

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: THE FREQUENCY AND VARIETY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO ONLINE INSTRUCTORS

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ABSTRACT

Online education is no longer a peripheral phenomenon in higher education: over one-third of faculty members have taught or developed an online course. As institutions of higher education expand their online education offerings, administrators need to recognize that supporting faculty members through the use of incentives and through effective faculty development programs for online instruction is important to the improvement of the quality of educational programs. This quantitative study used an online survey to investigate the types and frequency of faculty development programs for online instruction at institutions with an established teaching and learning development unit (TLDU). The average TLDU offered about fifteen different types of faculty development programs, the most common being websites, technical services, printed materials, and consultation with instructional design experts. Findings indicate that some faculty development programs for online instruction are being offered more frequently; this increase has resource and staffing implications for the support of these programs.

KEYWORDS

Faculty development, faculty development programs, online instruction, professional development, TLDU, workshops, institutional support, faculty

I. INTRODUCTION

The growth of online education programs is one of the most pressing and rapidly changing issues faced by faculty members and administration in higher education. Faced with pressure from declining state budget appropriations, increased competition for recruiting graduating high school seniors, and rising costs, many institutions turn to online instruction as a way to recruit and retain students. With increasing market pressure, rapid growth in online instruction nationwide [1], and with faculty resistance to online instruction, one of the biggest challenges faced by higher education institutions is faculty training. Institutions are compelled by accrediting bodies to offer some form of support to faculty [2], but the form and extent of this support is not specified.

Faculty development has become increasingly prevalent over the last ten years; there has been a dramatic increase in the number of established teaching and learning development units (TLDUs) [3]. While TLDUs vary in organizational structure, staffing, and funding, an increasing number of institutions are establishing or growing TLDUs. Despite the growth in these TLDUs, faculty members are frustrated with professional development available for online instruction: 70% of faculty members describe their institution's support for online instruction as average or below [4], and nearly 20% of all institutions do not offer any support to faculty teaching online [5]. The more than one-third of faculty members who have developed or taught an online course [4] report that developing and teaching online courses takes much more work than traditional courses.

Clearly, faculty members are dissatisfied with the current level of institutional support for online instruction. Because faculty members who have not taught online before tend to have a negative perception of online instruction, and because they perceive a lack of professional development as a major barrier to the development and implementation of online programs, this dissatisfaction poses a major problem for institutions that are trying to improve or grow their online programs. Because online education is becoming increasingly central in higher education, and institutions need to remain flexible in order to remain strong and viable in the face of growing financial and enrollment pressures, this lack of adequate faculty support is a problem that needs to be addressed.

The purpose of this research study is to provide benchmarking data on faculty professional development programs for faculty members transitioning to online course design and delivery at non-profit higher education institutions in the United States with an established and active teaching and learning development unit (TLDU). While the literature clearly describes that faculty members perceive a lack of institutional support for online instruction, there is a lack of data on the actual types and extent of professional development provided to faculty members at non-profit higher education institutions in the United States with an established and active teaching and learning development unit (TLDU). While Allen & Seaman's 2010 nationwide survey of 2,500 institutions provides a valuable overview of faculty training for online instruction nationwide and reports the findings by institution type, the survey is limited. The Allen & Seaman survey only included four types of training (informal and formal mentoring, and internally and externally run training), which only includes a small percentage of the much wider variety of professional development programs for online instruction currently in practice. This study will provide a much more complete description of the types and extent of faculty development programs for online instruction.

Twenty-five different types of faculty professional development programs were included in this study. These program types included: (1) institutionally-supported self-teaching opportunities, (2) peer mentoring, (3) collaborative course design, (4) workshops, (5) online training, and (6) quality assurance evaluation programs. These faculty development program types were selected based on a review of the literature citing common faculty development programs for online instruction [4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11].

This study focuses on non-profit institutions in the United States with a teaching and learning development unit (TLDU). This study is limited to non-profit institutions because for-profit institutions vary quite a bit in their percentage of online students and their approaches to faculty recruitment and development; therefore, the study was limited to non-profits. Also, this study was limited to institutions in the United States; faculty development as a profession and the nature of TLDUs can vary dramatically

from one country to another, so this study focuses on one country with an established faculty development network. Finally, the study focuses only on institutions with established TLDUs.

Chief academic officers, policy makers, and faculty development unit directors need data on practices at comparable institutions in order to inform policy development and strategic planning. With at least half of all institution types reporting that online instruction is central to their long-term strategic plans [5], and with mandates from regional accrediting bodies to provide training for faculty teaching online, having such benchmarking data is vital to the decision-making process. Faculty development directors can also use this data to develop future programs to support faculty.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Faculty and Online Instruction

Faculty members are involved in online course development and delivery in surprisingly high numbers: according to a nationwide survey of 10,720 full (85%) and part-time (15%) faculty members from 69 different institutions (50,000 surveys were distributed) conducted by the APLU, the Babson Survey Research Group, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in 2009, 34.4 percent of faculty have developed or taught an online course, 9.3 percent of faculty are currently working on developing an online course, and approximately one-fourth of all faculty are currently teaching an online course. Women tend to teach online more frequently than men, and years of teaching experience does not seem to impact whether a faculty member is teaching online [4]. The only exception is that faculty members with fewer than five years' teaching experience teach online at a slightly lower rate than other faculty members.

