Executive Summary

This briefing is designed primarily for department chairs, but it will also be useful to other academic administrators responsible for faculty development. It is based on a series of findings reported from our major study of the field of faculty development in higher education (Sorcinelli, Austin, Eddy, & Beach, 2006). It asks two important questions: What are the key challenges facing faculty members and their institutions? and What are the issues around which faculty members are likely to need support over the next few years? It is important to note that while the term faculty development broadly refers to assisting faculty to become more effective in performing all roles related to academic life, a large number of our findings focus on roles and responsibilities related to teaching and student learning.

We begin this briefing by identifying the key challenges and pressures facing faculty members and their institutions in this changing world of higher education. These are the changing nature of the professoriate; the changing nature of the student body; and the changing nature of teaching, learning, and scholarship. Next, we offer an overview of each of these challenges and discuss how department chairs can initiate activities that respond to them in ways that support the professional development of their faculty. We conclude by offering five specific action steps that chairs can take as they guide and support their departments in an era of dramatic change, not only in the expectations for our faculty and the profile of our students, but also in our paradigms for teaching, learning, and scholarship.

Introduction

Efforts to support and enrich faculty work—particularly in a changing context—are critically important to faculty members, department chairs, and institutions. In fact, fostering the growth and development of faculty members may be a department chair’s most important challenge and opportunity. It is a challenge because although any organization’s effectiveness relies on promotion of the ongoing growth of its human resources, professional development in higher education is often expected to happen naturally, without departmental or institutional support. Even chairs who are committed to supporting the development of their faculty may find that this priority fades into the background under the pressure of other demands on their time. But a chair who understands the importance of his or her role as a faculty developer—as a support to colleagues as they grow as teachers, scholars, and citizens—will find this to be one of the most rewarding parts of chairing an academic department.
To consider the future of faculty development, we conducted a survey to collect the views of faculty developers today. There have been earlier, large-scale studies of faculty development structures and activities (Centra, 1976; Erickson, 1986), but our study is the first to ask developers specifically what goals and purposes guide their programs, what the influences on their programs and practices are, what services are currently offered, and how useful they are. Perhaps most important, our study is the first to ask developers to identify the key challenges and pressures facing their faculty and their institutions and to project what they see as potential new directions for the field of faculty development.

The population that we studied were members of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD Network), the oldest and largest professional association of faculty development scholars and practitioners in higher education. The 500 respondents were directors of teaching and learning centers, faculty members, department chairs, academic deans, and other senior administrators. Respondents came from research and doctoral universities, comprehensive universities, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, Canadian universities, and other institutions such as medical and professional schools (Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

When asked what best described the structure of faculty development efforts at their institutions, respondents categorized their structures as follows:

- A centralized unit with dedicated staff (54%)
- Individual faculty members or administrators (19%)
- A committee that supports faculty development (12%)
- A clearinghouse for programs and offerings (4%)
- Other structures, such as systemwide offices or special-purpose centers; for example, for medical education (11%)

Our findings demonstrated a dramatic increase during the past five years across all institutions in the number of centralized units with dedicated staff, a trend that can be of great advantage to department chairs. As Bland and Risbey note in the July 2006 issue of *Effective Practices*, a central faculty development office can provide resources and expertise to departments, serve as a clearinghouse for sharing strategies across departments, and facilitate institutionwide initiatives.

What, then, are the issues that these faculty development programs, services and resources will likely need to address in the next 5 or 10 years? What future directions will be important for chairs to consider when they make decisions about faculty development support and resources? Faculty developers in our study identified a constellation of issues that coalesced around three primary challenges and forces of change: the changing nature of the professoriate; the changing nature of the student body; and the changing nature of teaching, learning, and scholarship. Let us address each of the issues under these three broad categories.
THE CHANGING PROFESSORIATE
Although some elements of faculty work continue unchanged across the decades, professors today are facing a growing array of changing roles and responsibilities that will require them to engage in ongoing professional growth. In general, our study found a disparity between what our respondents perceived as the importance of various development services to support that growth and the extent to which such services are offered. One survey respondent, a director of faculty development at a research/doctoral institution, highlighted the crucial role that department chairs and other academic leaders need to play: “[W]e need] greater emphasis on working with chairs and deans to create environments that support good teaching and scholarship. Faculty live in their departments and schools. While changes can be implemented university-wide, the quickest and most profound changes will occur through departments and schools” (Sorcinelli et al., 2006, p. 147). Here we describe several key challenges to faculty work— the expansion of faculty roles; the challenge of finding balance; the concerns and needs of new faculty; and the increasing array of academic appointments, in particular part-time and non-tenure-track appointments—and identify the chair’s role in helping faculty to meet each challenge.

The Expansion of Faculty Roles
Universities and colleges face extensive changes and pressures from both their external environments and the internal environments within the institutions themselves. In our recent study, about one-third of the faculty developers at research/doctoral, comprehensive, and liberal arts institutions (but fewer at community colleges) identified changing faculty roles as one of the most important issues concerning faculty members at their institutions. Department chairs most likely can easily identify some of the pressures that are causing faculty roles to expand.

