Chapter 14

Starting and Sustaining Successful Faculty Development Programs at Small Colleges

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This chapter complements a recent chapter in To Improve the Academy by Mooney and Reder (2008) that discusses the distinctive features and challenges of faculty development at small and liberal arts colleges. As a continuation and expansion of that more conceptual discussion, we aim to convey practical strategies for relatively new faculty developers at small institutions with incipient programs. The suggestions offered in this chapter are grounded in our experiences as faculty developers at liberal arts colleges and developed through numerous national conference presentations.
and conversations with colleagues in the field over the past decade. Although our recommendations are particularly salient for faculty developers working in a small college setting, our ideas should be applicable across institutional types.

Over the past decade, we have been involved with the implementation and evolution of faculty development programs now rapidly taking place at small colleges. Since 2001, we have facilitated conference sessions focused on small college faculty development work at the annual Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network meetings, at numerous Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) conferences, and at a variety of other higher education gatherings, both national and regional. In various forums—primarily workshops, but also on panels, through roundtable discussions, and at organizational meetings—we have begun to identify and theorize about the tenets for starting and sustaining successful teaching and learning programs in the small college environment. In an earlier To Improve the Academy chapter (Mooney & Reder, 2008), we discuss from a conceptual perspective the distinct features and challenges of faculty development at small and liberal arts colleges. This chapter complements that work with a discussion of thirteen specific strategies for small college faculty development. Some of these strategies were originally generated for a workshop (Reder & Mooney, 2004) and have since been expanded and refined through conversations with faculty developers at a wide variety of small institutions. It is important to note that although our recommendations are tailored specifically for practitioners at small colleges, most of our ideas are applicable to a variety of institutional types.

As is true of our workshops, this chapter has several goals. First, we identify the distinctive challenges of small college faculty development and describe the general work of program directors on small campuses. Next, we offer some basic strategies for starting and sustaining successful faculty development programs at small colleges. Finally, we pose questions to encourage some self-reflection and help with the identification of the next steps needed to develop or improve an institution’s programs.
Challenges for the Small College Faculty Developer

Starting and sustaining a successful faculty development program at a small college presents challenges distinctive from those at larger institutions. Because these challenges are covered elsewhere in some detail (Mooney & Reder, 2008), we address only two: 1) those related to faculty culture at small institutions and 2) those related to the multiple roles often played by small college faculty developers.

There is an implicit assumption that small and liberal arts institutions value excellent teaching and therefore only hire faculty who "already know how to teach" (Reder & Gallagher, 2007). Faculty at small colleges report experiencing greater stress from the demands of their teaching (Lindholm, Szeleny, Hurtado, & Korn, 2005), and when they already feel confident in their teaching, they may hesitate to allocate their time to improving an activity in which they are considered to be proficient. Although faculty across a wide range of institutions, from two-year colleges to research-intensive universities, may report feeling over-taxed and stressed, the competing demands of teaching, advising, conducting research, and doing committee work may be felt more keenly by small college faculty than by their peers at larger institutions (see Gibson, 1992).

Small college faculty developers also face competing and compelling demands on their time. Unlike their counterparts at larger institutions, who often have positions that focus primarily on supporting teaching and learning, small college faculty developers often devote only a small fraction of their total time to their faculty development work. Like many faculty developers at larger institutions, virtually all faculty developers at small schools teach at least one course per year, often more. Such teaching is not only important for legitimacy in the eyes of the faculty with whom they work, but it also gives faculty developers experiences with the current student population from which to draw on and allows for their own ongoing pedagogical development. However, in addition to their teaching duties, many small college faculty developers have other administrative responsibilities as an associate dean, department chair, or director of programs such as first-year seminars or a writing center. In addition, most have multiple
committee assignments (sometimes as part of their regular faculty duties, sometimes specifically because of their involvement in faculty development), and they frequently continue their ongoing advising or other responsibilities to students.

