



Understanding the Resources Faculty Use When Trying Out and Refining New Insights: Findings from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

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Agenda

- Background of study on faculty engagement in and institutional encouragement of SoTL
- Findings from current study
- Small group work and discussion on future research



Background

- Interest in faculty participation in SoTL activities and faculty perceptions of institutional encouragement
 - To what extent do institutions encourage faculty to engage in SoTL?
 - To what extent do faculty engage in SoTL?
 - What predicts faculty perceptions of institutional encouragement and faculty participation in SoTL?



Background

- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
 - Annual survey of faculty members
 - Baccalaureate-granting institutions
 - Current or prior participation in NSSE
 - Goal: to measure faculty perceptions of and contributions to student engagement



Background

- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
 - Third party admin--IU Center for Survey Research
 - Faculty surveyed in the spring
 - Institutions choose faculty to be surveyed
 - Faculty responses are kept anonymous
 - Administered online
- Survey options
 - Course-based questions
 - Typical student questions



Background

- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
 - Sample reports and copies of surveys
 - Selected results
 - Grand frequencies by Carnegie classification
 - Recent FSSE research and presentations
- FSSE Facilitator's Guide
- Special analyses



Background

- Huber and Hutchings (2005) defining features of SoTL
 - Questioning
 - Gathering and Exploring Evidence
 - Trying Out and Refining New Insights
 - Going Public



Background

- Over 4,000 faculty members from 49 US institutions
- Encouragement lags behind engagement in certain areas
- Encouragement of and engagement in public dissemination lag behind other areas
- Education faculty reported highest levels of encouragement and engagement



Our Focus Today

- Open-ended item included in the set of experimental items:
 - When you make changes to your courses, what kinds of information inform your decisions?



Developing Academic Plans

- External influences
- Institutional influences
- Unit level influences
- The role of the learner
- Assessment and evaluation

Lattuca, L. R., & Startk, J. S. (2009). *Shaping the college curriculum: Academic plans in context* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Our Focus Today

- Responses from 4525 faculty members from 49 US institutions were analyzed
- 30 codes were initially identified
- Collapsed into 5 major themes



Five Themes

- Student Feedback
- Student Performance
- External Influences
- Internal Influences
- Faculty Influences



Student Feedback

- Formal course evaluations
- Informal feedback from former students
- Informal feedback from current students

“I don't depend too much on course evaluations. Those are very unreliable metrics. I base changes on what happens on the ground, in reality, when I'm teaching.”

“I do continuous data gathering of info from student groups (anonymous and during the class) about activities, my teaching, and sometimes content changes (in professional preparation classes).”



Student Performance

- Assignments and Exams
- Formal assessment

“Assesment of student improvement in the class is most important in updating by teaching methods. Individual student evaluations are not the primary generator of change. Converstations with students give me ideas for more meaningful changes.”



External Influences

- Accreditation standards
- Advances and trends in the discipline/industry
- Advances and trends in teaching and learning

“Following current trends in the industry and doing a lot of reading. I need to stay at the top of the field so my students are prepared for their place in the workforce.”



Internal Influences

- Institution-level
- Department-level
- Role of Faculty

“I am an adjunct and do not make changes to the basic coursework. Changes I make are limited to correcting the syllabus when it has errors.”



Faculty Influences

- Self-assessment
- Collaboration with other faculty
- Peer feedback

“Discussion with other instructors teaching the same class; what has worked, what has not worked. Programs sponsored by the Provost Office such as the Teaching Circles and lunch discussion panels.”

“My own sense of my students' success or lack of success in meeting my expectations. My own sense of how successful or unsuccessful various assignments and activities have been in helping students to achieve course goals.”



Future Research

- Who are the faculty that report making no changes to their courses?
- Who are the faculty that focus on certain influences for making changes to their courses?
- What other types of activities do these faculty engage in?
- Do the students of these faculty have different patterns of engagement?



Discussion

- How can we further explore the scholarship of teaching and learning and the resources faculty use to improve courses?
 - What would be most helpful for you to know?
 - What could we ask about in the future?



Small Group Discussion

- When looking at faculty's approach to improving courses, what themes are present at your institution?
- What is the state of course evaluations at your institution? Do faculty find them beneficial? How are results used by the institution?



Questions

Thank you for participating.

For more information on FSSE, visit
www.fsse.iub.edu

