

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY
2010 TEACHER-SCHOLAR SUMMER INSTITUTE EVALUATION SUMMARY

Background/Methodology

During August 2010, an institute for faculty members and librarians was offered at Bridgewater State University (BSU). The Institute had two main tracks: the first for professional development in effective teaching (the pedagogy track, with 24 participants) and one for focused writing time with peer feedback (the writing track, with 14 participants). Participants in the pedagogy track engaged in thematic workshops in two of three areas: Cultural Inclusion, Sustainability, and Undergraduate Research. At the conclusion of the Institute, all 38 participants completed an evaluation. Separate instruments were administered to participants in the pedagogy and writing tracks.

Key findings/Pedagogy Track

- 87.5% affirmed that working with colleagues from other disciplines had given them new insight into their teaching or teaching practice
- 78.3% believe “time for individual work” at the Institute was useful in improving teaching

Key findings/Writing Track

- 71.4% affirmed that “peer feedback from my writing group” at the Institute was useful to their writing
- 64.3% in the open-ended questions discussed how they could integrate (or were already integrating) small group work and/or peer feedback into their courses

Key findings/All Participants

- 78.9% believe the Institute “Very Much” met its goal of “building a community of teacher-scholars/writers”
- 83.8% believe the Institute “Very Much” met its goal of “taking your work to the next stage”
- 89.5% believe the Institute “Very Much” met its goal of “helping you feel energized about your work”

Highlighted Comments/Open Response (Pedagogy)

The multi-disciplinary approach was very important to understanding a more holistic approach to teaching. The selection of participants for the Institute was outstanding placing all of us in a very high level environment. The organization of the workshop, its authenticity, was truly exceptional and clearly demonstrated the hard work and dedication that was put into it.

The Institute has successfully created a learning community among participants, which I hope will last and develop. The topics/issues raised in the Institute workshops will continue to have different meaning or significance depending on contexts, situation, time, and those who are involved. Continuing discussion is one way to understand the significance of these topics and to bring about changes.

I can do better and I have learned many new ideas and obtained many new tools that I know will help me get better. I have met people who are truly remarkable in their enthusiasm, interest, and dedication to teaching and I know that I can continue to connect with them.

I learned that I really like thinking about new ideas in a community of scholars setting where I am working with peers outside of my field. I found this to be really inspiring – it makes me want to continue to “reach across the aisle” and build new and continuing partnerships.

It offered tremendous inspiration. I’m so impressed – yet again – with all the amazing work of my colleagues. The new folks I met have offered me all sorts of new personal and professional connections. I hope these continue [in the] learning community/network. Encouraged risk – with a “safety net” (people, BSU, money, colleagues).

[. . .] [T]hank you for a wonderful, enriching experience. Aside from students/classroom (teaching, specifically), this has been the best, most useful, most profound experience of my professional life . . . I plan to pay back this support, respect, and confidence building by paying it forward to other teachers and students. Many thanks.

Highlighted Comments/Open Response (Writing)

I got a lot clearer on how to write up my project for a talk and/versus for an article. I developed scattered notes into a conference presentation (main goal) and have a nice rough draft of an article (secondary goal). Most importantly, I am less resistant to the process; worked through “issues” which is huge.

I came in with zero work completed, just a concept/idea for my work. By Thursday night I had a rough draft for all seven sections of my proposal, feedback on all, and five pages of a chapter. This was huge. I moved past my intimidation, learned a significant amount about the proposal process and the feedback helped me grow as a writer and as a person.

Would love to see the writing group networks live beyond this week! The push to help us network ... was welcome, especially for junior faculty.

I learned that I have too high of an output expectation. I found forgiveness. I learned that my lack of confidence comes through in my writing as seen through “padded” words, hesitation, and lack of conviction. I learned that I am better at starting with free association writing to purge ideas. In the past I allowed the attempts at perfection ... increased anxiety and completely stalled production.

I think the lessons I learned about myself as a writer will help me be a better teacher. . . Setting goals, storyboarding, feedback, etc. are all techniques that would benefit developing writers.

I think I can incorporate part of the goal setting and peer evaluation exercises into my classes. In the past, rather than create a community of writers I have focused more on feedback and critique. The institute provided me with some concrete ideas about how to revise this in the future so that students are less fearful about sharing their writing.