These multiple roles are further complicated by the broad range of faculty development activities for which small college faculty developers may be responsible. In contrast to faculty developers at larger institutions, many of whom have positions devoted specifically to supporting faculty in their teaching, sometimes even to a specific aspect of teaching and learning (for example, instructional design, working with teaching assistants, teaching with technology, or working within a specific discipline), faculty developers at small colleges are required to be generalists, responsible for supporting all areas of faculty work. Not only are they often the one-stop shop for everything having to do with teaching and learning, but they may also be expected to coordinate mentoring to new and early-career faculty (including scholarship, promotion, and tenure), to run programs that address institutional priorities (such as diversity, writing, quantitative literacy, assessment, accreditation), or to support departmentally based curricular initiatives and revision. In our roles on our campuses, for example, we have been called on to do the following:

- Help individual faculty with course design, including incorporating technology, writing, speaking, and research assignments
- Lead departmental curriculum revision
- Assist in the development of department chairs
- Facilitate groups for early-career faculty and experienced faculty
- Run campuswide discussions on issues such as general education, diversity, and assessment
- Support the institution’s accreditation review process, including chairing the college’s accreditation review committee in the case of two authors
- Host events where faculty and students talk about teaching and learning
- Assist individual faculty, departments, and programs in designing tools for assessing teaching and learning
**Thirteen Principles of Small College Faculty Development**

Although many principles are important to successful faculty development (Sorcinelli, 2002), we believe the ideas we offer here are particularly relevant to small colleges. As with all such recommendations, we affirm that what defines "best practices" is almost always dependent on the local conditions at your particular institution, and we caution the reader to bear in mind your own faculty culture as you use these principles to guide your program development. In our experience, the majority of small college faculty developers are drawn from the ranks of the faculty at the institution they serve, and they often retain significant teaching, research, and service responsibilities; therefore, the following principles, although readily transferable to a variety of institutional types and situations, are designed for the small college faculty developer for whom faculty development is only one part of a larger set of responsibilities.

1. **Seek guidance from stakeholders.** It is impossible to overstate the importance of connecting small college faculty development to the needs and interests of the faculty and the institution as a whole (Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006). Given the limited size of the faculty community at small colleges, what might be isolated incidents at a larger institution can dramatically change the general climate and openness to faculty development at a smaller institution. For example, on the positive side, a school notes that a few of the promising new faculty (all come from doctoral programs at large, research-intensive universities) may struggle to adjust to a new teaching climate that is heavy on small seminars or courses outside their area of expertise. The difficulties of a few of these new faculty may prompt department chairs or the academic administration to seek assistance from the faculty developer. Conversely, any perception that candidates who receive a negative tenure decision spent too much time on their teaching to the detriment of their research can poison the water for faculty development efforts. Perhaps more maddening for those working in such a climate is that the small college faculty community is small enough that faculty opinion can swing
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rapidly from position to position, sometimes controlled by only one influential voice. In such an environment, keeping an ear to the ground is absolutely essential to success.

If you are charged with launching a formal faculty development program or expanding the programming currently offered, it is good to have the go-ahead from the chief academic officer and even better to have a direct charge from some formal entity within the faculty governance structure. A good first step is to start discussing new programming with faculty colleagues, including a few "unusual suspects." An effective developer will meet with a broad sample of the college faculty. Indeed, it is possible and can be very valuable for a single person to meet individually with every member of the faculty over the course of a few months (Holmgren, 2005).

2. Create an advisory board. Any such information gathering can be the first step to creating an advisory board. Advisory boards or other formal advisory structures are necessary to keep a one-person operation connected to the diverse faculty community. Having a reliable, engaged committee to evaluate ideas and provide the leadership for some programs is critical to your productivity and mental health. An advisory group can serve as eyes and ears around campus, act as a sounding board for ideas and programming, and support the director or coordinator in making important decisions.