Faculty experience with teaching online does vary slightly by rank, however: 36.1% of non-tenured faculty, 35.7% of non-tenure track faculty, and 32.6% of tenured faculty have taught an online course. As these percentages demonstrate, these differences are not large, although tenure-track faculty members also comprise the smallest percentage of faculty currently teaching an online course. Part-time faculty members are also more likely to be teaching an online course: 32.4% of part-time faculty are teaching online compared with 22.2% of full-time faculty. However, the percentage of full-time versus part-time faculty members who have ever taught an online course is much more evenly matched, suggesting that part-time faculty simply teach online more frequently than do full-time faculty [4].

Faculty opinions about the effectiveness of online instruction vary, depending on their previous experience with online education. Among faculty members who have never taught online, 80% think that online instruction produces inferior student learning outcomes compared to traditional courses [5, 9]. Less than one-third of chief academic officers believe that their faculty members are accepting of the "value and legitimacy of online education. This percent has changed little over the last six years" [5]. This attitude also varies by institution type: "Baccalaureate institutions are the most negative about the quality of the online degree and associate's institutions are the most positive" [12], and chief academic officers at institutions that offer online courses tend to be more positive about online education's effectiveness [5]. In fact, 66% of academic leaders perceive the learning outcomes from online instruction to be similar or superior to those in face-to-face courses [1]. Many institutions cite this lack of buy-in from faculty members to be a major barrier to the overall growth of their online programs [5]. However, the majority of faculty members with online experience, or about one-third of all faculty

members, perceive online instruction as equally or more effective than face-to-face classes [4]. Because these faculty members are still the overall minority, though, administration's perception that the majority of faculty members have a negative perception of online instruction is correct.

Despite their motivations to teach online or their perceptions of whether online instruction is more effective, when faculty members develop and deliver online courses, they encounter more challenges than they would in the traditional classroom. Multiple national surveys by the Sloan Foundation have demonstrated that chief academic officers believe that online course development design and delivery takes faculty more time and more work than traditional courses [12, 13, 14]. Faculty agree: 64% perceive teaching online courses as more work, and 85% perceive developing online courses as more work [4]. These administrators and faculty are correct: the amount of work required for the design and preparation of an online course is substantially greater than the amount of work needed to prepare a traditional course [15, 16, 17, 18, 19].

Faculty perceive this additional effort, in both online course development and delivery, as the greatest barrier to becoming involved in online instruction [4, 10, 20], and in institutions where support for online instruction ranks highest, including professional development, faculty do not perceive that these programs reduce their overall workload for online course development and delivery [4]. The need for technology training, lack of time for professional development, and a negative attitude toward online instruction are also common barriers [10, 20]. The purpose of professional development programs for faculty members transitioning to online course development and delivery is not alleviating faculty workload, but rather providing the support that they need to develop higher-quality online courses.

B. Institutional Support for Faculty: Fink's Model for Institutional Effectiveness

Clearly, faculty face challenges when transitioning to online instruction. However, with the demand for online education increasing, institutions of higher education have incorporated expanding the percentage of online course offerings into their long-term strategic plans [5]. If the institution's organizational development goals include both online course expansion and maintaining a high quality educational experience for students, then the institution must consider whether its current faculty development programs and policies for online instructors will enable the institution to meet its strategic planning and organizational development goals.

In *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*, L. Dee Fink argues that institutions of higher education "need to give serious attention to their role in supporting faculty change" because changes in the faculty, who are in charge of designing and delivering courses and curricula, are necessary for the improvement of the quality of educational programs. Fink explains that in order to overcome barriers, six critical conditions need to be met to affect change: awareness, encouragement, time, resources, cooperative students, and recognition and reward. This study focuses on Fink's "resources" critical condition for faculty growth, because the availability of resources is one of the critical conditions that can be directly influenced by changes in institutional policies. Fink provides some example of "resources," including "teaching and learning centers or faculty development programs that offer individual consulting services, workshops, classroom observations, organized group discussions, reading material, and the like" [21]. This study includes 25 types of faculty development programs for online instruction that can all be

considered “resources,” as their availability to faculty can be influenced through institutional policies.

Clearly, Fink advocates for the institutional support of teaching and learning centers to support faculty professional development in online instruction. While TLDUs as a separate administrative office is not ubiquitous across institutions of higher education in the United States, the growth of online education is a major source of pressure that can act as an impetus to change. A catalyst such as the demand for growth of online education will give faculty leaders and administrators “an opportunity to initiate the kinds of organizational changes that can give faculty the support they need from their own institutions.” Fink explains that in fact, “almost all of the needed actions are already happening in various institutions,” and that institutional leaders just need to complete the “puzzle” by taking the actions needed to “better support faculty” [21].