Calls for Accountability
Over recent years, the public—including employers, parents, and legislators—has become skeptical about the contributions of higher-education institutions and increasingly interested in the extent of access to postsecondary education, the efficiency with which universities and colleges operate, the ways in which universities and colleges contribute to economic development, the relevance and impact of research on societal issues, and especially the abilities and qualities of graduates as they enter the workforce. In response to societal calls for accountability, faculty members must become adept at assessing student learning outcomes; interacting with the public to explain their research in ways that are understandable to individuals outside their areas of expertise; and engaging in collaborative projects that couple their scholarly expertise with the interests and questions of citizens in the local, national, or international community in order to address significant problems.

Fiscal Pressures
Many higher-education institutions also face fiscal pressures, as costs rise and state and federal support do not keep pace. Faculty members must do their part in carrying out institutional missions efficiently as well as effectively. In addition, there are rising expectations that faculty members engage in entrepreneurial work that brings in revenue. For example, faculty members may need to develop the necessary skills for offering short courses in revenue-producing programs, repackaging courses into workshops for new audiences, and marketing these learning opportunities so that they will attract the public.

The Expansion of Knowledge
The rapid expansion of knowledge has led to new specialties and the blurring of disciplinary lines. Faculty members whose graduate work focused on particular disciplinary areas must keep up with new directions and emerging specialties in their fields, and frequently they must learn how to engage in interdisciplinary programs and research projects. Increasingly, faculty members must have the ability to work closely with colleagues whose bases of knowledge and research traditions may differ from theirs. Skills in collaboration, conflict resolution, and group dynamics become useful in doing productive scholarly work.

The Prevalence of Technology
Faculty members also need to assume new roles in the face of an increasingly technological workplace (Gumport & Chun, 2005). Technological developments affect teaching and learning processes (as we discuss later), thereby requiring faculty members to be adept
at facilitating individualized instruction and to consider new ways to organize their courses and learning materials. Technology offers new and engaging ways for faculty to interact with students and colleagues, but at the same time, the speed and omnipresence of e-mail means that faculty members feel pressured to be always available, which can intrude on the reflective time necessary for thoughtful research and writing. Technology opens access to immense sources of information, which enhances research, yet these opportunities require faculty to master new research skills.

**Summary**

Each of the developments—societal expectations for accountability, fiscal constraints, the expansion of knowledge, and the prevalence of technology—offers exciting new avenues through which universities and colleges can fulfill their missions. However, each also places demands on faculty members to master new skills and expand the nature of their work. The career stages of faculty members also play a part in the extent to which they are prepared to handle the new roles accompanying these changes.

Department chairs will need to carefully consider their expectations for the faculty role, identify how it is changing in their department, and ask how they can encourage faculty members to find and use opportunities for professional growth that enable them to handle new situations and tasks, and undertake new directions, successfully.

**Finding Balance**

Closely related to the challenge of managing expanding and new roles for faculty is the challenge of achieving balance in work and, more broadly, in life. In our research, faculty developers identified balancing and finding time for one’s responsibilities as a significant issue for faculty, an observation also supported by other research (e.g., Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Expansion of the roles that faculty members are expected to fulfill is often referred to as “ratcheting” by observers of higher education. Ironically, Boyer’s (1990) call, more than a decade ago, for appreciation of a variety of forms of scholarship—which has encouraged faculty members and their institutions to recognize the scholarly contributions of teaching and engagement as well as more traditional discovery-focused research—has sometimes resulted in greater pressures on faculty members to add to the roles that they fulfill (O’Meara & Rice, 2005).

New faculty members, in particular, express concern about “finding enough time” to get their work done (Menges & Associates, 1999; Rice et al., 2000). Moreover, graduate students aspiring to be faculty members report that they have observed the hectic lives of their professors and wonder if it is possible to live a “balanced life” as a faculty member. This concern has led some of these students to doubt whether they should choose such a lifestyle (Austin, 2002). Aspiring and new faculty members observe that research and teaching are very important, with their relative importance varying depending on institutional type, but note that service to the institution, advising, and engagement with the community are also expected. How to prioritize and balance these duties is a worrisome issue, particularly as early-career faculty try to figure out the best route to tenure. Especially at institutions that are striving to enhance their reputation and rankings, which is often the case for comprehensive institutions, faculty members have heavy teaching loads while also facing expectations for increasing research productivity (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2003). Our research has indicated that faculty developers in community colleges, which concentrate their focus on teaching, do not regard balancing multiple roles as critical a challenge as do developers at other types of institutions.

In addition to early-career faculty, more advanced faculty members also find the issue of balance to be an ever-present challenge (Bland & Bergquist, 1997; Finkelstein & LaCelle-Peterson, 1993). As they progress in their careers, they know that accepting mentoring roles; assuming leadership for institutional issues; and, for some, stepping into formal administrative roles, are elements of being effective and responsible faculty members. Although they may have found ways to handle their teaching and research effectively, they now must add this array of other important roles.

The issue of balance, however, goes beyond the myriad responsibilities in the academic workplace. Faculty members also are concerned about how to achieve balance as they handle personal responsibilities and commitments as well as those that are professional. Not surprisingly, concerns about balancing work and family issues are especially important for women, who often face the press of the biological clock for childbearing while also trying to start their careers and, in many instances, earn tenure. However, recent research shows that many males aspiring to professorial roles or in the early-career period also are committed to creating lives that include time for personal as well as professional commitments.