An ideal advisory board member should be known for teaching, scholarship, and leadership. The board should contain individuals who represent diverse disciplines and levels of experience. Reaching out to a few faculty who initially may not appear to be interested in faculty development efforts might broaden your audience and expand your own thinking. On a small college campus where teaching is already assumed to be important and faculty may be hesitant to devote extra time to improving their pedagogy, advisory board members can also serve as role models to other faculty. If campus leaders are willing to devote time and energy to programming to improve teaching, these activities will be seen by others as valuable. As political allies and advocates who understand your work and programmatic goals, the advisory board itself can play an invaluable role in the (not always popular) decisions
you will make. For example, such a board is particularly important when the center for teaching and learning (CTL) offers—or denies—funding for faculty development initiatives proposed by individuals or departments.

One critical issue that should be addressed by the advisory board of any new program is the question of the program's or center's relationship to the tenure and promotion process. This issue is salient at small institutions because there may be implicit expectations about the information a faculty developer or faculty affiliated with the program can provide about candidates for promotion and tenure; such expectations are at odds with good faculty development and the creation of a "safe space" in which faculty can learn. An active faculty development program may draw on the skills of many faculty over a period of a few years, and any number of senior faculty might work mentoring untenured faculty. If all those senior faculty were to recuse themselves from addressing tenure cases, it would dramatically skew the available pool of those able to weigh in on such decisions. Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to this challenge because the faculty community is so small, and it is therefore important to address this issue openly and early on in the program development.

The advisory board can let you know how frequently it needs to meet. Once programs are established, monthly meetings may suffice. You may wish to establish an advisory board listserv for contact, advice, and input between meetings.

3. **Make your program or center a place of excellence.** Your program or center should be the place where good teachers talk about good teaching. Make every effort to get the best teachers and leaders involved in running programs: invite faculty who have won teaching awards, who are known by students and other faculty as excellent teachers, and who have the respect of faculty across the campus. Their participation will help facilitate topical conversations that bridge disciplinary and pedagogical differences.

At small and liberal arts colleges, the idea of the scholar-teacher should come to fruition: ideally, faculty teaching and scholarship should support each other. Boyer's idea of the scholarship of teaching should be particularly appealing in these small
institutions that emphasize faculty commitment to being both teachers and scholars (Boyer, 1990). One way to incorporate a scholarly approach to faculty conversations and programs is to "assign" a common reading in advance of a session or workshop. In addition to facilitating a discussion, this approach signals to colleagues that this workshop, this conversation, this endeavor is grounded in theory, practice, and previous scholarly applications of ideas. These conversations about pedagogy and class assignments are not about remediation; they are about teaching excellence and critical practice—ideas well suited to small college faculty culture.

4. Start with one program and do it very well. Doing too many things at once not only can dilute your program's effectiveness, it can also sabotage its success. On a small college campus there is an interesting multiplier effect: faculty know each other, and they talk. An event attended by 20 faculty at a large institution with 700 faculty accounts for fewer than 3 percent of the faculty; at a small college with 140 faculty, that workshop represents almost 15 percent of the total faculty. Because each and every event is high stakes, quality matters more than quantity. If faculty find your programming worthwhile, they will spread the word, demand for your services will increase, and your programming will expand naturally. If they find it a waste of time, they will also tell others, and faculty will start avoiding your events. An ill-considered abundance of faculty development opportunities can quickly deplete the limited pool of available faculty development hours, but one well-considered and strategically targeted program can create an ongoing demand for additional programming.

5. A good place to start: working with incoming faculty. The first program you develop should be for new faculty. A liberal arts or other small college needs to do more than merely inform new faculty that teaching is important; it needs to explicitly support this claim if new faculty, who often have little experience teaching at small colleges, are to be successful. Such programming sends the message to faculty from the start that teaching is valued at the college, talked about, and shared (Reder & Gallagher, 2007). Evidence suggests that after several years, a school's entire teaching culture can be transformed, as subsequent
classes of entering faculty not only share the same vocabulary around teaching but treat it as a public act that can be examined and improved (Frederick, 2007; Holmgren, 2005; Reder & Gallagher, 2007).