C. Faculty Development Programs for Online Course Development and Delivery

Most online faculty members are adapting their lesson plans and lectures to the online environment, creating a strong need for continuous professional development. 33.5 percent of faculty have developed an online course at some point in their careers; non-tenured, tenure-track faculty are the most likely to be developing an online course. Part-time faculty members are more likely to be involved in course development than full-time faculty [4]. Data from the Sloan Consortium national surveys provide a helpful overview of the current state of faculty training for online instruction. According to the survey, training is available in 81% of institutions that offer online programs; most training takes the form of formal training courses and informal mentoring [5]. The literature describes a variety of professional development programs for supporting faculty engaged in online course development or delivery.

Allen & Seaman describe the type of faculty training provided by the 2,500 institutions included in their survey. Among the 81% of institutions that provide training for faculty teaching online:

- 59% provide informal mentoring,
- 40% provide formal mentoring programs,
- 65% provide internally run training courses, and
- 15% provide training through an externally-run course [1].

The type of training offered to faculty varies by institution size. The larger institutions are more likely to use internally run training programs, while the smaller institutions are more likely to use externally run programs. Table 1 summarizes the percentage of institutions, by Basic Carnegie Classification and by institutional control, that provide each type of training included in the study.

Non-profit institutions are more likely than for-profit institutions to offer informal mentoring, while for-profit institutions are more likely to offer formal mentoring programs. Also, baccalaureate institutions are most likely not to offer any training, while externally-run training courses are most prevalent at associate’s institutions [1].

Type of Program	Doctoral/ Research	Master's	Baccalaureate Institutions	Associate's	Private, non-profit	Public	Private, For-Profit
Informal mentoring	68.8%	57.7%	60.1%	58.9%	60.9%	63.4%	39.6%
Formal mentoring	32.8%	37.2%	31.3%	47.6%	31.2%	39.1%	61.3%
Internally run training course	69.9%	66.1%	57.4%	69.4%	58.0%	71.1%	59.9%
Externally run training course	4.0%	11.9%	14.7%	19.7%	14.3%	13.2%	22.0%
No training provided	15.1%	15.9%	25.4%	19.4%	19.9%	16.9%	24.9%

Table 1: Percentage of Institutions that Offer Faculty Development Programs for Online Instruction by Institution Type

With the rapid increase in online courses, and with over 80% of institutions offering some type of faculty training for online course design and delivery, institutions of higher education in the United States are clearly placing importance on faculty training. The Sloan survey, however, has limited data, as the variety of faculty development programs for online instruction is much greater than the four categories included above. Literature on faculty development initiatives at teaching and learning centers provides a much more complete portrait of the variety of faculty development initiatives for online instruction, as well as some data on their overall effectiveness.

D. Faculty Development for Online Instruction at Teaching and Learning Centers

Faculty developers in the Sorcinelli et al. 2001-2002 survey were asked the extent to which they offer programs related to a number of key issues common in faculty development. Student-centered learning, new faculty development, technology, and active learning were all offered to a moderate extent; assessment of student learning, diversity, SoTL, and writing across the curriculum were all offered to a slight to moderate extent [6]. Among all of these topics, faculty developers reported that integrating technology into instruction was the most frequently offered service by teaching and learning centers.

As online instruction becomes exponentially more prolific at colleges and universities nationwide, so does the variety of faculty development programs designed to prepare faculty for this new teaching environment. The following section will describe the primary types of faculty development programs for online instruction currently described in the literature. Although variations on each of these approaches are noted when possible, individual institutions often adapt these techniques to their own institutional contexts, creating a much larger variety of programs than is reported in the literature; the rapid pace at

which new programs are developed also makes it difficult for publications to keep pace with new programming. In fact, the literature on faculty training for online teaching is quite limited and argue for further research in this area [11].

The scope and variety of these programs will likely continue to increase over the next several years, both as online instruction becomes more common and as faculty development professionals use research to improve existing programs and create innovative, new approaches.

E. Program Types and Effectiveness

1. Self-Teaching

There are a variety of resources available for faculty members who prefer self-directed learning about online instruction, including books, journal articles, pod/vodcasts, video, recorded online seminars, and online materials. Some faculty members also prefer to experiment with technology, course design, and pedagogy, using student evaluations, research, and intuition to guide their progress.

Some resources have been developed to assist faculty members who prefer self-directed learning. One example is Pennsylvania State University's online faculty self-assessment tool. This free online tool, an interactive rubric, allows the participant to evaluate their preparedness for teaching an online course in terms of organization, time management, communication, experience, and technical skills when teaching an online class: the tool provides detailed feedback to the faculty member upon completion [22].

