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Guided Protocol for a Faculty Learning Community Meeting

The intent of this protocol is to facilitate Faculty Learning Community (FLC) discussions. This protocol serves as a guide to group work and is based upon the work of the National School Faculty Reform (NSFR). While the NSFR utilizes professional learning communities within the K-12 educational system, universities across the nation have adapted this concept to meet the professional development needs of faculty at the postsecondary level. To ensure successful implementation of the FLC process on your campus, we urge you to carefully follow this protocol.

1. *Select Facilitator*
    - Facilitator serves as timekeeper and protocol guide for FLC participants

2. *Faculty Presentation (5 minutes)*
    - A faculty member presents their course syllabus, course assignment, course test/exams or lecture following the guidelines offered in <u>Preparing for a Faculty Learning Community</u>. Topics selected may deal with a pedagogical issue, content area, assessment issue or any combination thereof. Faculty should highlight the essential features of this course activity in light of larger course "Threshold Concepts" and state their particular area of challenge, concern or question.
    - Remaining participants listen silently while formulating clarifying questions.

3. *Clarifying Questions (5 minutes)*
    - Group members take the opportunity to ask "clarifying questions" in order to get more information so that they may better understand the course assignment or activity. Clarifying questions are factual in nature and are simply intended to expand one's understanding of the activity or assignment and are not judgmental in nature.
    - The faculty presenter listens and offers more information as requested.

    Examples of Clarifying Questions include:
    - "Could you tell me more about…?"
    - "When do your students complete online assignments?"
    - "How many questions are included in the final exam?"

4. *Probing Questions (10 minutes)*
    - Group members take an opportunity to question the presenter with probing questions designed to redirect, deepen, extend, reframe or clarify the presenter's thinking. Probing questions should be designed to help challenge the faculty member to see the problem from a new perspective, to "think outside the box" or question their

assumptions about the assignment of activity. Probing questions should include consideration of how the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) may apply. It is important to note that clarifying questions do not offer solutions but rather nudge the presenter to consider alternative perspectives within the framework of UDL.

- The faculty presenter listens and offers their comments to the question posed.

Examples of Probing Questions include:
- "Why is it important for your students to..?"
- "Is there another way you could show your students how to..?"
- "What assumptions have you made about your students knowledgebase?"
- "Can this assignment be altered to offer multiple ways to..?"
- "What experiences/skills are necessary for your students to have prior to…?"
- "What expectations are embedded in this assignment that is essential to the threshold concept of …?

5. *Warm and Cool Feedback (10 minutes)*
- Group members offer warm and cool feedback on the issue presented while the faculty presenter is silent (may even sit outside of the circle – a fly on the wall) yet should take notes. Each member begins by offering a minimum of one warm feedback item then a one cool feedback item (sometimes phrased in the form of reflective questions). The process continues until everyone has offered warm and cool feedback and helpful ideas or solutions as appropriate.
  - o Warm feedback highlights faculty/course strengths in meeting specific curricular or pedagogical course goals or a novel educational approach
  - o Cool feedback might highlight possible disconnects, gaps or problems between the stated course objectives, exams and/or curricular content.
  - o While providing feedback, individuals may offer ideas or suggestions for strengthening the work presented utilizing the principles of UDL or other successful teaching practices as appropriate.
  - o It is essential to keep in mind the initial framing question or problem posed by the faculty presenter should guide the focus and direction of the warm and cool feedback.

6. *Reflection (5 minutes)*
- Faculty presenter speaks to those warm/cool feedback topics he or she chooses to address while the group members remain silent. This is not a time to defend oneself but rather a time for the presenter to reflect aloud on those ideas or questions that seemed particularly interesting and which may address the issue presented in a helpful or reasonable manner.

7. *Debriefing/Final Comments (5 minutes)*
- All group members conclude with final comments on the group process
- Group members decide upon the faculty presenter(s) for the next session

8. *Feedback from Previous Sessions (5 minutes)*