In addition, programs for first- and second-year faculty are "safe" programs for faculty at all levels to support, because these programs play into the false and somewhat paternalistic idea that newer faculty will most benefit from faculty development programming. Finally, incoming and early-career faculty need support, not only for their teaching but to ensure a successful transition into their new lives. Targeted programming helps new faculty connect with other faculty across the disciplines, introduces them to the different expectations of teaching in a small college setting, and facilitates their understanding of institutional values, expectations, and cultures.

6. Make careful and deliberate choices about expanding programming. An effective teaching and learning program will offer at least two types of programming: 1) a year-long experience designed specifically to meet the needs of incoming faculty and 2) ongoing programming open to faculty of all ranks. Among the varieties of programming for experienced faculty, two types often have the most impact: 1) a year-long exploration of some aspect of teaching and learning or 2) a series of one-off events that faculty can attend according to their interests and needs. Programs such as Colorado College’s "Thinking Inside and Outside the Block Box" series (www.coloradocollege.edu/learningcommons/tlc/programs_lunches.asp) and Connecticut College’s “Talking Teaching” series (http://ctl.conncoll.edu/programs.html#talking) offer faculty the opportunity to discuss specific teaching issues with colleagues in an informal setting.

More structured, year-long seminars (sometimes called learning communities) invite a group of faculty to meet regularly to discuss specific pedagogical issues. Examples of successful year-long programs at liberal arts colleges include Allegheny College’s Teaching Partners (Holmgren, 2005), Macalester College’s mid-career faculty seminar (www.macalester.edu/cstMid%20Career%20Seminar/ Index.htm), St. Lawrence University’s Oral Communication Institute (Mooney, Fordham, & Lehr, 2005), and St. Olaf
College’s Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts associates program that focuses on the scholarship of teaching and learning (Peters, Schodt, & Walczak, 2008).

Once you have established two well-running programs, we encourage you think about expanding your activities using these four guidelines:

1. Consider the balance between events for both occasional participants (for example, using Excel gradebook or active learning in large classes) and ongoing users (for example, a learning community focused on cognition and learning or a multiple-workshop series in various dimensions of teaching using an online course management system).
2. Select topics of both general interest (for example, “how students learn”) and focused on specific issues (for example, “teaching science labs” or “grading student presentations”).
3. Offer programming options that appeal to a variety of faculty at different points in their careers, full-time or part-time, across disciplines and teaching styles.
4. Align specific programs with the time of the semester (for example, a pre-semester syllabus workshop or a discussion of grading at the end of the semester).

7. Use the talent pool on your own campus. At its most basic level, our job is to provide the impetus for faculty to get together and talk about their teaching. Lee Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, talks about the “pedagogical solitude” that most faculty face; our job is to overcome this isolation and make teaching, again in Shulman’s terms, “community property.” Recognizing the depth of expertise and excellence already present on our campuses by asking our faculty to share their ideas with other colleagues builds community and collegiality. As an added benefit, your faculty best know your college’s distinctive culture, along with its students and curriculum, and will be seen as credible sources of ideas by their colleagues. To make these conversations possible, it is important that you keep abreast of who is doing what in terms of their teaching. Because of the small size of our campuses, simply maintaining an ongoing conversation with colleagues and students about what is
happening in their classrooms allows you to identify who is up to something interesting.

One additional facet of small college culture makes focused but informal faculty-facilitated conversations particularly important. There is a strange intimacy among the faculty of a small college that is at once immediate but distant: they work in close confines, yet even those who may see each other every day for a year or have offices next to each other may know little about the other's work and even less about the other's teaching. Those with offices at opposite ends of the campus may rarely see each other unless they share a committee assignment. Because of the campus's small size, faculty feel that they should know each other, but often they do not. We have experienced moments at our events, when we realize that a recently tenured faculty member who has been on campus for six years is unknown to a more senior colleague. Although two tenured colleagues meeting for the first time is not an unusual scenario at a large university with multiple colleges, a large physical plant, and thousands of faculty, on a residential campus with fewer than two hundred faculty, it surprises us that this scenario recurs several times each year. Faculty events centered around teaching are an opportunity to draw in diverse participants from across the disciplines.