Nonetheless, having responsibility for dependents affects male and female faculty in different ways. For male faculty, time spent on work increases with the number of dependents, whereas for female academics, work time decreases as dependents increase (Leslie, 2005).
Research at one large research university also showed that tenure-track women report choosing to have fewer children than they would prefer to a greater extent than their male colleagues (Mason & Goulden, 2004).

These findings make the challenge of time and balance a key issue for individual faculty members but also a critical issue for chairs who strive to have a happy and productive faculty and who wish to ensure the diversity of their departments. Chairs will need to determine how they can best help faculty members handle multiple roles, intense time commitments, and the challenge of developing a sense of balance in their lives.

**Concerns of New Faculty**

As significant numbers of experienced faculty members retire in the coming decade, a considerable number of new faculty members will enter academe. Our study identified new faculty development as a critically important area to address. Over the past decade, various studies have focused on the experiences of new faculty and have offered a similar conclusion (e.g., Austin, 2003; Austin, Sorcinelli, & McDaniels, in press; Menges & Associates, 1999; Sorcinelli & Austin, 1992). See also Betsy E. Brown’s “Supporting Early-Career Faculty” (2006). Young faculty members are attracted to the profession by opportunities to pursue their intellectual interests; guide young people in learning about their disciplines; participate in a stimulating, collegial environment; and contribute to the betterment of society. At the same time, however, they express significant concerns about academe and the lives of professors.

**The Tenure Process**

A major concern centers around the tenure process. Although they respect the value of peer review and the standards of quality represented by tenure, early-career faculty members are often frustrated by and worried about unclear information regarding the steps toward tenure; conflicting information about expectations that they should meet and a sense of a “tenure bar” that keeps getting higher; and insufficient, unclear, and sometimes conflicting feedback about their progress toward tenure. Early-career faculty members also express concerns that their senior colleagues may not be familiar with newer directions or specialties in their disciplines and, thus, may have limited ability to assess their work. In addition, the tightening of external funding support in some fields exacerbates the stress associated with the tenure process for many early-career faculty members.

**The Sense of Community**

Early-career faculty members express disappointment in the extent to which they find a sense of community in academe—a concern that more advanced faculty members sometimes also lament and that is at least partially related to the time pressures already discussed. Early-career faculty members often describe their idealism when beginning their roles, hoping to experience the kind of collegueship, intellectual exchange, and camaraderie that characterize the ideal graduate experience. However, new faculty members report that instead they often feel isolated and sometimes alienated from their colleagues. They observe that people are too busy for both casual interactions and deeper conversations around topics of mutual interest. Women faculty and faculty of color, in particular, have called for a stronger ethos of mentoring and collegiality in departments.

**Part-time and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty**

The increase in part-time faculty and in full-time faculty holding non-tenure-track appointments is a major trend (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Finkelstein, Seal, & Schuster, 1998; Gappa & Leslie, 1993, 1997; Gappa, Austin, & Trice, in press). In fact, addressing the needs of part-time and adjunct faculty is a primary new direction for faculty development, according to our study; among community college developers, it is one of the issues that they consider most important (which is not surprising...
given the large proportion of community college faculty members who are in part-time positions).

The increase in hiring part-time faculty is motivated partly by efforts to achieve fiscal savings by minimizing the expense of the benefits that accompany full-time positions. Additionally, by hiring part-time and non-tenure-track faculty, institutions can maximize their flexibility to respond to changing student interests and, in some cases, to help students connect their scholarly studies to the practical experiences shared by part-time or adjunct instructors with experience in the workplace. In some instances, increased enrollments and the growth of distance education are factors that contribute to institutional interest in employing part-time faculty.

A few statistics highlight why the professional development of part-time and non-tenure-track faculty warrants attention from academic leaders. In 2003, more than 50 percent of the faculty in the United States held part-time positions (U.S. Department of Education, 2004), and among new full-time faculty, more than half held non-tenure-track appointments (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). To illustrate this trend, we note that in 1987, 20.6 percent of all faculty members held non-tenure-track positions (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1988), whereas the comparable figure in 2003 was 31.9 percent (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Most certainly, this trend has continued.

Faculty members in part-time or non-tenure-track positions can feel isolated, alienated, invisible, and powerless (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). In studies, part-time faculty members express a sense of exclusion for several reasons, such as not being invited to department meetings or social events, having problems with securing office space, and encountering a lack of opportunities for professional development or travel funds. Similarly, whereas some institutions or departments include non-tenure-track faculty members in the life of the department, in other institutions they are marginalized by colleagues and excluded from all unit decision making (Gappa et al., in press). Unlike most of their tenure-track colleagues, these faculty members often find their work “unbundled,” which means that some are expected to focus on research whereas others are allowed to devote their time to curriculum design or teaching. This separation of responsibilities can further add to the isolation of faculty members from each other and from a coherent sense of community.

The contributions of all faculty members are important to academic departments and institutions. As the faculty ranks become more diverse in terms of the nature of appointment types, chairs will be well advised to find ways to ensure that each faculty member, regardless of appointment type, feels respected, appreciated, and supported. The alternative, far less desirable for either departmental health or individual satisfaction, is a bifurcated faculty in which some individuals hold places of prestige and others are “second-class citizens” (Gappa et al., in press).

