



Preparing Future Faculty to Assess Student Learning: A Technical Workshop on a New CGS Grant Opportunity

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CGS Summer Workshop, Boston, MA

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Workshop Overview

- Project Goals and Background
(Daniel Denecke)
- The Value of Integrating Assessment Skills into Graduate Student Faculty Preparation Programs
(Richard Linton)
- “Learning and Retention in STEM Courses: Harvard’s Experience”
(John Girash, Rachael Lancor)
- CGS Request for Proposals
(Daniel Denecke)

Overview

- Project Funded by Sloan Foundation and the Teagle Foundation
- \$50,000 “Accelerator grants” to Five universities
- Graduate schools will: Lead projects to integrate undergraduate learning assessment into preparing future faculty & similar programs; Foster intra-campus disciplinary and multi-disciplinary dialogues among faculty and students about effective response interventions; and Share promising practices in an ongoing way with graduate community.
 - STEM and Economics
 - Humanities AND Social Sciences
 - Discipline specific as well as generally relevant content
 - Leverage existing (!) professional development programs and expertise in assessment to scale up promising practices
 - Document and assess project outcomes

Goals

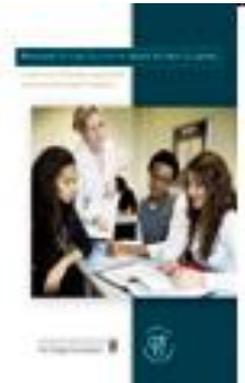
- To provide graduate students who aspire to faculty positions with strategies to assess undergraduate learning in their classrooms and programs, respond to needs through enhanced teaching techniques, and engage with others in evidence-based conversations within and across the arts and sciences
- Integrate learning assessment skills into the majority of existing professional development programs for graduate students aspiring to faculty careers

National Context

- Assessment for Accountability and Improvement
 - Regional accrediting bodies, state boards, etc.
 - Student Learning Outcomes
 - Program Assessment and Review'
- Professionalization of assessment
 - Campus Experts
 - External Vendors
- Faculty Pushback! Concerns:
 - Bureaucratized
 - Anecdotal not evidence-based
 - Accountability without assessment
 - Irrelevant to disciplines

CGS's Teagle Project (2010-11)

- Initial, exploratory project to:
 - Examine national need for greater integration of learning assessment skills into PFF and similar programs
 - Identify gaps between national expertise in assessment of learning assessment and current PFF and similar programs
 - Identify opportunities and potential challenges
- Synthesis Research on:
 - Context
 - Status and characteristics of PFF and similar programs
 - Opportunities and Challenges for integration of assessment
- Survey 37 Respondents of 57 surveyed
- Focus Group/Stakeholder Input



Preparing Future Faculty (1993-2003), CGS & AAC&U

- Prepare doctoral students in full range of faculty roles & responsibilities (teaching, service, research) and for success in a variety of institutional contexts
- Four phrases of grant funding (Pew Charitable Trusts, Atlantic Philanthropies, and NSF) resulted in:
 - PFF programs at 43 universities
 - Nearly 300 partner institutions (liberal arts colleges, master's focused, community colleges, MSI's)
 - Departmental programs in 11 disciplines
 - 1000's of full participants in faculty positions

How Active are PFF Programs Today?

- Nearly all “PFF” programs funded by CGS/AAC&U remain “Active” (76%) or “Somewhat Active” (22%)
- Programs described as centralized (59%), hybrid (35%), and “program-specific” (5%)
- Graduate School or Graduate College plays a leading role in 75% of reported programs
- Percentage of PFF with collaborations by type: master’s-focused/comprehensive (35%), liberal arts (41%), MSI/PMI’s (21%), other doctoral (19%)

How are Faculty Prepared to Assess Student Learning?

Most faculty are not introduced in a systematic way to learning assessment.

The primary mechanisms for engaging faculty in assessment is via orientation through either a passive/static handbook format or orientation event without a chance for meaningful reflection and formative input, follow-up, or sustained dialogue with experts or each other.

