

Professional Development Center

Summary of Campus Feedback and Final Report

Professional Development Center Committee:

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3/12/2008

This report summarizes feedback gathered from the campus community regarding potential services and programming SUNY Fredonia's Professional Development Center could provide.

Introduction:

One of the charges of the Professional Development Center Committee is to collect feedback from the campus community regarding potential services and programming the Center could provide in order to support the educational and professional development needs of faculty and staff. The ideas contributed will assist the Professional Development Center Advisory Board (see recommendations) in communicating the campus' vision for the Center, and will also serve to inform the planning and decision-making process as the campus proceeds with the development of the Center.

Data Collection:

The Committee sought feedback from the campus community in the following ways: via email; using the public survey on ANGEL; via campus mail; by asking deans and department chairs to discuss the project at departmental meetings or via departmental listservs and submit suggestions; by asking the Vice Presidents of Student Affairs, Administration, and ITS Administration to do the same; and by hosting three campus-wide discussion forums. The request for feedback via email, the public survey and campus mail went out on the Academic Affairs and Classified listservs on October 23rd with a submission deadline of November 9th (See Appendix A-1). Academic Deans and Vice Presidents were asked to help solicit feedback from their constituents the week of November 5th, with a rolling deadline for submitting recommendations to the Committee (See Appendix A-2). The three discussion forums were advertised on the Academic Affairs and Classified listservs, and were held on the following dates in the Williams Center S104: Tuesday, November 13th from 12:00 – 1:00 pm; Wednesday, November 14th from 9:00 – 10:00 am; and Thursday, November 15th from 3:30 – 4:30 pm (See Appendices A-3 and A-4).

The public survey on ANGEL was the preferred method for submitting feedback, with 74 individual suggestions received through the survey. The second most popular venue for submitting feedback was through email with 12 responses containing 25 individual recommendations. The discussion forums were attended by eight people total. The Tuesday lunchtime session brought in two faculty, one classified staff, and two professionals. The Wednesday morning session brought in one faculty and one classified staff member, and the Thursday afternoon session had the smallest turnout with only one faculty member in attendance. The Committee did not receive any responses via campus mail, and we have not received any feedback from the Academic Departments or Vice Presidents at this time.

Data Summary:

The Committee was able to categorize the feedback gathered into four categories: Information Sharing and Networking Resources, Professional Development Programming, Technology Training, and Center Design. Through analysis of the feedback data, the Committee was further able to identify the following broad themes, which recurred throughout the comments collected:

1. The Center should function as a “clearinghouse” for professional development, providing a centralized location for the collection and dissemination of relevant information.
2. The Center should strive to meet the professional development needs of all SUNY Fredonia employees.
3. The Center should provide continuing professional development opportunities, in addition to programming and services for new employees.
4. The Center should cultivate a culture in which knowledge is shared among diverse constituencies and should provide a gathering place in which this dialogue can occur.
5. The Center should provide consultation and training for technology-related issues and should be provided with the resources necessary to keep abreast of new technological innovations.

I. Information Sharing and Networking Resources

A. Information

Based on the feedback collected, the Committee surmised that it is often difficult for faculty and staff to know the appropriate person or place to go to when they have questions pertaining to professional development topics. While the Center won’t have all the answers, it needs to be able to send people to the right place on campus to get answers. Some of the topics for which more information was requested include: funding, grants, and interdisciplinary conferences. It was suggested that one way the Center could share this information is through a website.

B. Networking

Even though Fredonia is not a large campus it was expressed in many ways that people would like to network outside of a particular department, but find that it is difficult. The feedback reflected a need for more relaxed social networking. Additionally, there were recommendations for more formalized, focused networking opportunities in the form of discussion groups or learning communities. It was recommended that the Center be a place where faculty attending conferences and workshops could share useful information with others outside their department.

Recommendations:

Based on our analysis and discussion of the feedback data, the Committee would like to make the following recommendations for the future role of the Center on campus:

- The Center cannot be all things to all people, but it can act as a primary service point for questions related to professional development issues. Its service role should be that of organizing and providing easy access to information related to professional development activities, facilitating and promoting development, and for making referrals to appropriate campus experts and services.

- The Center should serve as both an informal and formal gathering place for faculty and staff to network outside their departments and offices.