Lovvorn, Barth, Morris, & Timmerman presented a case study of a small, public institution in the southeast United States. They explained that although the administration brought in a speaker to launch online instruction, faculty primarily learned how to teach online through self-instruction [23], although the faculty desired workshops in how to use software. While in some instances faculty members prefer to learn on their own, in others, either due to budgetary constraints or a lack of an established professional development program, self-instruction is the only option available.

2. Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring as a form of professional development for online instructors is common. Mentoring can either be part of a formal program [7] or an informal relationship; some faculty members receive formal training as mentors [8], others are chosen for their prior online teaching experience, while some institutions use a team mentoring approach [4].

There are several examples of institutions implementing mentoring-based faculty development programs for online instruction. In a year-long program in Louisiana, sixteen faculty members from four community colleges were trained in online course design and delivery in order to serve as mentors at their home institutions [8]. At Middle Tennessee State University, the faculty peer assistants (FPA) program combines formal mentoring during the course design phase with a peer review process, led by the mentor, after the course design is complete [24]. Another example of a peer mentoring program that includes a

peer view process is Park University's online instructor evaluation system [25].

3. Collaborative Course Design

One form of faculty development is collaborative course design, or ongoing mentoring and individualized support during the design of an online course. This process can take several forms. First, many faculty members consult with instructional design experts on an ongoing basis during the development of a course. The experts serve as both tutors and evaluators in online course design, providing the faculty member with training, support, and critical feedback throughout the design process. Some institutions may also provide separate technical services, in which an expert assists the faculty member with the technical aspects of the online course design or simply converts the content to an online format for the faculty member. Such services may or may not have a professional development component, depending on the extent of the involvement of the faculty member. Michigan State University is an example of an institution with such a technical service, although Koehler et al. find this division of labor to be "inappropriate" and detrimental to the course quality [10]. Appana argues that this team effort is necessary for instructors who lack the needed skills [9].

One interesting variation on the collaborative course design model is Michigan State University's approach to faculty development for online course design, in which a group of three or four graduate students work collaboratively during a semester-long graduate-level seminar to develop an online course. The course is developed collaboratively during the fall semester, and then the faculty member teaches the course the following spring [10].

4. Workshops

Workshops can be internally or externally run, can take place on site or at a different location, and can vary in length. Some workshops are "one shot" professional development events, in which the entire program takes place in one session, from an hour to a full day. Koehler et al. argue that such "one shot" workshops and seminars are "shortsighted" because they cannot adequately allow faculty to understand and integrate the relationships between pedagogy and technology in a course [10]. Other workshops attempt to address this problem by including a series of meetings over a longer period of time, from two days to several months. Workshops can take place at the faculty member's home institution or at an off-site location, such as at a professional conference. Despite these differences, most workshops tend to be face-to-face, group experiences that include a variety of activities, including lecture, small group work, and hands-on technical training. In a study of online faculty development in the North Carolina Community College System, workshops, or on-site training, were one of the most frequently-attended programs [11].

Two organizations that frequently offer workshops for faculty at a variety of institutions are Magna Publications and the Sloan Consortium. Magna Publications offers a variety of faculty development resources, including online seminars, online courses, publications related to online education, and conferences for faculty members. Their products are used by faculty members across the United States [26]. Another major provider of externally-based workshops is the Sloan Consortium. Sloan-C online workshops, offered both in asynchronous and synchronous formats, are two to four week long workshops that are attended by thousands of faculty members from hundreds of institutions. These workshops are taught on a variety of topics by presenters from a wide variety of higher education institutions [27].

5. Online Training

Online professional development can either be synchronous (real time) or asynchronous (at the participant's own pace). Some online training is combined with face-to-face professional development for a blended approach [27]. One clear benefit of online training is that it can allow faculty the opportunity to experience the online learning environment first-hand; however, some online training could be time-consuming or expensive to produce or offer.

The University of Phoenix uses online training as a major component of its faculty development program, a necessity since University of Phoenix faculty are so geographically dispersed. Before beginning the online training program, faculty must complete a pre-test on proficiency with Microsoft Outlook. Next, faculty complete a four-week online training program, and finally a mentorship program with an experienced online faculty member, in which the mentor reviews the new faculty member's online course materials on a regular basis. Another example of the use of online training at the institutional level is the Digital Learning Faculty Certificate Program at Sacred Heart University, in which a cohort of 8-14 faculty members complete an eight-week online program on online instruction [28]. Pagliari, Batts, & McFadden recommend the use of online training in order to increase attendance and accessibility of professional development for faculty [11]. Also, as mentioned earlier, Magna Publications and the Sloan Consortium also provide online training to faculty nationwide.

F. Quality Assurance Evaluation Programs

One approach to faculty development for online course design is to make professional development one component of a larger quality assurance process. The online course is designed by a faculty member, often with the help of peers, instructional designers, and/or technical experts. The final online course design then undergoes a rigorous quality review process. With the increasing focus on accountability in higher education, it is not surprising that this type of program is increasing in popularity.

