

College of Education and Human Services Professional Development Plan 2013-14

The intent of the COEHS Professional Development Plan is to:

- (1) Identify the expressed professional development needs of the College of Education and Human Services Faculty,
- (2) Interpret these needs relative to the mission, vision, and capacity of the College,
- (3) Make final operational recommendations as to how to best address the expressed professional development needs within the College.

COEHS Faculty Professional Development Needs and Recommendations

For year 2013-2014, the PDC identified COEHS professional development needs using a needs assessment survey. On March 13, 2014, the PDC sent invitations to participate in our 6 question, Qualtrics survey to all COEHS faculty and adjuncts. The survey closed on April 2, 2014. Of the 379 people contacted to participate, 35 completed the survey. We partially attribute the low response rate to the lack of an administrative signatory on the original invitation and a rule in the Qualtrics software that stops survey participants from completing the survey if they leave their computer for more than a few minutes or if the participant closes the survey and attempts to reopen it again to complete it. The 2014 survey consisted of the following 6 questions:

1. To be a more effective teacher, what areas of your teaching would you like to improve?
2. What type of support would help you meet your "service" goals and objectives?
3. What additional skills and knowledge would you like to have to help you be a better researcher?
4. As a learner, what types of learning delivery methods are most effective for you?
5. What suggestions can you make for how the University can better meet your professional development needs related to professional service, teaching, and research?
6. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how well do you believe the College of Education and Human Services meets your professional development needs related to service, teaching, and research?

Question 1

To be a more effective teacher, what areas of your teaching would you like to improve?

Summary of responses. 33 out of the 35 respondents made comments to this question. Of those 33, 14 (42%) were directly related to working with technology in some way. Additional comments from the faculty (18%) mentioned training for increasing interaction with students through critical thinking or classroom engagement and working with diverse students. Needing additional time for teacher preparation (15%) was the third highest category mentioned in the comments.

Interpretation. It appears the faculty who gave feedback is looking for additional support in working with technology to create meaningful learning experiences for students. Specific

topics mentioned included: innovative design for online learning, additional interactive online content, iPad resources for learning, and white board training.

Recommendations:

Professional development opportunities should be offered in the following areas:

1. Using technology to enhance online learning
2. How to develop critical thinking questioning techniques
3. Student engagement
4. Working with diverse students and learners.

Question 2

What type of support would help you meet your “service” goals and objectives?

Summary of responses. 32 of 35 participants responded to question 2. Their responses were coded and the following themes emerged with the highest frequency of response listed first, and the lowest frequency of response listed last: more time/less responsibility, better information/communication, more service opportunities, and training.

Interpretation. The respondents perceive that they do not have enough time to adequately devote to service. Additionally, they perceive that information and communication methods need to be improved. Finally, a lack of service opportunities does not allow the respondents to participate as they would like.

Recommendations:

1. Provide support for the “service” component of faculty job functions so that they could have more time to pursue “service” activities.
2. Provide better information and communication related to faculty support for the service component of their roles.
3. Ensure that an adequate number of service opportunities exist to support the “service needs” of the COEHS faculty.

Question 3

What additional skills and knowledge would you like to have to help you be a better researcher?

Summary of responses. 31 of 35 participants responded to this question. Three themes emerged as the responses were reviewed: training/knowledge, time, and support. The majority of the responses logged were related to specific skills that the respondents either wanted to learn or improve.

Interpretation. With regard to training/knowledge, several specific statistical/research programs were identified such as SPSS, MaxDQA, NVivo. With regard to time, 6 respondents noted that they needed time to even pursue research, others time to complete it and others specified the need for time to write. The third theme, Support, garnered the most comments. The need for actual laboratory space was mentioned along with the need for collaboration. Better support from the Office of Sponsored Research was also noted as a need. Graduate Research Assistants and trained statisticians were noted as needs. The need

for information on how/where to publish was noted. Finally, the need for a *real* benefit for students who participate in theses was noted.

Recommendations.

1. Provide or continue to provide training and support related to the following specific topics:
 - SPSS software for dummies
 - MaxQDA software workshop to better accomplish qualitative data analysis, which is basically what you do in a literature review.
 - Collaboration skills
 - Quantitative analysis and mixed-methods approaches to educational research
 - Grant-writing skills
 - NVivo software training
 - Research design instruction
 - Greater access to technology and technology training that are not iPads
 - Review of accessing materials through Odum library
 - Cabell's database training
 - Personal meetings with a library research specialist; perhaps once or twice per semester to develop internet research skills.
2. Ensure that research activities are seen as priority by the University and provide support that reinforces that research activities are a priority.

Question 4

As a learner, what types of learning delivery methods are most effective for you?

Summary of responses. There were 32 participants who made responses to this question. Of the number of coded responses, 51% preferred fact-to-face learning events, 20% preferred online learning events, and 8 % preferred to learn by reading.

Interpretation. Clearly, the respondents identified face-to-face learning opportunities as their preference when identifying a preferred delivery method for learning,

Recommendations.

1. Face-to-face learning should be the most frequent mode of learning delivery methods, although not the only mode.
2. Online learning events and text should be used less than face-to-face.

Question 5

What suggestions can you make for how the University can better meet your professional development needs related to service, teaching, and research?

Summary of responses. Of the 35 responses recorded, most centered on a need for release time or a reduced load in order to allow time for professional development. Similarly, there was an expressed frustration with the time required for administrative tasks. Another group of

suggestions dealt with the accessibility, number, and quality of available professional development resources.

Interpretation. It is clear that the majority of those individuals who responded to the survey feel that a burdensome schedule is a key reason for not participating in PD activities. While it is beyond the charge of the college PD committee to directly address the assigned responsibilities of personnel, there may be some benefit to providing direction as to how to more efficiently schedule and implement multiple tasks. Several respondents expressed a need for training in a number of areas. The challenge is to provide training episodes in a just-in-time schedule and in an individualized format.

Recommendations:

1. Offer time management training, particularly for new faculty. It may be most effective to have the training conducted by accomplished faculty members who successfully model the desired time management skills.
2. Use the college video capture system to record and make available on demand PD episodes that occur on campus.
3. Make available on-line, selected webinars and video resources that address expressed PD needs such as instructional practices and the use of teaching technology. These resources might best be organized and made available within a college PD website.

Question 6

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, please rate the following statement: How well do you believe the College of Education and Human services meets your professional development needs related to service, teaching, and research?

Summary of responses. Ratings ranged from 1 to 5 with “3” being the most frequent score.

Interpretation. It is difficult to draw many conclusions from a single score. The fact that “3” was the most popular score indicates a general satisfaction of the College’s PD efforts. Frequencies of the most extreme scores suggest that the larger departments provided the lowest scores although this was not true in all cases. The results, while hard to interpret directly, may suggest that PD planning is best done in the context of expressed departmental needs rather than at the college level only.

Recommendations.

1. When surveying college personnel, measures should be in place that allows PD needs to be defined by department.
2. To the degree that it is possible, PD events and resources should be tailored to the expressed needs of each department.