Key Challenges

- Faculty Resistance
 - Perception that assessment is about accountability only, not improvement
 - Time
 - Lack of familiarity or preparation
 - Unclear professional expectations
 - Weak support for assessment within program
 - Lack of accessible information
- Student Engagement
- From Assessment to Use
- Operational Challenges
 - Variations in training & standards, lack of central support/resources

Opportunities

- **Approaches to Integrating Assessment Training**
 - Sessions, workshops, courses on SLO's
 - Require or offer credit for courses in prof. dev.
 - Involve faculty advisors and mentors in training
 - Invite speakers involved in accreditation and faculty development to present at PFF events
 - Require students to incorporate SLO's into their teaching responsibilities
 - Training the trainers of teaching programs in vocabulary/value of assessment
 - Link TA-training to faculty development workshops on assessment

Request for Proposals

Minimum requirements and commitments

Selection criteria and priority considerations

Key project dates

http://www.cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CGS_PFFASL_RFP.pdf

Minimum Requirements and Commitments: Collaboration

- Leverage existing programs and resources
(e.g., CTLs, CIRTLL, departmental PFF or similar), ROLE, REESE, CCLI, etc.)
- Involve teaching and learning experts **and** faculty with field-expertise

Minimum Requirements and Commitments: Content

- Identify at least 2 “gateway” courses from targeted STEM fields and explain how graduate students will be prepared to address discipline-specific issues
- Define skills in learning assessment and teaching methods used, describe how these skills are grounded in literature on how undergraduates learn.
 - ...e.g., may include, but not limited to: active and collaborative learning, STEM learning studios, immediate feedback, peer facilitators, interest groups, etc.

Minimum Requirements and Commitments: Impact and Infrastructure

- Use grant to scale-up promising practices
- Set numerical targets for student participants and explain how targets will be met
- Describe how needs assessment data will be used
- Track student participation and employment during the grant and 3 years subsequent to grant period
- Share project results, resources, materials via CGS web clearinghouse, at CGS meetings, and in appropriate meetings in the disciplines

Minimum Requirements and Commitments: Impact and Infrastructure (2)

- Key leadership of the project by the senior academic officer for graduate education (graduate dean or equivalent) who will serve as PI
- Provide evidence of senior institutional support for enhanced teaching and learning
- Provide letters of support from faculty in target disciplines detailing agreement to collaborate with graduate school

Selection Criteria and Priority Considerations (1)

- Institutional capacity to bring expertise and graduate school leadership to develop model programs with potential to advance national dialogue around graduate student preparation in learning assessment
- Demonstrated national expertise in learning assessment, including learning methods, practices, theories, assessment relevant to STEM fields (esp. Engineering, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Economics) & Humanities and Social Sciences

Selection Criteria and Priority Considerations (2)

- Discussion of how experience in STEM classrooms and arts and science classrooms will be used to prepare graduate students for academic careers
- Plan for sharing promising practices with others on campus
- Discussion of how discipline-specific learning assessment activities will enrich centralized PFF programming and/or institutional undergraduate learning plans

Selection Criteria and Priority Considerations (3)

- Willingness and capacity of the graduate school to sustain successful project activities as evident by strength of plans for scale up and sustainability beyond the duration of the grant
- Discussion of how differences in cultural, including international, background of participating graduate students and/or undergraduates will be addressed



Teagle Foundation's Graduate Student Teaching in the Arts and Sciences

Columbia University
Cornell University
Harvard University
Northwestern University
Princeton University
Stanford University
University of California Berkeley
University of Virginia
Council of Graduate Schools

<http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Grantmaking/Grantees/default/?gg=404&rfp=391&o=0>

Key Project Dates

- Webinar: <http://www.cgsnet.org/cgs-webinar-recordings>
- **Proposals due, September 10**
- Awards announced by Oct 15
- Projects Begin Nov 1, 2012 conclude 10/31/2014
- Annual Narrative and Financial Report due November 30, 2013
- Final Narrative and Financial Report due October 13, 2014

More information

- <http://www.cgsnet.org/preparing-future-facultypreparing-future-faculty-assess-student-learning>
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