

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT – A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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WHAT IS FACULTY DEVELOPMENT?

Faculty development, or staff development as it is often called, has become an increasingly important component of medical education. Staff development activities have been designed to improve teacher effectiveness at all levels of the educational continuum (e.g. undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing medical education) and diverse programs have been offered to health care professionals in many settings.

Faculty development (FACDEV) refers to “that broad range of activities institutions use to *renew* or *assist* faculty in their many roles.” (Centra, 1978) That is, faculty development is a planned program to *prepare* institutions and faculty members for their academic roles and to improve an individual’s knowledge and skills in the areas of teaching, research and administration. (Bland et al, 1990) The goal of faculty development is to teach faculty members the skills relevant to their institutional setting and faculty position, and to sustain their vitality both now and in the future. (Whitcomb, 2003)

FACDEV CONTENT

COMMON CONTENT AREAS

- Clinical teaching
- Small group facilitation
- Large group presentations
- Feedback & evaluation
- Use of technology in teaching & learning
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“NEWER” CONTENT AREAS

- Leadership & management skills
- Academic skills & career management
- Organizational & curricular development
- Educational scholarship
- Teaching of specific content areas
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FACDEV FORMATS

COMMON FORMATS

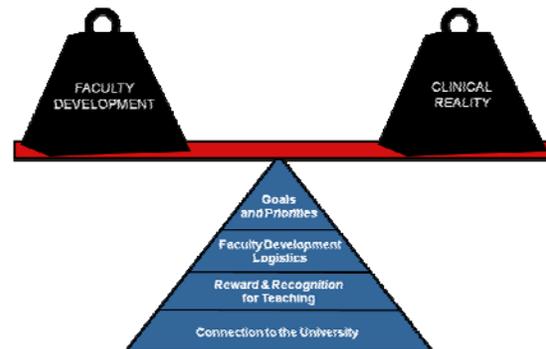
- Workshops and seminars
- Short courses
- Sabbaticals and fellowships
- One-on-one consultations
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ALTERNATIVE PRACTICES

- Peer coaching/Formal mentorship
- Integrated, longitudinal programs
- Online & self-directed learning
- Decentralized activities
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COMMON CHALLENGES

- Defining goals & priorities
- Balancing individual & organizational needs
- Motivating faculty
- Working within limited resources
- Choosing appropriate methods & formats
- Remaining relevant and practical
- Obtaining institutional support and “buy-in”
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PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS – BEME FINDINGS

FACDEV “IMPACT”

- Overall satisfaction is high
- Positive changes in attitudes towards teaching & FACDEV noted
- Gains in knowledge & skills reported
- Changes in teaching behaviours reported & observed
- Changes in student learning & organizational practice infrequently observed

SUMMARY OF KEY “FEATURES”

- The role of experiential learning
- The value of feedback
- The importance of peers
- Adherence to principles of teaching and learning
- The use of multiple instructional methods to achieve outcomes
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FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Moving beyond teaching and instructional improvement
- Developing alternative “models” of faculty development
- Situating faculty development in a theoretical context
- Using faculty development to promote organizational change
- Evaluating effectiveness in a rigorous fashion
- Developing new partnerships
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DESIGNING A FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

- Understand the institutional/organizational culture
- Determine appropriate goals and priorities
- Conduct needs assessments to ensure relevant programming
- Develop different programs to accommodate diverse needs
- Incorporate principles of adult learning and instructional design
- Offer a diversity of educational methods
- Promote “buy-in” and market effectively
- Work to overcome commonly encountered challenges
- Prepare staff developers
- Evaluate - and demonstrate - effectiveness

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