One of the most popular of these programs in the United States is Quality Matters. From 2003 to 2006, FIPSE awarded a grant to MarylandOnline to develop a quality assurance program for online learning. Quality Matters focuses on course design with the goal of course improvement, and is part of a faculty-driven, peer-review process of existing online courses. The review involves three faculty peer reviewers, including a subject matter expert and at least one faculty reviewer from a different institution. The faculty member who developed and teaches the online course is actively involved in the review process. This program has trained over 3,000 faculty [29] from over 160 different institutions in reviewing online course design: in addition to the professional development benefits, faculty participants also receive \$150 for each completed peer course review and include a record of their participation in their promotion and tenure files [30]. The organization also has provided on-site, online, and Elluminate-based training to over 7,000 faculty nationwide [29].

Another example of a quality assurance process in practice is the Universitas 21 Global (U21G) approach, a quality assurance process for online instruction used at this newly-established (1997) and entirely asynchronous online academic institution. Universitas 21, "a network of 18 international universities spanning four continents" [7], established its quality assurance process to make sure that its online courses' academic standards were comparable to the standards set by the member institutions. Course

content is developed by the faculty member along with three to four other professionals, and blind peer-review of both course content and delivery for appropriate academic rigor is part of the course development process. Next, professional instructional designers put the course content online; courseware development also goes through a peer-review process for quality control.

Chua and Lam believe that quality assurance processes improve student satisfaction and retention [7]. This approach is an especially effective tool for developing adjunct faculty members, as the process involves an ongoing mentoring relationship with an experienced full-time faculty member. The Quality Matters program's use of multiple incentives is clearly successful at garnering participation in its professional development programs, and there is evidence that the program leads to improved online course design [29].

While quality assurance programs on this scale are clearly effective, their development and application are problematic for smaller institutions. Developing a quality assurance, peer-review based program is complex: it involves everything from the creation of agreed-upon standards for online course design to orchestrating a complex review process, which is even more difficult when involving off-campus reviewers. Apart from the tremendous workload involved in program development, the financial cost involved can be prohibitive. If an institution does not have in-house time or expertise to create and sustain a quality assurance program, they must pay high subscription fees to use an external service such as Quality Matters.

G. Faculty Preferences

At seven four-year public HBCUs, faculty most strongly preferred workshops and individual consultations with faculty development staff as modes of training [32]; also, faculty members prefer individualized instruction [32,33]. Other preferred training types included mentoring, personalized instruction, web-based modules, and informal help. Less desirable modes included "self-teaching, books, audiotapes, videotapes, and formal courses" [31]. Faculty members also preferred learning with their peers and having the opportunity to apply theory through actively using technology.

Faculty development professionals need to consider which types of programs will be most effective and appropriate for their particular institutional contexts. Kinuthia recommends programs that are "well-defined, task-centered," and emphasize "immediacy of application"; programs should include course development, instructional techniques, and assessment [31]. Because specific professional development requirements will result in dissatisfaction, faculty should have the opportunity to select their own training based on their particular interests and needs [32].

III. METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study investigated the frequency and type of faculty professional development programs for online instruction at institutions that met three criteria. A quantitative methodology was selected in order to collect data from as large number of institutions as possible. First, this study was limited to institutions with an active teaching and learning development unit (TLDU) as defined by Kuhlenschmidt's 2009 survey of the field [34]. The TLDUs in this study are (1) the primary (not secondary) unit for the institution and (2) a unit that serves the primary faculty of the institution, rather than Teaching Assistant (TA) training only. Next, institution type, as defined by the 2010 Carnegie

classification, was limited to associates, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral/research institutions under the 2010 basic classification [35]. Finally, the study was limited to not-for-profit institutions as designated by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [36]. While this study provides data on the programs offered by TLDUs, the resulting data does not provide a comprehensive picture of all professional development opportunities for online instructors offered at an institution, since other units, such as online education offices or individual academic departments, could also offer programs. Further research on this topic could also include offerings by these other organizational units.

The final population of this study is comprised of the 821 institutions. Among these institutions, 292 (35.5%) are associate's institutions, 62 (7.5%) baccalaureate institutions, 264 (32%) master's institutions, and 203 (25%) are doctoral institutions. As for institutional control, 620 (75.5%) are public institutions, while 201 (24.5%) are private institutions. As for total enrollment, 179 institutions had fewer than 5,000 FTE students, 203 institutions had 5,000-10,000 FTE students, 348 institutions had 10,000-50,000 FTE students, and six institutions had over 50,000 FTE students.

During the course of the data collection process, closed TLDUs, TLDUs without accessible contact information, and TLDUs with invalid contact information were removed from the sample. The survey was distributed via email to the remaining 782 institutions; 191 total institutions responded to the survey, for a response rate of approximately 24%.