Department chairs, who work on a daily basis with the faculty in their units, can do a great deal to create contexts in which each faculty member is valued, with his or her work-related needs supported and professional development encouraged. Chairs might offer an orientation for part-time faculty members in which departmental colleagues address common teaching issues (e.g., preparing a syllabus, understanding who their students are, outlining testing and grading guidelines) as well as department policies and practices. Chairs might also wish to designate a “go to” colleague who can provide mentoring, visit a class, or review teaching evaluations.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE STUDENT BODY

The myriad challenges of a changing professoriate are matched by the challenges of a changing student body. With each year, the student body becomes larger and more diverse across several variables: educational background; gender, race and ethnicity; class, age, and preparation (Keller, 2001). Today, only 16 percent of the student population can be described as “traditional” in terms of entering college right out of high school, attending full-time, and living on campus. Further, more than 70 percent of students work, almost half are over the age of 25, and more than half are women. Many of these new students are the first generation in their family to attend college (Smith, MacGregor, Matthews, & Gabelnick, 2004). This growing diversity of students is a significant and applauded
aspect of American higher education; individuals’ lives are enriched and the country benefits from a more fully prepared citizenry and workforce. At the same time, the increasing diversity of the student body places considerable and new demands on faculty members. Here we highlight two key challenges that deserve the department chair’s attention: increasing multiculturalism and diversity, and underprepared students.

**Increasing Multiculturalism and Diversity**

Faculty members and academic departments are faced on a day-to-day basis with the realities of changing student demographics. One concern for chairs is the need to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of underrepresented students. Another is the growing disparity in terms of diversity between who teaches and who is taught. But an emphasis on increasing diversity requires an expanded focus on how we can foster learning environments in which diversity becomes one of the resources that stimulates learning—and on how to support faculty with students who learn most effectively in different ways.

In our study, faculty developers identified multiculturalism as it relates to teaching and learning as one of the most important issues that needs to be addressed through faculty development services; however, there was great disparity between perceptions of the need to address this issue and the extent of faculty development services being devoted to it (Sorcinelli et al., 2006). As one survey respondent noted: “[We need] to focus more on the realities of changing student demographics—how this will impact the culture of the diverse classroom—and to support faculty in this endeavor” (Sorcinelli et al., 2006, p. 84).

**Diversity and Increased Demands on Faculty**

Chairs already have ample evidence of the impact of diversity inside and outside of the classroom. They have seen how—because a diverse student body also has diverse needs—faculty members are expected to give more individual attention to their students and be available far beyond the traditional workday. Furthermore, students who have grown up in the age of technology expect faculty members to communicate freely using technology and to integrate technology in meaningful ways into the learning experience. Students older than the traditional 18- to 22-year-old group, as well as many within that age range, are likely to want their education to be relevant to the work world, convenient in time and location, responsive to their interests and needs, and characterized by high quality (Levine, 2000). Faculty members must have the flexibility and interest to offer programs that respond to labor-market changes in their regions and in the country.

More multicultural and diverse students bring to faculty members other interesting but demanding expectations. For faculty members to be able to meet the learning needs of their students effectively, they must stay abreast not only of new developments in their fields, but also of the characteristics of their students, the various strategies for multiple learning styles and levels that can enhance learning for a diverse group of students, and the possibilities for facilitating learning offered by technology. Faculty members must couple dedication with flexibility and willingness to continue their own learning. They may need the encouragement and support of their department chairs to ensure that the courses and programs that they offer are at the cutting edge in content, quality, and responsiveness. Chairs also can promote teaching methods and strategies that increase students’ capacities for problem solving, teamwork, and collaboration—skills required in a rapidly changing and increasingly global world. Further, faculty members may need guidance in engaging diverse students, particularly in the classroom, about the sensitive issues surrounding gender, religion, race, and ethnicity.

Traditionally, campuses have tended to focus diversity efforts on student affairs, which suggests that diversity concerns are a student development rather than a faculty development issue; faculty members themselves may be reticent about addressing issues of diversity inside and outside of the classroom because of a lack of training. However, such efforts are important if chairs wish to help their faculty members cope with demands; embrace change; and, ultimately, prepare students for life and work in a culturally diverse environment.

**The Challenges of the Underprepared Student**

Underprepared college students have been a hot-button issue in politics and the media over the last several decades, as have various efforts to improve public primary and secondary education. Yet, today too many high school graduates are still not prepared for college-level work.

**The Essentiality of Support Systems**

The American Association of Colleges and Universities reports that about 50 percent of students entering our colleges and universities are academically underprepared; that is, they lack basic skills in at least one of the three fundamental areas of reading, writing, and mathematics (Miller & Murray, 2005).
It was surprising, then, that only individuals in community colleges listed teaching underprepared students as one of the top three challenges facing their faculty and institutions. However, it can certainly be argued that paying attention to student academic preparedness is the business of every institution and that the issue of underprepared students’ needs should be addressed more broadly throughout higher education. According to Astin (2004), “The education of the remedial student is the most important educational problem in America today, more important than educational funding, affirmative action, vouchers, merit pay, teacher education, financial aid, curriculum reform and the rest” (p. 1).

A comment from one of our survey respondents linked teaching the underprepared student to “teaching for retention,” because the underprepared student will find it much more difficult to complete a degree program. If colleges and universities wish to retain students beyond the first year or two, they need to design and implement support systems for this cohort.

