

## **Preparing for a Faculty Learning Community Meeting**

Preparing for a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) meeting provides you the opportunity to thoughtfully consider a particular course you teach and to what extent the course content, assignments, activities and assessments are conceptually and pragmatically linked together. As faculty, we are often asked to teach courses that we did not develop. Thus, we may not have had an opportunity to critically examine all course activities in light of the course objectives. In preparation for your upcoming FLC meeting, please follow the steps below so all participants have a shared understanding of the process. This preparation, in addition to the actual FLC meeting, can significantly refine or enhance the teaching and learning that occurs in your classroom.

### **1. Review Course “Threshold” or “Key” Concepts**

Begin by considering the essential concepts included in your course or a specific assignment/activity that you wish to review during the upcoming FLC meeting. Ask yourself the following questions:

- a. What do I want my students to learn from this course/activity?
- b. How do I assess if students have learned this knowledge/skill?

Example: In my EDSP 515 class (Advanced Legal Issues in Special Education), one key concept for this course is that students will be able to access and utilize the California Department of Education (CDE) legal database. Mastery occurs when students can successfully navigate this database and individually respond in writing to the online questions posed regarding the current discipline standards for students with disabilities. It is hoped that they also use this database as a resource when preparing their individually crafted Applied Field Projects (AFP) that are submitted at the end of the semester.

### **2. Consider Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

Next, review what you have learned about the three key principles of UDL. Given that you have identified what you want your students to learn and how you could assess what they have learned, next consider:

- a. How do I Represent this concept in my class?
- b. How do I Engage students in learning this concept?
- c. How do I ask students to Express that they know about this concept?

Example:

Representation: In my class, students learn about the CDE database because:

- I provide a handout in class
- I lecture and demonstrate its general features in class
- I place a link to CDE via the course website

Engagement: Students engage in learning about this course concept by:

- Reading about it online
- Listening to the lecture and watching the instructor model its use in class

- Navigate the site with a specific set of instructions provided by the instructor
- Expression: In my class, students are asked to demonstrate their knowledge by:
- Visiting the site and seeking to answer questions posed by the instructor via an online activity identifying current discipline regulations for student with disabilities.

### **3. Alternative UDL Considerations**

In preparation for your FLC, what other ways could you implement the principles of UDL within this course/assignment? Ask yourself: How else could I...

- Represent this concept?
- Engage students in the learning process to attain this concept?
- Ask students to express what they know about this concept?

Example:

- I cannot think of how else I could represent this course concept
- I could ask students to engage in small group discussions in class on how the database can be used in their final projects
- I could ask students to offer evidence that they used the database in their final projects by providing clearer expectations in their AFP description

### **4. What Challenges, Concerns or Questions Remain?**

Why did you select to examine this topic for you FLC work?

Example: While it is evident that students can access the database to answer the online questions, I have never been satisfied that students use the database in their final AFP. The real pedagogical intent is that they use this as an applied resource in their final projects – not simply as an online assignment within class.

### **5. Attend your FLC meeting (please refer to FLC Protocol)**

### **6. Implement Changes Offered by FLC Members**

Consider suggestions offered by the FLC that tie closely to your original concern:

- I could ask students to complete another online assignment or short paper later in the course that asks them to return to the site and use the database in a focused way that ties directly to their AFP project (literature review)
- Incorporate a clearer rubric for the AFP report that includes awarded points for evidence that they used the database in their AFP work
- Provide a sample AFP final report which models the use of the database

### **7. Evaluate Changes/ What Instructional/Pedagogical Issues Remain?**

Implement selected changes in your course and examine the outcomes

### **FLC Support Documents to be Provided In Advance of the Meeting**

- A copy of your course syllabus to highlight:
  - Course “Threshold” Concepts
  - Current course practices/assessments/assignments
  - Other support materials (sample assignments/rubrics, etc)
- A summary outline of:
  - Alternative UDL solutions you have already considered as appropriate
  - Remaining challenges, concerns or questions