

## **Professional Development Committee Minutes**

May 12, 2009, 2:50 - 3:30 P.M.

Room 430

**Members:** Justin Christensen, Don Gamble, Bobby Gavin, Kate Kodros, Mary McCarty, Paul Molinelli, Jan Mullen, Chuck Murphy, Linda Rich, Patrick Ruff, Patty Zarkin; Carole Nickolai (guest)  
Excused: Chad Zullinger

The meeting began with a prayer.

**Summer Grants** — Paul gave a brief update on summer grant awards, focusing upon those grants in which the PDC made specific recommendations and/or requests for further clarification, specifically as these questions pertain to the scope of the grant work and participants' roles in each grant project. The following grants have been approved and work is moving forward, consistent with the PDC's approval and recommendations:

***AP Science Laboratory Curriculum Development (Level 6)*** — *Christine Wilkinson, Byron Philhour, Michelle Wynn* — In preparation for the introduction of the zero- and 8<sup>th</sup>-period AP Science Laboratory next fall, this AP science team will clarify and codify lab curricula for AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics, thus creating more vertical integration across these three distinct science disciplines.

***The Ethics & Justice of the RS 300 Reader (Level 6)*** — *Anne Stricherz, Chad Evans, Jason Beyer, S.J.* — These faculty will produce a thoroughly researched and revised course reader, including copyright permission for all selections.

***Wellness Course: An Integrated, Multidimensional Approach to Modern Health and Wellbeing (Level 7)*** — *Carol Devincenzi, Hillary McKinney, Michael Thomas, Scott Plymale (consultant, Edgewood Foundation)* — In preparation for the introduction of this elective next fall, this team will develop an overall wellness course framework, including course-wide enduring understandings and essential questions, and they will design corresponding units of study, including key performance assessments and learning activities.

***Curriculum Development for Science & Religion: A New Senior Elective in Religious Studies (Level 6)*** — *Adrian O'Keefe, with Bill Haardt* — This course will introduce students to the philosophical, theological, and ethical relationship between science and religion.

**Professional Development Planning & Priorities** — Discussion then focused upon PD planning for both the short and the long term. For the purposes of this discussion, Paul asked the Committee to consider the following summary outline of various PD criteria and growth areas:

- School-wide
  - Action Plan & LRP
    - Wellness
    - Technology (1:1 laptops, project-based learning, etc.)
    - Data (data literacy, data teams, etc.)
    - Formation (staff & student)
    - Diversity (staff & student)
  - Other School-wide
    - Learning Disabilities (& learning styles)

- Pedagogy (e.g., ongoing RBT courses, writing across the curriculum, grading, critical thinking/Bloom's Taxonomy, etc.)
- Department-specific
  - Curriculum Development (e.g., UbD)
  - Program/Structural changes (e.g., Counseling, RS)
  - Content knowledge (discipline-specific)
  - Leadership (admin, dept chairs, others)
- Individual
  - 5-Yr-Plan, Discipline-specific (content, pedagogy)
  - Personal spiritual growth

Paul asked that in considering these criteria and growth areas, the Committee might keep an eye toward how our in-services might align and serve these priorities. In addition, Paul circulated copies of the March In-service evaluations, calling particular attention to one of the free response items asked people to suggest topics or areas they'd like future in-services to address.

The Committee discussed several PD priority areas and possible topics for future in-services.

For example, one member suggested that it would be helpful to do more work as a faculty about how to support our students with learning disabilities, including learning more about the services and support currently available to our students. With the addition of Elisa Romero, and resources already available through Academic Support Center the LD Counselor, doing so might help faculty understand more clearly all that is available to our students, and how we as a community might more capably support these students and one another.

Another Committee member raised the importance of deepening our understanding of the potential role of distance learning, the value of which was underscored by the recent swine flu scare. How will we teach our courses if forced to do so remotely? We have the opportunity to learn more about online educational tools, using either Catlink (SI's implementation of the Moodle online course management system) or other digital and online tools that can facilitate communication and distance learning.

Scheduling was raised as another topic worthy of PD resources and time, perhaps as an appropriate subject for one or more upcoming in-services. One Committee member suggested that since many veteran faculty had already participated extensively in the last examination of bell schedules and had visited numerous schools, that these faculty might serve a different role in this process than those who may not have been at SI six or seven years ago. However, other Committee members thought that all faculty would derive some benefit from visiting other schools during this schedule-examination process. Another Committee member suggested that prior to an examination of our bell schedule ought to come preparation and investigation into how to create more constructivist, inquiry-based learning experiences for our students. Included in this investigation would be time spent identifying and visiting those schools that are effectively creating these kinds of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments. Overall, it was agreed that the criteria by which we should evaluate our current and alternative bell schedules will need to be established prior to this work.

The Committee also discussed the topic of revising the annual EIT binder process, especially in light of the fact that the EIT program is about to undergo significant

review and revision as one of the major Professional Development objectives in the Long Range Plan. Another Committee member suggested that perhaps the PDC might be able to serve as a consultative body in this process.

The Committee also briefly discussed the possibility of using our in-services to examine areas of interdisciplinary overlap and connections, for the purposes of forging more concrete relationships among these traditional disciplinary knowledge bases in ways that mirror the real-world integration and application of this knowledge.

Paul concluded by thanking the Committee for their time and hard work this past school year, particularly in reviewing and evaluating Summer Curriculum Grant applications, and he offered a special thanks to Kate Kodros, for all of her significant and lasting contributions this Committee these past years.

**Meeting adjourned.**