As a final benefit of using local talent, when we ask faculty to get involved in the leadership of our programming, we also offer them an opportunity to develop their ideas about teaching into something that can be shared with a wider audience. For many faculty, the next natural step is to present at a teaching conference or, for some, to write an article on their teaching or pedagogical research. For example, one of our faculty led a successful lunchtime discussion about his approach to teaching critical thinking skills; his discussion led to a request from his colleagues that he offer a more developed workshop. His materials and ideas from that workshop were subsequently turned into an article that was then published in a national periodical.

8. Generate grassroots interest in your programs before announcing them. We have all found that extending conversations about potential programming beyond the advisory board is quite helpful and
To elicit useful feedback before programs are announced. We recommend taking the time to describe to at least five colleagues from across the disciplines what you are planning. By engaging their interest early and incorporating their feedback before you commit additional time and resources to a new project, you not only have started building your participant base, you have also ensured its attractiveness to colleagues from multiple disciplines.

By taking this principle even further and asking for faculty commitments to attend an event before it is officially announced, you can dramatically increase participation. For example, by inviting several faculty to be featured discussants on the session’s topic, Connecticut College’s “Talking Teaching” Series of lunchtime pedagogical discussions more than doubled in attendance, going from an average of eight to ten faculty participants to an average of over twenty (http://ctl.conncoll.edu/programs.html#talking). These discussants, who represent a variety of disciplines, teaching styles, and career stages, do not run the discussion or workshop, but their presence draws in diverse participants eager to learn about their colleagues’ teaching.

9. **Collaborate widely within your own institution.** At small colleges, even those without formal teaching and learning programs, faculty learn about teaching in a variety of decentralized locations: first-year experience programs, community learning projects, general education, information fluency initiatives, the writing program, instructional technology, and departmental discussions (P. Frederick in Mooney & Reder, 2008; Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006). Because the faculty developer has limited time, forging strategic partnerships with other campus groups with similar aims allows a teaching center to expand its programming, increase its influence on the college’s teaching culture, and best use both time and the school’s resources.

Because teaching and learning programs are focused on supporting faculty teaching and improving student learning, they are often viewed as neutral entities that are able to address charged campus political issues. Our programs have been asked to sponsor discussions on topics such as changes in general education, diversity, accountability, grade inflation, and policies (final exams,
course enrollment limits) that affect teaching and learning. Faculty teaching and learning centers can be thought of as the center of a nexus of opportunities for faculty learning—helping shape events and cosponsoring events with a diverse variety of campus offices and connecting faculty to these initiatives.

10. Build your program’s visibility by making it the “center” of faculty learning. We are often asked how important it is to have a physical center, and the answer is, “It depends.” Certainly, the wrong space—an ill-maintained house on the edge of campus or a nice suite of rooms that is hard to find or inconveniently located—might be worse than no space. Similarly, space that has been “liberated” from a department whose members hold grudges and have a lot of influence may hinder rather than help your cause. What is most important is that your program be felt as a presence on campus, and the right space may help with that. At Colorado College, for example, the Crown Faculty Center was established within some unused basement space in the main library. Several years later, with a gift and matching funds provided by the College itself, the faculty center became part of a cluster of “centers,” each with a focus on learning for both students and faculty. A collaboration among the directors of the library, instructional technology, and the faculty center led to The Learning Commons at Tutt Library (Dickerson, Kuerbis, & Stiles, 2007). What constitutes the right space will depend on the institutional culture. At some schools, space in the central administration building near the chief academic officer or president communicates importance and influence that enhance the program and its effectiveness. At others, such close association with “the administration” is the kiss of death.