The survey questions relevant to this study were developed through consultation with a survey design expert and refined after participant feedback from a brief pilot study. The survey asked participants to respond to the following question: Below is a list of different types of faculty development programs that could be offered to online instructors through a teaching and learning center. Please indicate how frequently your institution's teaching and learning center has offered each of these programs to faculty within the past two (2) years. Please use the following definitions to inform your selection:

- Never: My institution never offered this program in the last two years.
- Rarely: This program was offered once in the last two years.
- Sometimes: This program was offered at least twice in the last two years
- Frequently: This program has been offered at least once each semester.
- Continuously: This program is available on a continuous basis.

The participants then could select from the options above. Additionally, participants were asked, "If you would like to provide additional details on any of the faculty development programs that you indicated above, or if you would like to include any programs not already mentioned on the list above, you may add this information below." The participants then had the opportunity to add a written response or comments.

IV. RESULTS

A. Frequency and Types of Programs Offered

This quantitative study investigated the frequency and type of faculty development programs for online

instruction offered at non-profit institutions in the United States with established and active teaching and learning development units (TLDU). Institutions were asked about twenty-five different types of faculty development programs that could be offered to online instructors through a TLDU. For each of these programs, respondents were asked to indicate how frequently their institution's TLDU has offered each of the programs to faculty within the past two (2) years. Table 2 lists data on the number of institutions that reported offering each of these twenty-five faculty development program types. For each program type, the percentage of institutions that reported offering this program, as a proportion of the total number of institutions that responded to that question, is indicated.

Among the twenty-five types of faculty development programs, the program offered by the largest percentage of institutions in the past two years was the availability of a website or course management system site with online resources for faculty for online instruction (90.4%). The faculty development program offered by the next largest percentage of institutions was a technical service (89.0%), followed by the availability of books, journals, or other printed materials on online instruction (87.8%), pod/vodcasts, DVD, online video instruction, or recorded online seminars (85.7%), and consultation with instructional design experts (84.2%).

Other programs that were offered by 75% or more of the institutions include internally-run formal workshops of less than four hours, informal mentoring, conference attendance, and the critical review of a finished online course design by a peer, instructional designer, or committee.

Faculty Development Program Type	Percentage	N
Website or course management system site with online resources for faculty for online instruction.	90.4%	146
Technical service (not including content or pedagogical design)	89.0%	145
Availability of books, journals, or other printed materials on online instruction	87.8%	147
Pod/vodcasts, DVD, online video instruction, or recorded online seminars	85.7%	147
Consultation with instructional design experts	84.2%	146
Internally-run formal workshops: < 4 hours	83.1%	142
Informal	82.2%	146
Conference attendance	78.9%	147
Critical review of finished course by peer, instructional designer, or committee	75.0%	144
Internally-run formal workshops: 4 hours to full day	72.7%	143
Self-paced asynchronous training	67.1%	143
Course creation by instructional designer with assistance/input from faculty member, includes pedagogical design	66.2%	145

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Blended training	65.2%	138
Internally-run formal workshops: multiple days	63.8%	141
Ongoing peer mentoring during faculty-led development of an online course	63.6%	143
Formal program	62.1%	145
Internal review process	57.4%	141
Online synchronous training	53.9%	141
Quality Matters	49.3%	140
Internally-run formal workshops: multiple weeks	47.2%	142
Externally-run formal workshops: < 4 hours	44.0%	141
Externally-run formal workshops: 4 hours to full day	37.2%	145
Externally-run formal workshops: multiple days	33.3%	144
External review process	31.7%	139
Externally-run formal workshops: multiple weeks	27.0%	141

Table 2: Percentage of Respondent Institutions that Have Offered Faculty Development Programs for Online Course Design and Delivery in the Past Two Years

While there were nine faculty development programs offered by 75% or more of the responding institutions, there were also seven faculty development programs offered by less than 50% of the responding institutions. These include Quality Matters (49.3%); internally-run workshops that are multiple weeks long (47.2%); externally-run workshops of less than four hours (44%), four hours to a full day (37.2%), multiple days (33.3%), or multiple weeks (27.0%); and an external review process (31.7%).

In addition to whether or not the program was offered, the survey also asked respondents to note how frequently their institution offered each of the programs. The respondents were asked to use the following definitions to inform their selections: Never: My institution never offered this faculty development program in the last two years; Rarely: This faculty development program was offered once in the last two years; Sometimes: This faculty development program was offered at least twice in the last two years; Frequently: This faculty development program has been offered at least once each semester; and Continuously: This faculty development program is available on a continuous basis.

After collection, the data was coded as following: Continuously (4), Frequently (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), and Never (0). The mean frequency score for each of the twenty-five faculty development programs is reported in Table 3. Two sets of mean frequency scores are reported. The first column of mean frequency scores includes all respondents, including those institutions that indicated that they have never offered this program to faculty within the past two years. The second column of mean frequency scores includes only those respondents that indicated that they have offered the program at least once

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within the past two years. The first column provides descriptive data on the frequency of the program, taking into account all responding institutions, while the second column provides descriptive data that reveals how frequently the faculty development program is offered by institutions that offer that type of program.