**Improving Success Rates**

Miller and Murray (2005) suggest that students fail to do well in college for a variety of reasons, and only one of them is academic preparedness. Other factors may include self-confidence, study behaviors, and skill in navigating an institution’s bureaucracy. In addition, once the underprepared student engages in course work, there is often a substantial mismatch between student and faculty expectations for academic work, especially in terms of time devoted to study outside of class. Improving the success rates for underprepared students, then, requires a multipronged approach.

The responsibility for helping underprepared students may often fall to academic staff in a student learning center and may be seen as a burden to individual faculty members or a threat to the excellence of an academic department. However, this issue affects every department, and both faculty and chairs must be ready and willing to encourage academic effort and engagement. For example, chairs can lay the groundwork for success by paying attention to the structure for academic advising and rewarding faculty and professional staff who provide effective advising. Chairs can encourage faculty members, in both advising and teaching, to emphasize their and the department’s expectations for students as well as the kind of one-on-one interaction that students can expect from their advisors and instructors. They can also familiarize themselves and their faculty with resources offered by the institution (e.g., basic skills courses, tutoring, topical workshops, supplemental instruction) and steer students to the appropriate center or program. Finally, chairs would be well advised to raise the question of how their own faculty members might act as resources within the department and how their department and other offices might work together to address the needs of such students more broadly and deeply across the curriculum.

**THE CHANGING NATURE OF TEACHING, LEARNING, AND SCHOLARSHIP**

The changing environment for teaching, learning, and scholarship has been identified as a pressing challenge for faculty and institutions. As noted earlier, faculty members are facing instructional situations in which students may differ widely in their levels of preparation, commitment, learning styles, and ethnic and social diversity, compelling faculty to develop more inclusive course materials and teaching methods. Faculty members are also called on to provide educational opportunities through a widening range of technologies and, thus, require technological support and resources. In addition, faculty members are being asked to assess student learning outcomes and document their own teaching. Furthermore, as traditional boundaries between disciplines and fields are blurred, faculty members are asked to engage in multidisciplinary work, requiring deeper expertise in new knowledge domains. Finally, at a number of institutions, faculty members have been encouraged to become more “engaged scholars.” This means that they must link their research more closely with problems in the local, national, or international community, which requires new skills for engaging with the needs of constituencies on and off campus (Sorcinelli et al., 2006).

In our study, faculty developers recognized these emergent challenges concerning faculty work. The issues that they identified as playing a particularly formative role in the future of faculty work were emphasizing student-centered teaching, integrating technology into teaching and learning, emphasizing assessment of student learning outcomes, expanding the definition of scholarship, and building interdisciplinary collaborations. Here we discuss the possible reasons that each issue is important to chairs and their departments.

**Emphasizing Student-Centered Teaching**

Faculty developers in our study identified the need to engage in student-centered teaching as one of the top three challenges confronting faculty members and the most important issue to address through faculty development services and activities. Despite their desire to place student-centered learning at the heart of the educational enterprise, however, developers also reflected on
the difficulties in using learner-centered teaching strategies. An associate director of a teaching center pointed out: “Although faculty developers may think ‘been there, done that,’ I do not think we are anywhere near getting faculty on board for student-centered learning” (Sorcinelli et al., 2006, p. 135).

The Paradigm Shift from Teaching to Learning
Student-centered learning has been a central topic since teaching development literature began. The issue really gained momentum a decade ago, when Barr and Tagg (1995) called for a shift from a teacher-centered paradigm in which the teacher dispenses information to one in which the teacher facilitates student learning. Student-centered learning places less emphasis on the transmission of information, shifting the focus of attention on what and how students learn. It places greater emphasis on engaging students in assignments and activities (e.g., reading, discussing, writing) that more fully involve them in course content and in developing higher-order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation). There is a large repertoire of active learning strategies on which faculty can draw, including student-led discussions, team learning, peer learning, small-group experiences, oral presentations, writing-to-learn activities, case studies, and study groups.

The Challenges of the New Paradigm
Weimer (2002) notes that the paradigm shift from teaching to learning is based on extensive literature and empirical research on how people learn. Much like our respondents, however, she cautions that shifting to learner-centered teaching is not without challenge and requires five key changes in practice. These changes are in

1. The balance of power
2. The function of course content
3. The role of the teacher
4. Who is responsible for learning
5. The purpose and process of evaluation

Both students and colleagues may resist a teacher’s learner-centered approaches. These approaches require more work, and students lose some of the practices to which they have become accustomed (e.g., passive listening). For many faculty, learner-centered teaching may require new and unfamiliar teaching skills and raise fears that they will not be able to cover the content or be involved in learner-centered teaching.

Strategies to Support Learner-Centered Teaching
What strategies might a chair employ to support learner-centered teaching?

As a first step, the chair can acknowledge the challenge of transforming passive students into engaged, self-directed learners. He or she might ask successful teachers to share their approaches with colleagues through departmental seminars or forums. The chair can also provide faculty development funds to help faculty members understand and implement active or problem-based learning. Such funds could support participation in a conference that offers hands-on experience in employing learner-centered teaching strategies, as well as individual mentoring from faculty experienced with such techniques.

Integrating Technology into Teaching and Learning
Participants in our study from research, comprehensive, and liberal arts institutions named the integration of technology into traditional teaching and learning one of the top three challenges facing their faculty colleagues. Respondents from community colleges considered the teaching of on-line courses a more critical challenge for their faculty. However, respondents across all types of institutions said that the most important direction in which the field of faculty development should and will move is technology integration, in both traditional and new teaching environments.