But physical space is not the only way to gain visibility. At Connecticut College, the faculty development program does not have a physical space, but centers are important. Consequently, faculty development is housed in the Center for Teaching & Learning, which exists as the metaphorical center of opportunities for faculty development (see Frederick, 2007; Mooney & Reder, 2008). Given the Connecticut College culture, creating a clear presence with extensive programming for faculty is more important than physical space (Reder & Gallagher, 2007).
As another example, early on in the formation of Allegheny College's faculty development program, the associate dean charged with developing the program was struggling with creating a presence for the program in the absence of both effective space and a name on which to hang the program. At the suggestion of a small college faculty development colleague, the associate dean catalogued the existing programs housed in the dean's office—travel support, workshops for new faculty, the sabbatical leave program, research mini-grants managed by a faculty committee, a small endowment for curricular development grants—and created a tri-fold brochure that was distributed to all faculty. In that single act, which required relatively little time and few resources, a faculty development program was born. Many faculty contacted the dean and the associate dean to say how surprised and pleased they were to see how many faculty development programs were available. The irony is that none of the programs were new, but many were not well known or understood as part of faculty development.

11. Reward faculty for participating. Two responses typically emerge early on in any discussion of how one builds participation in faculty development programs: pay them or threaten them. Although rats will run through mazes to get treats or avoid shocks, deep learning of the kind that leads to the pedagogical growth we seek in faculty development programs is unlikely to derive from simplistic approaches such as blatant rewards or coercion. Clearly, to be effective we need to provide faculty with a different type of impetus. Wergin (2003) asserts that faculty are motivated by four underlying desires: autonomy, community, recognition, and efficacy. In our experience, most effective programs attend to at least three of these four motivators.

Mandatory faculty development, which might be perceived as forced remediation, is rarely effective, and we suggest all faculty development programs honor faculty autonomy by being voluntary in nature. In addition, to the extent possible while respecting the program's integrity, participants will appreciate and respond well if they have wide latitude in helping to shape the program or the activities therein. Most faculty development programs build
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Community by incorporating common attendance at a workshop, by creating shared experiences, and by offering regular opportunities for substantive conversation about teaching. Community development is another reason to offer meals or refreshments in conjunction with faculty development activities. Any program that fosters increased teaching skill and confidence enhances participants' sense of efficacy. Providing participants opportunities to reflect on and discuss practical issues they face in their classrooms (for example, by grounding a discussion of human learning in classroom experiences common at the college) can help realize benefits in ways that are immediately apparent and motivating for participants. Recognition can come in a variety of ways, including thanks or acknowledgment from the president or provost; an invitation to a faculty member to share experiences, lead a session, or serve as a mentor; and, when handled well, a stipend.

12. Details matter. Communicate quality in the setting and food that you provide. Attending to faculty needs and the physical space demonstrates that you value faculty time enough to pay attention to the details. Whenever possible and whatever the budget allows for, providing refreshments sends the right welcoming message. Being careful to acknowledge dietary restrictions communicates that you care about the participants as individuals. Providing a comfortable setting that is conducive to conversation and the task at hand supports the informal exchanges that sustain and inform community and faculty development on small campuses. Because time is a faculty member's most precious resource, events during the breakfast or lunch hour are often the most convenient and best attended. At our institutions, we typically build time for informal conversation over food into faculty development opportunities. By publicizing when the gathering begins (for example, "lunch is served at noon") and when the formal program starts ("Professor Black will begin with introductory comments at 12:25"), we also allow faculty the autonomy to decide whether they will come for the meal (most do) or just the structured sessions. Providing delicious meals—the best possible given your funding—is a wonderful way to draw faculty in and
let them know that their participation is appreciated. It also meets a very practical need: if no food is provided, faculty may need to choose between either getting sustenance or participating in faculty development. The symbolism and power of sharing good food together, coupled with good conversation and learning, can make a discussion or workshop all the more enjoyable and effective.