II. Professional Development Programming

Based on the campus feedback the Committee was able to identify the following areas in which educational opportunities are needed and of interest:

A. Recruitment and Retention

1. New Faculty & Tenure

Orienting new faculty to campus and mentoring them through to tenure is a very important goal for the Center. While the Center will be the hub of new faculty development, departments will also need to play a strong role. The feedback data suggests that faculty would like to receive assistance throughout the process of tenure and promotion.

2. Permanent Appointment

Professionals are requesting assistance in navigating the permanent appointment process as well as career advancement within the University. This includes requests for leadership training and assistance with continuation of education and degrees.

3. Mentoring

Based on the collected data, the Committee also recommends that the Center host mentoring and orientation programs, for both groups and individuals. It was suggested that this type of programming not only be offered for new faculty, but for professional and classified staff as well. In conjunction with this request, it was suggested that programs also be offered to train mentors.

B. Effective Teaching and Learning

One of the most important activities for faculty is teaching and facilitating learning. We need to help our new faculty get off to a good start, and senior faculty also need opportunities for improving or refreshing their skills. Suggestions were made for programs that address following topics: best practices in designing courses, using technology in teaching, assessment of student engagement, and teaching evaluation techniques. This includes activities such as peer evaluation and videotaping classes. It was also recommended that the Center host regularly scheduled discussions that focus on teaching and learning. It was further recommended that the campus find new ways to recognize good teaching and course design. Once these campus experts are identified, they could be called upon to assist with improving teaching and course design campus-wide.

C. Scholarship, Publishing, and Grant Writing

Scholarship and publication are also important activities for faculty and staff. One of the needs identified is for more support for publishing efforts, including help with the submission and publication process for books and journal articles. Also, programming that would assist with the improvement of campus publications was suggested. Requests additionally were made for discussions and workshops on the topics of online journals, copyright, and ownership of publications.

Many of the publishing-related requests were made in connection to grant writing. Some of these were technology based, while other requests focused on assistance with locating and writing grants. It was recommended that we use campus experts to provide workshops in grant writing.

D. Leadership Development and Communication Skills

As faculty and other campus employees move into leadership roles, new skills are needed. Many of the ideas for leadership development and communication skills are based on the need to be more effective when working with colleagues. The skills identified in the data include: support for collaborative and informed decision-making, public speaking, interpersonal skills training, effective meeting facilitation, and conflict resolution strategies.

Recommendations :

Based on the campus feedback, the Committee feels that priorities need to be established in order to phase in a comprehensive programming schedule that meets the needs of a variety of constituents. The Committee recommends that the programming needs noted in the campus feedback data should be addressed by the Center in the following order:

- The Center should offer programming that assists faculty and other employees with navigating the processes of tenure, permanent appointment, and promotion. In addition, the Center should focus on providing orientation and mentoring opportunities for all employees. Providing these types of opportunities will equip members of the campus community with the tools needed for professional success here at SUNY Fredonia.
- Teaching and learning is central to the mission of SUNY Fredonia. As such, it is recommended that the Center should place a high priority on the improvement of teaching practices campus-wide.
- Promoting involvement in scholarly and creative enterprises also plays a prominent role in the University's mission. It is recommended that the Center place priority on programming relevant to publishing, as well as other scholarly and creative endeavors.
- In order to best move ahead as a campus, we need good leaders. It is recommended that leadership development opportunities, along with opportunities for improving communication skills, should be offered to employees throughout all levels of the institution.

II. Technology Access and Training

Based on the campus feedback, the Committee perceives a strong need for training on basic computer and technology skills, such as training on Operating Systems (ie. Vista and Leopard), MS Office programs, webpage development, and file management. There is also a need for access to and training on equipment such as digital cameras and DVD burners. An interest in more advanced training

on Office programs, video editing, and specialized software such as SPSS and Photoshop was also indicated. A need was expressed for professional printing services such as large format/poster printing, color photocopying and scanning.

Recommendations:

The Committee perceives a campus need for clarifying the path that should be followed in order to receive help and training on technology-related issues. The Committee recognizes the importance of this need, and recommends that the Center would be an ideal environment in which to create and facilitate a learning community where campus experts can be easily identified and called upon to answer individualized questions and provide workshops as demand necessitates. The Center would be an appropriate place to schedule and host workshops, as well as provide easy access to information on regional training opportunities. While training for technology equipment can be handled through the Center, it may not be the place for the actual equipment to be held. The feedback suggests that the Center be used to develop people, and the Center should be provided with the tools necessary to do that. This includes high end computer workstations that host the newest software used in education, as well as the most recent peripheral equipment. This would provide faculty and staff an opportunity to try different software and hardware before asking a department to invest in it.