... respondents across all types of institutions said that the most important direction in which the field of faculty development should and will move is technology integration, in both traditional and new teaching environments.

That they will have less control over assessment activities.

Weimer concludes, however, that learner-centered teaching is worth the effort, because such teaching allows students to do more of the learning tasks, such as organizing content or summarizing discussions, and encourages them to learn more from and with each other. Teachers, on the other hand, can do more of the design work and modeling and provide more frequent feedback to students.

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is being done to determine meaningful and appropriate ways of integrating technology. One administrator at a comprehensive university wrote, “The emphasis on technology is likely to continue—I wish we could do better on knowing and integrating the most important aspects of technology, with the focus on learning” (Sorcinelli et al., 2006, p. 134).

When considering technology in teaching and learning, one immediate issue that faculty members face is what tools—PowerPoint, e-mail, the Internet, course management systems—might best serve their student-learning goals. However, the integration of technology in teaching is more complicated than one might think at first pass. Zhu and Kaplan (2006) note: “The successful integration of technology entails the careful consideration of course content, the capabilities of various technology tools, student access to and comfort with technology, and the instructor’s view of his or her role in the teaching and learning process” (p. 221).

To add to the complexity, faculty members may also be called on to develop educational delivery in new formats—through on-line courses, short modules, and certificate programs. Many faculty members have not been trained to teach in these new contexts, and, while specific needs vary because of differing levels of experience and interest, many faculty members will probably require support and training to function optimally in such a rapidly changing technological environment (Baldwin, 1998).

Chairs already recognize that digital technology will continue to change not only how teachers teach and students learn, but also how departments will conduct their fundamental teaching and research missions. Learning (1998) suggests that chairs and their departments need to explore a range of questions such as: How will we keep pace with technological developments? What are some of the advantages in using technology in our teaching? How will technology change students and classrooms, especially around issues of time, place, and space? What does the department need in terms of hardware, software, and pedagogical support?

Finally, there are several faculty development strategies that chairs can try when they meet resistance to teaching with technology. These include the following:

- Developing a “peer innovator” or mentoring program, so that faculty members who are early adapters of teaching technologies can work with colleagues
- Creating a system of recognition and rewards for faculty members who innovate their teaching through the use of new instructional technologies
- Encouraging the use of assessment tools to determine whether and in what ways teaching technology approaches are working in the classroom

**Emphasizing Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves deciding what students should be learning, making expectations for learning explicit, systematically gathering and analyzing student assignments and activities to determine what students are actually learning, and using the resulting evidence to decide what to do to improve learning. In our findings, assessing student learning outcomes was perceived as one of the top three challenges facing faculty and important to address through faculty development. Further, assessment of student learning was viewed within all institutional types as a critical issue for institutions as well as for faculty members.

Although there has been a growing demand across higher education for the assessment of student learning, legislators, higher-education boards, accrediting agencies, and administrators have generally been more enthusiastic about assessment than faculty members. Indeed, until recently much assessment has been at the institutional level, focusing on issues of external accountability or program review, rather than on developing assessment activities that help individual faculty members improve their own teaching and student learning (Sorcinelli et al., 2006). This is changing. For example, there are a growing number of resources that can help faculty members develop a better understanding of the learning process in their own classrooms and assess the impact of their teaching on it. They feature classroom assessment techniques and advice on how to adapt and administer them, analyze the data, and implement improvements in teaching and learning practices (Stassen, Doherty, & Poe, 2000a). Assessment can be a powerful tool not only for diagnosing and improving student learning at the course level but also for evaluating programs. Increasingly, chairs are being asked to lead assessment processes to improve departmental practices. Program or department assessment focuses on evaluating the student experience to determine whether students have acquired the knowledge and skills associated with their programs of study.

Stassen, Doherty, and Poe (2000b) suggest that effective program assessment helps chairs and departmental faculty answer three questions: What are you trying to do? How well are you doing it? and How can you improve? Effective program assessment is also systematic, built around the depart-
that is used to measure departmental
students more effective while re-
ment to make the learning process for
supporting the potential for assess-
there is clear evidence that assessment
may even resist it themselves), but
there is evidence that assessment
is important. Equally, there is evidence
that chairs can play a pivotal role in
face some resistance from faculty (and
may even resist it themselves), but
there is clear evidence that assessment
is important. Equally, there is evidence
that chairs can play a pivotal role in
supporting the potential for assessment
to make the learning process for
students more effective while re-
ponding to the need for assessment
that is used to measure departmental
accountability.

**Expanding the Definition of Scholarship**

In his seminal work *Scholarship Re-
sidered: Priorities of the Professorate*,
Boyer (1990) argued that it was time
to move beyond the “teaching versus
research” debate and to redefine and
broaden the concept of scholarship to
include four distinct but interrelated
dimensions: the scholarship of discov-
ery, the scholarship of teaching, the
scholarship of integration, and the
scholarship of application. In particu-
lar, Boyer argued that excellent teach-
ing is marked by the same habits of
mind as other scholarly work and de-
serves greater recognition and reward.

