Assessment of student learning is an important skill for faculty at U.S. colleges and universities, and central to improving the quality of higher education. Yet many faculty members are not exposed to learning assessment practices until they begin their academic careers. Securing greater faculty engagement in learning assessment will require both institutional leadership and investment in preparing future faculty. This report describes effective strategies for preparing today's graduate students to assess undergraduate learning in the future.

The CGS Preparing Future Faculty to Assess Student Learning initiative was a three-year project to identify models for infusing undergraduate learning assessment skills into existing Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) programs. With support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Teagle Foundation, and in collaboration with seven funded institutions and 19 affiliates, the project involved close to 1,300 graduate students and 200 faculty across the humanities, social sciences, and STEM.

PROJECT GOALS

- Prepare a cadre of skilled graduate students to become champions for undergraduate teaching and learning upon transition to the professoriate
- Develop a portfolio of sustainable activities in existing programs for preparing future faculty
- Improve undergraduate learning outcomes through gateway course reform and cross-disciplinary conversations

OUTCOMES

The group made significant progress toward infusing undergraduate learning assessment into existing structures and programs. Outcomes included:

- *Examples of assessment skills and competencies developed by participating graduate students.* These included flipped classrooms, backward design, concept inventories, and response systems.

- *Common strategies for infusing these skills into graduate student development programs across institutions and disciplines.* Strategies included gateway course reforms, assessment fellowship programs, Teaching-as-Research, and assessment learning communities.

- *Solutions to common challenges such as low faculty engagement and insufficient graduate student recruitment.* For example: engaging senior leadership and external partners, diversifying promotional materials, creating online alternatives to face-to-face opportunities, and tapping graduate students as peer leaders and collaborators with established faculty.

FUNDED RESEARCH PARTNERS

- Cornell University
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- Michigan State University
- North Carolina A&T State University
- The University of California, Merced
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Through this project, CGS and its partners assembled a robust portfolio of replicable and sustainable strategies for preparing the next generation of faculty to assess undergraduate learning. The institutions embedded these strategies into existing PFF programs, helping ensure their continuity beyond the life of the grant and minimizing additional costs. Most importantly, the partnering institutions successfully worked across disciplines to establish a forum for engaging both current and future faculty around undergraduate teaching and learning outcomes.

PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY RESOURCE LIBRARY

CGS has compiled helpful resources and tools for institutions, deans, and program directors seeking to enhance the preparation of graduate students to assess student learning: http://cgsnet.org/resource-library/section/96

Access the full report at: www.cgsnet.org/publications