III. Center Design:

The feedback data reflected frequent requests for the Professional Development Center to be equipped with the following features: high tech meeting rooms that can be booked by any faculty member, less formal meeting spaces and/or lounge area, a smart classroom, and flexible furnishings. Additional comments suggested a kitchenette, a dining/bar area, additional restrooms, a library of teaching-related books, individual workstations with high-end programs, and comfortable seating. All of the requests will require that the space be flexible and tech ready.

The feedback data also reflected frequent concerns with the location of the Center and planning for future growth. Concern was expressed over having to share the classroom area with student development activities, and it was stated several times in the comments received that a space should be provided that is entirely devoted to developing faculty and staff. Concern was also expressed that the future growth of the Professional Development Center be taken into account in the design of the Center, since there is potential for more staff to be hired in the future.

Recommendations:

In the design of the Center, form should follow function in order for the Center to succeed. This will mean evaluating the space available and comparing this to the current needed space as well as future needed space. The Committee recommends that clear lines of communication be established in order to address and alleviate faculty concerns about sharing the space with student development

activities. While a library instruction classroom will be constructed at the same time as the Center, it needs to be more clearly communicated that these are two separate projects. It is recommended that the Center have its own classroom space, serving the primary function of faculty development. While the Center's classroom space and the library's classroom could potentially be used reciprocally, the separation needs to be clearly defined in order to alleviate concerns.

The Committee recommends that for the location in the library to be viewed positively by faculty and for design process to be successful, key players need to be involved in the planning process from its beginnings. We recommend that the Professional Development Center Advisory Board be involved in the planning process, in addition to Library and Professional Development Center employees whose work spaces will be impacted by this project.

Conclusions and General Recommendations:

Based on the Committee's analysis of the feedback data, it is felt that the Center's primary mission should emphasize and prioritize programming related to Faculty and Professional Development, specifically in the areas of orienting and mentoring new faculty and staff; tenure, permanent appointment and promotion; effective teaching and learning; scholarship and publication; and leadership development. Serving the needs of the faculty and staff, particularly in regard to information sharing and networking opportunities, can also go a long way in employee retention. The Committee feels that the Center's secondary mission should be to fill an appreciable gap in the technology training available on campus.

Additionally, based on the tone of the feedback data, the committee recommends that the Center should make a strong effort to recognize and respect differences between the populations it is trying to serve. There will need to be a balance in the types of programming offered. In order to achieve this goal, the Committee feels the Center should be a place to:

- Find the answer rather than a place that has all the answers
- Determine what needs exist and the best way to meet these needs
- Collect data on professional development support issues
- Share expertise and provide networking opportunities

In order for the campus vision for the Professional Development Center to continue to progress, the Committee recommends that a Professional Development Advisory Board be established in order to build upon our efforts to-date and to serve in an advisory capacity to the Center's Director. The Committee recommends that the Advisory Board consist of the following makeup:

- One faculty member from each of the five teaching areas: Arts, Education, Humanities, Natural Science, and Social Sciences

- One member of the library faculty
- One educational technologist
- One professional staff member from each of the following areas: Academic Affairs, Administration, Student Affairs, and University Advancement
- One classified staff member

Based on the Committee's work and communication with the incoming Director, we foresee that some of the initial charges of the Advisory Board will be to collaborate with the Center's incoming Director on writing a formal mission for the Center, and to assist the incoming Director with planning for the Center's design.

Appendix A: Campus Communication

A- 1: Listserv Message Soliciting Feedback from the Campus (Versions of this message went out on the Academic Affairs and Classified listservs)

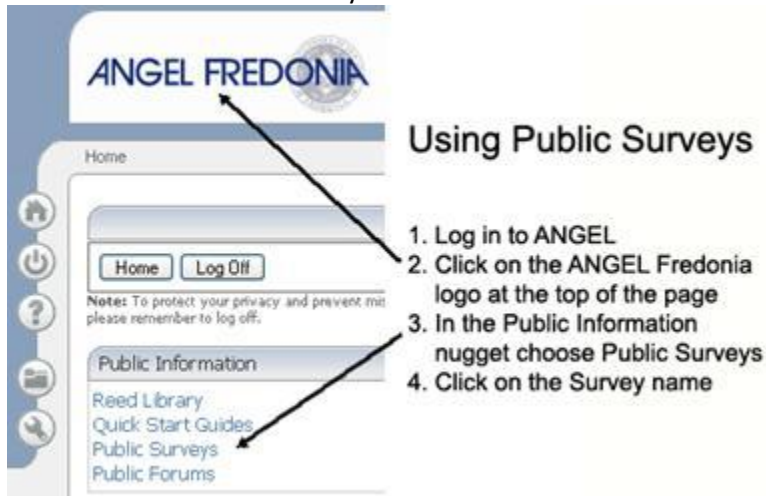
The Center for Professional Development Advisory Board is seeking input from all faculty and staff on the educational and professional development needs of the community. The goal of the Center is to provide a central location for all faculty and staff to continue learning and growing. Here are some suggestions for potential services and programming that we have received so far...