In our study, developers from all
types of institutions agreed that ex-
oding the work of teachers available to
one another, to guide both development
and personnel decisions. Many faculty
members have explored the develop-
ment and use of teaching and course
portfolios to provide a fuller and more
informative assessment of teaching for
self-reflection, teaching awards, and de-
cision making regarding personnel. In
addition, disciplinary scholars are cur-
cently working with Carnegie to inves-
tigate how to expand the scholarship of
teaching and learning in the disciplines.

Chairs and their faculty have much
to add to this discussion. To this end,
Carnegie offers a wide range of exam-
ples of the scholarship of teaching and
learning as well as resources for fac-
ulty undertaking this scholarship.

**Building Interdisciplinary Collaborations**

A substantial percentage of respon-
dents identified all of the issues previ-
ously discussed as among the top
challenges facing faculty members or
their institutions. Although developing
interdisciplinary collaboration was not
explicitly identified as one of the top
challenges facing faculty and institu-
tions, “building interdisciplinary con-
nections and communities of practice”
was indicated as an important new di-
rection to address through faculty de-
velopment. One survey respondent
from a research/doctoral institution
highlighted the potential role played by
department chairs and other academic
leaders: “I hope to see collaborative work
to break down barriers between depart-
ments and allow them to learn from each
other and expand their creativity, under-
Interdisciplinary collaboration may involve a variety of types of connections among faculty members, curricula, departments and disciplines, and administrative units. Within the academic department, it may mean teaching a course with multiple departments involved, offering joint degree programs, or working on a research project from a multidisciplinary perspective. It may also mean building departmental programs that link service learning in the community.

**Five Models and the Role of the Department Chair**

DeZure (2000) identifies five models of “border crossings”:

1. **Interdisciplinary teaching and learning**
   - and the scholarship that undergirds it: This could be courses on complex social problems such as world hunger or genocide that require the insights of many disciplines.

2. **Undergraduate student learning communities**
   - that integrate the academic and social lives of students: This model often relies on faculty-student contact in and outside of the classroom and on students who serve as learning resources to their peers. It also embraces faculty learning communities first established at research-intensive universities through the Lilly Teaching Fellows Program, and now expanded to include faculty learning communities on a range of topics (e.g., diversity, technology, early-career faculty) and at institutions of all sizes and types.

3. **Assessment:** As noted earlier in this briefing, this can bring together faculty, staff, chairs, deans, and other academic leaders to evaluate student learning outcomes in courses and in departments.

4. **Development of a culture of teaching in higher education:** DeZure (2000) suggests that this development “was promoted by the publication of Scholarship Reconsidered (Boyer, 1990), a document which gave voice to the desire to reconceptualize faculty work beyond the traditional paradigm of teaching, research, and service” (p. 429).

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**“Interdisciplinary collaboration may involve a variety of types of connections among faculty members, curricula, departments and disciplines, and administrative units.**

**Within the academic department, it may mean teaching a course with multiple departments involved, offering joint degree programs, or working on a research project from a multidisciplinary perspective.”**

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**AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

In the context of the range of challenges and strategies for faculty development discussed in this briefing, we conclude by offering five specific action steps that chairs can take to create and support professional development opportunities for their faculty:

1. **Assess faculty members’ needs for professional development** and emphasize faculty ownership of the process. In determining what faculty development issues to address, chairs stand a better chance of success if activities and opportunities are designed in direct response to the concerns of their faculty members. To begin with, the chair might wish to meet with each faculty member—new, midcareer, senior, and part-time—to identify faculty development activities that the department might offer both to individual faculty members and on a departmental level. Another option might be to meet with small “focus groups” of faculty to help develop directions.
Finally, some chairs appoint a professional development committee to craft a faculty development plan for the department. It is important to present such a plan to the entire faculty, asking for feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. The chair should not hesitate to call on faculty members who are respected teachers and scholars to help implement the plan. Faculty ownership can ensure that professional development activities remain responsive to faculty needs. It also provides a channel for the emergence of faculty members who can take a leadership role in research or teaching renewal. While the department chair must oversee and guide initiatives, the faculty development programs and activities should be faculty inspired.

2. **Know the resources of the institution and be proactive in encouraging faculty to use these options.** Universities and colleges typically offer a wide array of resources to help faculty members with their work as well as with some of their personal responsibilities. Having knowledge of these options and opportunities will enable chairs to help faculty members find the resources relevant to their interests and specific needs, such as policies explaining options regarding the tenure process, parental leaves, health issues, and dependent care. The institution may also provide orientation programs for new faculty, classroom coaching through a teaching and learning center, and workshops on the uses of technology in research and teaching. Often campuses offer faculty development grants for teaching enhancement, curriculum development, research, and interdisciplinary faculty learning communities.

Chairs of new faculty need to make it very clear that participation in faculty professional growth opportunities is encouraged and valued by the department. Women faculty, for example, may be reluctant to use the policies that afford them leave for childbirth or options for adjusting the tenure timeline without their chair’s and senior colleagues’ support.

3. **Identify professional growth opportunities that can and should be provided at the departmental level.** Faculty development at the departmental level requires resources in terms of time and funding. Department chairs can encourage faculty to take time for professional growth and can allocate funds that they manage to support such purposes. For example, departmental colleagues can join together to provide an orientation for new faculty to the norms, practices, and resources within the department. Issues to address might include how the committee structure and governance processes are organized; what colleagues can expect from each other; how tenure processes work; and how such typical tasks as book ordering, travel planning, and paper copying and faxing are handled. Many chairs help early-career faculty members find mentoring committees of more experienced faculty members both within and outside of the department who are willing to provide explicit guidance in research and teaching to new colleagues.