13. Attend to your own needs and development. Whereas centers for teaching and learning at large institutions often have multiple staff members, those of us involved in faculty development work at small colleges often do our planning in relative professional isolation and without mentors. It is essential for our own professional development to reach out to colleagues, not only at similar institutions but also at a variety of colleges and universities. The exchange of energy and ideas at conferences focused on teaching, learning, and curricular issues, be they regional (for example, the New England Faculty Development Consortium, the Collaboration for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, the Lilly conferences) or national (for example, the annual POD, AAC&U, and Teaching Professor conferences), is invaluable for your current and future work. Although you work in a distinctive context, learning about faculty programming at a variety of schools can help enrich your programming back on your home campus. Equally important, small colleges, particularly private colleges, can sometimes feel cut off from the larger world of higher education. It is important to understand your work and your institution in a larger context, including the many forces, both positive and negative, that are shaping the future of teaching and learning: the shifting nature of faculty work, technology and its effect on learning, assessment and accountability, the changing demographics of the college-age population, and the financial pressures on colleges and universities.

At the end of the workshops we run for faculty developers, we always ask participants to assess their own distinctive situations and those of their college, consider what they have learned, and then begin to plan their next steps. We end this chapter with an invitation to engage in similar reflections through a set of
overarching questions we have found useful in focusing our own work and advancing our faculty development programs. We pose these questions within two frames: 1) the mission and context of faculty development programs or centers and 2) the challenges and goals specific to one's faculty and institutional culture. Asking yourself these questions is important, particularly because reflection—practicing meta-cognition within our profession—is a key to sustaining our work and refining it.

Conclusion

We propose the following questions to guide your reflective process for this frame: 1) What is the purpose, the mission, the philosophy behind the work you do? 2) Does your philosophical purpose always drive your programming? 3) Can you identify two situational challenges relevant to your work that you can address in the next two semesters?

These questions can guide your reflective process for this frame: 1) If you could only design (or redesign) one program, what one teaching and learning issue or practice would it address? 2) What would its goal be? 3) What possible ideas or programming are you familiar with that might help you address this goal? 4) What first step(s) will you take on your campus? 5) Whom will you contact? 6) What will you propose? 7) What might be the questions they ask? 8) What response do you want?

Although we have emphasized in this chapter a set of practical principles derived from best practices, our own engagement in reflective practice leads us to suggest that small-college faculty developers might also consider recent work in cognitive science and how people learn as we think about how teachers learn about teaching. Because the parallels between human learning and teacher (faculty) learning are striking, they provide one such lens through which to view our work. The seminal book *How People Learn* (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999) provides us with three related areas of inquiry regarding faculty growth and learning. First, we need to recognize that faculty bring to our sessions and programmatic events a highly personal set of experiences and beliefs. How do we recognize that prior knowledge, and how do we activate and build on it with new ideas about
teaching and learning? Second, faculty development over one’s lifespan consists of moving from novices as learners of teaching to more expert status. How do we account for this growth and development over one’s career as we plan sessions and programmatic events? Third, how do we encourage colleagues to engage in critical reflection on their teaching practices so that the impact on student learning is enhanced?

Each of us has found through our individual experiences that faculty development opportunities at small colleges, especially workshops and ongoing seminars, are usually highly collaborative, rewarding, and fun. Generally speaking, our faculty colleagues at small and liberal arts colleges understand teaching to be a primary responsibility and genuinely care about teaching well; they know one another and value opportunities to exchange ideas with faculty outside their disciplines. Programs that encourage and instruct in developing substantive courses with engaging assignments that address multiple aspects of student learning have a strong pull for faculty if these faculty development opportunities are offered with sensitivity to faculty culture and needs. Although we have noted more than once that our colleagues’ time is a precious commodity and that integrating faculty development programs into their priorities on any given day is a faculty developer’s persistent challenge, there are some very powerful forces working in our favor. First among them is the genuine and deep commitment to excellence in teaching and deep student learning that the majority of our colleagues bring to each and every course they teach.

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