- "I would like the center to include a drop-in lounge where faculty and staff can share ideas."
- "I think the center should provide assistance to new faculty navigating the tenure process."
- "I would like to learn more about Excel Spreadsheets."

Help us make the Professional Development Center a success. Please take a minute to respond with any ideas you have for potential services, training, equipment, or facilities the Center could provide. We look forward to receiving your suggestions!

You can submit your ideas and feedback three ways:

- E-mail your ideas to lisa.melohusky@fredonia.edu
- Use the Public Survey on ANGEL



- Use Campus Mail. Send to Lisa Melohusky, Reed Library

Please submit all ideas by November 9, 2007. Thank you!

The Professional Development Center Advisory Board

Dawn Eckenrode (Co-Chair), Dick Reddy (Co-Chair), Nancy Boynton, Jim Davis, Randy Gadikian, Chris Givner, David Kinkela, Lisa Melohusky, Timothy Overbeck

A-2: Message Distributed to Academic Deans (A similar version was also distributed to the Vice Presidents)

The Professional Development Center Advisory Board is seeking input from all faculty and staff on the educational and professional development needs of the community. The goal of the Center is to provide a central location for all faculty and staff to continue learning and growing. We know this is short notice, but the Advisory Board would appreciate it if you could set some time aside at your next departmental meeting, or, if you could initiate a chat on your department's listserv, in order to discuss the following amongst your faculty:

1. What ideas do you have for potential services the center could offer?
2. What ideas do you have potential training opportunities the center could offer?
3. What ideas do you have for equipment/technology the center could potentially provide?
4. What ideas do you have for the physical design of the facility i.e. classroom areas, lounge areas, conference rooms, etc...?

If you are interested in working with your department in order to provide feedback to the Advisory Board, please send a list of ideas from your discussion to Lisa Melohusky at lisa.melohusky@fredonia.edu. We would appreciate having this feedback no later than November 16th, if possible, but will also accept later submissions.

In addition, please encourage members of your department to attend one of the following brainstorming sessions that will be held in the Williams Center, Room S104, during the following dates/times:

- Tuesday, November 13th from 12:00 – 1:00 pm (Feel free to bring a brown bag lunch!)
- Wednesday, November 14th from 9:00 – 10:00 am
- Thursday, November 15th from 3:30 – 4:30 pm

We really appreciate your assistance in making the make the Professional Development Center a success. We look forward to receiving your ideas!

Sincerely,

The Professional Development Center Advisory Board

Dawn Eckenrode (Co-Chair), Dick Reddy (Co-Chair), Nancy Boynton, Jim Davis, Randy Gadikian, Chris Givner, David Kinkela, Lisa Melohusky, Timothy Overbeck

Some Background on the Professional Development Center:

The creation of a Professional Development Center is a key element in the Fredonia Plan to provide opportunities for all members of the campus community to engage in learning across a range of ideas, including reflecting upon and learning about their own teaching. Additionally, Center will create a broad range of supports and networks to assist our faculty and staff in learning and developing in their professional and personal roles. It will provide both formal and informal support for learning new techniques and technologies to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of job performance, and will provide opportunities for social and intellectual interaction of colleagues across campus. Called a "Teaching and Learning Center" in the Fredonia Plan, a Professional Development Center also will be important in providing the initiatives and programs needed for faculty and staff to connect with one another in improving first-year courses and program.

A-3: Listserv Message Announcing the Discussion Forums (Distributed on the Academic Affairs and Classified Listservs)

The Professional Development Center Advisory Board is seeking input from all faculty and staff on the educational and professional development needs of the community. The goal of the Center is to provide a central location for all faculty and staff to continue learning and growing. The Advisory Board would like to invite you to attend one of the following brainstorming sessions that will be held in the *Williams Center, Room S104*, during the following dates/times:

- Tuesday, November 13th from 12:00 – 1:00 pm (Feel free to bring a brownbag lunch.)
- Wednesday, November 14th from 9:00 – 10:00 am
- Thursday, November 15th from 3:30 – 4:30 pm

The discussions will focus on the following topics. Cookies and drinks will be provided!