Too often, professional growth is focused on new faculty, but every chair recognizes that his or her tenured faculty members require support as well. For senior colleagues, chairs might offer opportunities such as team teaching with early-career faculty, new roles and responsibilities as mentors, or special assignments in the department such as leading a program review. For the new chair, it may be important to talk with other chairs; the best sources of information and creative ideas on supporting faculty development might just be the chair’s colleagues in the same post.

4. **Be sure performance reviews are used to encourage professional growth and excellence among faculty members.** Department chairs typically have the responsibility of organizing the process through which faculty members receive annual reviews of their work. Chairs can set the tone for these reviews to ensure that the process focuses on both evaluation and development. They can also consider how career stage may relate to the needs of individual faculty members and the most productive use of a review for each colleague. Early-career faculty members, in particular, need honest, clear feedback and specific suggestions about what they are doing well and in what areas they need to improve.

All faculty members appreciate recognition for high-quality work and contributions, and many welcome opportunities to talk with the chair (in a role as “interested colleague”) as they plan and prioritize for the coming year or two. Some chairs make performance counseling a year-round, rather than just a yearly, activity by using department meetings or other forums to highlight the ways in which faculty members, individually or collectively, are helping the department to achieve its goals.

5. **Foster a department climate of collegiality and community.** The department chair is in an excellent position to set a tone of collegiality, respect, and flexibility. Chairs can encourage their faculty members to think about...
how to function as a group in fulfilling their teaching, research, outreach, and citizenship roles, rather than simply as a collection of individuals with varying agendas. For example, when a unit or department agrees to work collaboratively in fulfilling its tasks, faculty members may be able to handle the teaching responsibilities in ways that enable individual faculty members to rotate semesters with lighter instructional loads. Chairs can also help build a sense of community by sponsoring or encouraging a range of social or intellectual activities, such as brown-bag lunches or dinners, to celebrate occasions when faculty members achieve important landmarks in their careers.

CONCLUSION

Universities and colleges live in a world of rapidly changing demands, expectations, and challenges. In this environment, faculty development should be one of the chair’s most significant priorities. In our study, faculty developers identified three areas that are driving change and shaping the future of faculty development. A critical issue is how to develop and sustain the vitality of all of our faculty—newcomers, midcareer, senior, and part-time—as faculty roles change. A second factor is our increasingly diverse student body. It will be important to invest in faculty development as a means of ensuring that we cultivate teachers, students, and campus environments that value multiculturalism. The third shaping influence is the impact of a changing paradigm for teaching, learning, and scholarly pursuits. We hope that the information, strategies, and action steps presented in this briefing can assist chairs in developing their faculty and departments in response to the array of new roles, expectations, and priorities in our institutions.

REFERENCES


**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**


This chapter provides a synthesis of the research on early-career faculty over the past two decades, highlights the key concerns confronting new faculty, and offers suggestions for specific strategies that institutional leaders can employ to help new faculty embark on a strong and productive beginning.


Drawing on research on the increasing number of faculty members who do not hold tenure-track positions, Baldwin and Chronister, both known for their work on faculty careers, explain the challenges facing non-tenure-track faculty and offer suggestions for institutional approaches to address the circumstances of these colleagues.


This book focuses on the pivotal role that the department chair plays in socializing new faculty members and comprehensively explores three distinct phases in the development of new faculty: the recruitment and selection process of candidates; the development of faculty in the first year; and the role of the chair beyond the first year, especially as mentor. Particularly attractive is the hands-on approach of this book, which includes concrete materials such as candidate interview questions, letters of appointment, and annual plans that can be adapted to individual contexts.


Written by a former department chair and current dean who works with chairs, this volume helps chairpersons deal with the issues and problems that they will face as both academic managers and leaders. Each chapter identifies a problem, provides suggestions on how to deal with an issue or situation, and concludes with questions for further study. The book includes chapters on both professional development and how to support teaching and learning.


This comprehensive book outlines and explains the impact of the major factors affecting faculty work and faculty appointments today. The authors offer a new framework that highlights key elements that should be part of the work experience of all faculty—full-time or part-time, tenure-track or non-tenure-track. They then
present specific suggestions, with examples, for institutional strategies to ensure that each key element is incorporated into the academic workplace.


This practical guide to chairing an academic department offers a wealth of information, ideas, and advice for chairpersons. It covers a wide range of issues and provides strategies for faculty development, developing outcomes assessment programs, surviving the technology revolution, and managing Generation X.


These two articles together offer a fascinating analysis of the impact of family responsibilities on the careers of male and female faculty. The results deserve the attention of all department chairs who wish to help early-career faculty manage the responsibilities of work and home.


In this succinct monograph, Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin, who have each spent many years studying aspects of faculty careers, present the results of the views of early-career faculty and graduate students concerning the faculty career. The text offers department chairs 10 principles of good practice in supporting early-career faculty (Sorcinelli, 2000).


This recently published book explains the past history of faculty development, the current issues addressed through faculty development at many institutions, and the directions in which this field is likely to move. Drawing on a national study of faculty developers, the authors argue that the professional development of faculty is a responsibility of all institutional leaders. In addition, they offer specific strategies relevant to chairs.

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