Faculty Development Program Type	All Respondents	Institutions Offering the Faculty Development Program
Website or course management system site with online resources for faculty for online instruction.	3.09	3.42
Consultation with instructional design experts	2.80	3.33
Technical service (not including content or pedagogical design)	2.78	3.12
Availability of books, journals, or other printed materials on online instruction	2.70	3.08
Internally-run formal workshops: < 4 hours	2.54	3.05
Quality Matters	1.34	2.71
Course creation by instructional designer with assistance/input from faculty member, includes pedagogical design	1.76	2.66
Internal review process	1.48	2.58
Pod/vodcasts, DVD, online video instruction, or recorded online seminars	2.20	2.56
Internally-run formal workshops: 4 hours to full day	1.84	2.53
Self-paced asynchronous training	1.70	2.53
Informal	2.06	2.51
Critical review of finished course by peer, instructional designer, or committee	1.85	2.46
Internally-run formal workshops: multiple days	1.57	2.46
Formal program	1.51	2.43
Internally-run formal workshops: multiple weeks	1.15	2.43
Ongoing peer mentoring during faculty-led development of an online course	1.51	2.37
Blended training	1.49	2.29

Online synchronous training	1.16	2.16
Conference attendance	1.63	2.07
External review process	0.62	1.95
Externally-run formal workshops: 4 hours to full day	0.70	1.89
Externally-run formal workshops: < 4 hours	0.79	1.81
Externally-run formal workshops: multiple days	0.60	1.79
Externally-run formal workshops: multiple weeks	0.48	1.79

Table 3: Mean Frequency that Faculty Development Programs for Online Course Design and Delivery Were Offered by Responding Institutions. Frequency scores for each institution were reported as Continuously (4), Frequently (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), and Never (0).

Among the twenty-five program types, the programs that had the highest mean frequency scores among institutions that reported offering that program were a website or course management system site with online resources for faculty for online instruction (3.42), consultation with instructional design experts (3.33), technical service (not including content or pedagogical design) (3.12), availability of books, journals, or other printed materials on online instruction (3.08), and internally-run formal workshops: < 4 hours (3.05). These were also the faculty development program types offered the most frequently among all reporting institutions.

Among the twenty-five program types, the programs that had the lowest mean frequency scores among institutions that reported offering that program were an external review process (1.95), externally-run formal workshops of four hours to a full day in length (1.89), externally-run formal workshops of less than four hours in length (1.81), and externally-run formal workshops of multiple days in length (1.79) or multiple weeks in length (1.79). These were also the faculty development program types offered the least frequently among all reporting institutions.

B. Examples of Faculty Development Programs Offered

In addition to the Likert-type responses, the survey also asked participants if they “would like to provide additional details on any of the faculty development programs that you indicated above, or if you would like to include any programs not already mentioned on the list above.”

Many of the respondents commented on the availability of resources to offer faculty development programs or on the frequency that programs are offered. One institution noted that “we have an abundance of services, resources, and programs available to our faculty,” but that all training is voluntary, because faculty “will not accept training that is ‘required.’” Another institution explains that faculty members have many resources available to them through annual subscriptions to Sloan-C, Quality Matters, and “monthly user’s groups meetings.” A third institution explains that technical services, including Angel training and tutorials, are indications of continuous support. Additionally, two other institutions cite affiliation with Quality Matters, explaining that the full subscription to the service enables

faculty to attend workshops at other institutions as well.

Other institutions described in further detail financial resources used to offer faculty development programs. One institution explained that their Distance Learning unit has “in the past allocated \$100,000 for support for development. This past year the amount dedicated to grant support for individual faculty was \$50,000.” One institution that is part of a multi-campus system explained that the system was recently given funding by the administration to hire an online instructional designer.

While some of the respondents focused on the availability of professional development and financial resources, many of the comments were focused on online training programs. One distance education unit “offers 3 to 4 formal training sessions a year . . . each lasts 6 weeks and is in-person with some online components.” Several multi-week programs were described: another institution certifies faculty to teach online through a five-week online course; they also provide an additional five-week advanced course for further training. One institution reports offering on a regular basis a voluntary, virtual six-week online course development workshop, which includes synchronous components. Another institution offers a blended faculty development model, in which faculty members participate in an externally-run fully online program in online course design, which is supplemented by multi-day face-to-face instruction. Faculty members who complete this program must teach online within the next two semesters.

While several examples were reported of complex, multi-day and multi-week programs, several institutions also explained that they have simple or “developing” approaches to training, and shared their future plans for faculty development programs for online instruction. One institution is in the process of designing a blended training course for faculty who are redesigning courses for online learning; another will start offering Quality Matters training. Another reports focusing on “one-on-one” training, while another just hired a new staff member charged with developing workshops and other training opportunities. One director reports that while they currently do not have several of the survey items, “those things are initiatives currently being considered as part of our strategic planning.”