- What does professional development mean to you?
- How can the center help in your professional development?
- What ideas do you have for potential services and educational opportunities the center could offer?
- What ideas do you have for work/gathering areas, equipment, and technology the center could potentially provide?
- What could the center do to support scholarship and original research?

If you are unable to attend one these sessions, please submit your ideas for the Center in one of the following ways:

- E-mail your ideas to lisa.melohusky@fredonia.edu
- Use the Public Survey on ANGEL (see directions below)
- Use Campus Mail. Send to Lisa Melohusky, Reed Library

We will be accepting feedback via these forms through Friday, November 9th.

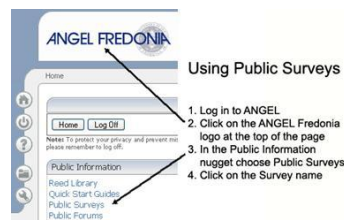
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Directions for using Public Surveys on ANGEL:



A-4: Informational Handout Distributed at Discussion Forums

Purpose of Today's Discussion:

Welcome! Today we would like to hear your ideas and opinions regarding potential services, training opportunities, programming, equipment/technology, and physical spaces the center could provide in order to support the educational and professional development needs of the campus community. The handout describes some of the potential services that have already been suggested. Please feel free to build off these ideas. We strongly encourage you to share new and original ideas as well.

The ideas you contribute today will assist the Professional Development Center Advisory Board in communicating the campus' vision for the center to the candidates interviewing for the position of the Center's Founding Director. Your suggestions will also inform the planning and decision-making process as the campus proceeds with the development of the Center, which is slated to begin offering services in the fall of 2008 with a physical space in the works for spring of 2010.

Some Focusing Questions for Today's Discussion:

- What does professional development mean to you?
- How can the center help in your professional development?
- What ideas do you have for potential services or educational opportunities the center could offer?
- What ideas do you have for work/gathering areas, equipment, and technology the center could potentially provide?
- What could the center do to help support scholarship and original research?
- Has anyone previously worked on a campus that provided professional development services? If so, what services did you use? What did you like about the facility?
- Any additional thoughts...?

Some Background on the Professional Development Center:

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Here are some services a Professional Development Center could potentially offer the campus community:

Offer programming to facilitate and promote the development of on-line courses

Offer workshops and direct one-on-one assistance with presentation tools, web sites, classroom communication systems, and online courses

Serve as a facilitator of scholarly, professional, and creative work—for example, there might be one or more groups which would share with one another their work in writing manuscripts.

Facilitate and support learning communities.

Assist faculty in balancing multiple responsibilities and taking on new and different roles.

Assist with and enhance mentoring programs

Assist faculty members in appreciating the diversity represented by their students and in responding with a range of effective strategies for teaching and facilitating student learning

Offer programs to promote personal growth, life planning, and interpersonal skills

Help faculty systematically collect and analyze information to assess student learning and their teaching.

Offer programs responding to the career span of academic life (e.g., mid-career renewal, retirement planning programs, career counseling, and wellness programs)

Assist instructors in understanding underlying theories of teaching and learning and in expanding their repertoire of skills and strategies in order to adapt to the

Helping to infuse diversity awareness into orientations, workshops, publications, and other teaching development activities

Help to facilitate team and interdisciplinary teaching

Support the appropriate and effective use of new instructional technologies

Help faculty members to develop their own teaching portfolios

Offer consultation services for faculty who want to improve their courses

Assist faculty members to incorporate student learning portfolios into their courses

Offer orientation programming for new faculty

Assist in assessing student learning outcomes and assist in efforts to improve those outcomes

Support classroom research, peer review of teaching, the use of course and teaching portfolios, and publications presenting the scholarship of teaching and learning

Help in evaluating course organization, presentation skills, and effectiveness through such means as *class visits*, *videotaping*, and *student feedback*.

Be a gathering place and a drop-in place for the faculty and professional staff, a place where they would feel

Support faculty efforts to explore the effective use of 'traditional' active-learning activities such as reading, writing, and listening, as well as newer cooperative, collaborative, problem-based, and inquiry-based learning strategies