo. Our estimation of how easily driving and constraining forces may be modified is represented in Figure 1 by solid and dotted lines. Solid lines represent forces we see as stronger and, therefore, the more appropriate targets for change strategy.

FIGURE 1
A Force Field Analysis of Influence on
Faculty Self Improvement Efforts

Make Resources Available	>	S	<-----	Insufficient Resources
Legitimize Time	>	T	<-----	Insufficient Time
		A		
Create Sphere of Encouragement	----->	T	<.....	Insufficient Encouragement
Create Medium for Recognition	----->	U	<.....	Insufficient Recognition
Maintain Confidentiality	>	S	<.....	Insufficient Confidentiality
Convene Interest Groups	>		<.....	Insufficient Interaction
Allow More Faculty Control	----->	Q	<.....	Insufficient Autonomy
Provide Student Feedback	----->	U	<-----	Insufficient Feedback
Create Forum for Concept Sharing	>	O	<-----	Insufficient Information

(Routing progress moves from left to right)

Note: Solid lines represent stronger forces, on our estimation. Dotted lines represent weaker forces.

The Vermont Program

Working within this view of the change process, the Instructional Development Center at the University of Vermont has assembled a number of distinct programs and services that are available to faculty interested in changing their teaching. There has been an attempt to design a set of programs which address multiple forces while allowing easy entry points, high motivation, and more extensive follow-up for faculty who are trying to overcome the constraints to improvement. The following is a list of programs and services available to faculty.

Instructional Incentives Grants: a small internal grants program that supplies money to faculty for course improvement through a proposal review process conducted by peers. This is designed primarily for the instructor who says, "If I only had the resources..."

Curriculum Publications: front-end financing, editing, printing, and publication support for faculty who wish to write their own text-books, funded at cost through sales to students at the bookstore. "If I had the resources to publish my own text..."

Teaching Notes: a monthly newsletter written by faculty and graduate teaching fellows devoted to descriptions of innovations they have introduced in their teaching, distributed to all faculty and administrators. "If I knew what others were doing and could share my views..."

Faculty Workshops: topical workshops conducted by faculty during the school year as well as a summer workshop in Criterion-Referenced Instruction for faculty redesigning their courses. "I wonder if others have the same questions ..."

Teaching Assistant Workshops: orientation to teaching conducted by experienced faculty and teaching assistants for new graduate teaching assistants. "I've never taught a college course before..."

Seminar in College: a three-credit course given for graduate teaching assistants and faculty on teaching methods. "I've never taken a course on teaching..."

Media Library: an assortment of films and tapes made locally or commercially for use by faculty. "I wonder if there is a film..."

Video Production and Feedback: a studio for faculty to create

instructional tapes for their classes or for faculty to view tapes of their own teaching. "I could make a better tape than I can find..."

Media Development: a shop for development of transparencies, slides, or audio tapes for use with classes. Technical advice and support are available as well as an extensive array of media equipment to display the products. "We lack the right kind of teaching aids..."

Evaluation: a student evaluation instrument and evaluation consultation, with a library of alternatives in peer and student evaluation of instruction. "I wonder what students think..."

Consultation: a staff of four professional developers (2.5 full-time equivalents) and a number of technical assistants to help faculty identify their aims, set their objectives, use the programs, and evaluate their effectiveness. Acting as consultants, the professionals link faculty to an entry point and then introduce new resources as the opportunity arises in the development process. Another major purpose of the consultation service is to provide linkages among faculty with similar development interests. "I have an idea but I'm not sure where to start..."

Each program is designed to provide a different pattern of impact on the driving forces in the force field analysis (Figure 1). Figure 2 summarizes the interaction of these programs at UVM with the driving forces on faculty development. The columns represent the driving forces on faculty development, and the rows represent the programs that are available. The X's represent those points where, on most campuses, program elements act upon the forces, shifting the *status quo* toward improvements. It is recognized that, on some campuses, additional forces might be acted upon by a particular program; e.g., video productions may be treated as scholarly work and rewarded as such. In general, we assume that any development program should act upon as many forces as possible.

This list of activities is by no means unique to the University of Vermont. A conscious effort to link these services in a multi-faceted change strategy allows developers to mount an effective program with relatively few staff members working at many levels of development and activity. Using this strategy, developers are able to work with many different types of instructors *and* with the same faculty member on a continuing basis in a progressive sequence of interventions for

Figure 2
Intended Impact of Programs on Forces for Change
Driving Forces

Programs	Resources	Time	Encourage- ment	Rewards & Recognition	Confidentiality	Collegial Interaction	Faculty Autonomy	Student Feedback	Useful Information
Instructional Incentive Grants	X	X	X			X	X		X
Curriculum Publications	X		X				X	X	X
"Teaching Notes"			X	X			X		X
Faculty Workshops			X	X		X			X
TA Workshops	X		X	X		X			X
Video Production	X		X				X		X
Media Development	X		X				X		X
Media Library	X						X		X
Student Survey of Teaching	X		X		X		X		X
Consultation	X		X		X	X	X		X
Note: The X's (X) identifies where programs are likely to influence specific forces for change.									

change. Instructors engage the available programs differently. For example, one teacher might begin by viewing a film at the Media Library, where personnel are trained to ask if more might be done to improve a course. This same instructor might then go on to seek an Incentive Grant to produce a video tape to replace the film that was never quite right. By contrast, another faculty member might begin with the student evaluation of teaching. Disappointed with some of the responses, he or she might then consult with the staff at the Center and subsequently move toward on-campus publication of a text which better fits the purpose of the course. Either of these two faculty might ultimately conduct a workshop for other people on the process. In another example, a graduate teaching assistant in the Seminar in College Teaching might write an article for *Teaching Notes* and then conduct an orientation session for new TA's in the fall. In sum, each participant in the Center's activities differs in the point of his or her entry, the sequence of activities engaged in, and the time spent. By arranging programs as separate, though interacting, entry points, we hope to encourage a "scenario" of self-development, controlled primarily by the individual who chooses to move from his or her *status quo* toward excellence. A description of one actual scenario helps to illustrate this concept.

A Scenario of Development

A UVM faculty member, whom we shall call Professor Bard, had taught Shakespeare courses for 20 years at several universities. Even with established competence in his discipline, he remained concerned with the inability of college students to engage the plays with sophistication and ease. Through his experience with classes, and through the *Student Survey of Teaching*, Professor Bard began to see a source of their confusion in the structure of Shakespeare's plays, with their interlocking circles of plot, motif, imagery, and characterization. He also noted that his attempts in the three-hour lecture to unlock the circles were "not regarded as totally organized," reflecting, as they did, Shakespeare's own non-linear structure. Having received a letter of announcement, Professor Bard wrote his first *Instructional Incentive Grant* application.

The first grant helped to produce a set of study guides, consisting of questions, that would move readers toward specific learning goals in each play. With an undergraduate assistant, Professor Bard wrote out, tried, and revised an extensive study guide for his students. This was first in the form of class handouts. Then with editing and more revision the work was published as a supplemental text. *A Mirror for Shakespeare* appeared in 1981 as a text of professional quality.

Using the guide as a base, Professor Bard broke his large class into smaller study groups. Using *Mirror* to guide their inquiry, the student study groups produced a scene from each play, and then prepared to defend their interpretation to their audience...the remainder of the large class. Professor Bard invited a staff member of the Center to observe these presentations, assess their utility, and consult on next steps.

With class structure considerably altered by the study guide and small group format, Professor Bard applied for his second *Incentive Grant* to purchase video tapes of the BBC Shakespeare series, rounding out his collection and giving his students (and the whole community) new models for Shakespeare. At the request of the Center, he wrote the first of his *articles* on instruction, "Mediating Between Student and Shakespeare: Finding a 'Frame of Discourse'" (February, 1980). The tapes were gathered in the *media Library* for controlled use with community groups and other classes. Simultaneously, he began to attend a *Campus Workshop Series*, "Teaching Students to Think," conducted by his colleagues and organized by the development staff. To strengthen the diffused structure of his Shakespeare course, Professor Bard applied for his third *Incentive Grant*. He used this to hire student interns as leaders for study groups, whose energetic productions had begun to run toward excess, and to help with frequent quizzes on student goals attainment. (The Shakespeare internship has since become a credit course.) His students have begun to produce their own *video tapes* in the Center's studio for examination by the class. Professor Bard wrote his latest article for *Teaching Notes* on "Teaching Shakespeare Electronically" (June, 1982) He has applied for external funding to explore the differences between Shakespeare on Page, Stage and Screen, and to produce a book on *Macbeth*. Speaking of his participation with development programs, Professor

Bard commented, "All of my work has resulted in total integration of teaching and scholarship, to the benefit of my students and field." His pathway of development activity is illustrated in Figure 3.

Conclusion

Professor Bard's experience is an example of the pattern of interaction that can be stimulated among faculty. By recognizing the realistic constraining forces acting upon faculty, an environment can be constructed where these can be reduced and driving forces can be enhanced. Beginning usually (but not necessarily) at one of the "easy entry points" and moving among the various options, an instructor receives support at all of the points of engagement and encouragement to progress along his or her own pathway of development.

Astin (1980) has argued that educational improvement will be assured through the application of two general principles. First, time on task produces change. Second, feedback systems should guide the change process in positive directions. These principles apply to the model described in this essay. By providing a variety of program options that elicit faculty time on the task of instructional development, and by providing several avenues for regular feedback, instructional developers create an environment in which faculty take responsibility for their own development. Most importantly, developers can be confident that the outcome will be positive, however difficult it is to predict the exact nature of change for any individual.

FIGURE 3
Interaction of one Professor with Development Options over Four Years

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