V. CONCLUSION

One of the challenges faced by non-profit higher education institutions in the United States looking to improve or expand their online programs is faculty development [4, 5]. Despite the importance of faculty development to the improvement of the quality of educational programs [21], including online education, nearly 20% of institutions that offer online programs do not provide training to faculty [5]. Of the 80% that do provide training, the majority of faculty felt that their institutions’ support for online course development and delivery was average or below. These faculty members perceived the lack of faculty development as a major barrier to the development of online instruction [5, 20, 37].

This research study investigated the variety of types and frequency of faculty development programs for online instruction offered by teaching and learning development units (TLDUs) at the responding institutions. The respondents were asked whether their TLDU had offered each of twenty-five program types over the past two years. The top nine faculty development programs were offered by 75% or more of the responding institutions; the seven least frequently offered programs were offered by less than 50% of the responding institutions, with the least offered program offered by 27% of institutions. In general, when a program type was offered by a high percentage of institutions, it also tended to be offered more frequently by those institutions. The same tends to be true for the least frequently offered program types:

when a program type was offered by a lower percentage of institutions, it also tended to be offered less frequently by those institutions. One exception is conference attendance: while offered by the eighth highest percentage of institutions, it was offered less frequently by institutions. The average institution offering this incentive type reported offering it an average of “at least twice in the past two years” but not as frequently as every semester. This is understandable: sending faculty members to conferences tends to be more expensive than other types of faculty development, and many conference opportunities are only available on an annual basis.

The Sloan Consortium surveys, which found that 81% of institutions are providing professional development for faculty teaching online, also asked about the type of professional development program offered [5]. While the Sloan survey was more limited in that it only contained five program types, it is helpful to compare the results of this study with the Sloan data; Table 2 includes the Sloan data by institution type. The Sloan data (from a 2009 survey) reports that 65% of institutions provide internally run training courses. This survey divided internally run training courses into four categories by length of time (from less than four hours to multiple weeks), and found that over 83% of institutions offered formal workshops of less than four hours. Both studies indicate that the majority of institutions offer this type of professional development; in fact, because this study has data that is two years more recent than the Sloan study, these findings suggest that the percentage of institutions offering internally-run workshops has increased over the past two years.

Conversely, the Sloan study found that only 15% of institutions offer external training (p. 11). This study also found that this percentage was relatively low compared to other professional development program types (between 27% and 44%, depending on program length), but again, the number suggest that the percentage of institutions offering externally-run workshops has increased over the past two years.

The Sloan study also provided data on the percentage of institutions that offer formal and informal mentoring programs: that study reported 40% and 59%, respectively. This study found that 62% of institutions offered formal mentoring programs and 82% offered informal mentoring. Like the Sloan study, formal mentoring was less common than informal mentoring. Again, this study’s percentages are higher than the Sloan study’s findings, suggesting an increase in the percentage of institutions offering formal and informal mentoring programs for online instruction. Just as the percentage of institutions with a TLDU is growing, so are the percentages of institutions offering these types of faculty development programs for online instruction. This is not surprising given the growth of faculty development as a field as well as the growth of online education across all institution types.

There have been several studies that have investigated faculty preferences for professional development program types [31, 32, 33]. In general, according to these studies, faculty members prefer mentoring, personalized instruction, web-based modules, learning with peers, and informal help. This study found that informal mentoring, individualized consultations, and websites were all frequently offered. This suggests that institutions are offering the professional development programs preferred by faculty. The research indicates that programs less desirable to faculty included books, audiotapes, videotapes, and formal courses [31]. Unfortunately, these less desirable professional development programs were also offered by the majority of the surveyed institutions. This may indicate that TLDUs are offering a variety of opportunities to faculty, so that they can select professional development based on their individual needs or preferences. Carroll [32] recommends that faculty should have the opportunity to select their

own training; these results suggest that these choices may indeed be available.

Fink's model of six critical conditions needed to affect the improvement of the quality of educational programs in a multidimensional, holistic approach includes the need for resources for faculty, including access to "consulting services, support groups, reading material, and workshops and conferences" [21]. With the majority of responding institutions indicating that they offer each of these resources, this study suggests that most institutions are meeting this critical condition.

Faculty development for online instructors is growing. This raises important implications for how institutions will support TLDUs and faculty through this growth. Administrators charged with establishing, maintaining, or funding TLDUs must ensure that these units have the appropriate staffing, funding, and other resources required to effectively support faculty. This study found that institutions with a TLDU also offer an average of fifteen to sixteen programs: this finding will help those starting professional development for online instruction to recognize the necessary scope and complexity of faculty development programs, as well as the need to provide faculty with options.

This study analyzed the findings within L. Dee Fink's multidimensional model for institutional effectiveness. Fink presents six critical conditions that need to be met to help faculty improve the quality of educational programs: one of these conditions, resources, can be directly impacted by institutional policies. While it was heartening that many institutions in this study offered professional development opportunities to faculty, this study also found that these were not universally-available programs. Also, with a majority of faculty being dissatisfied with their institution's support of online education through professional development, administrators working to expand online education must work to make these benefits more ubiquitous. Fink emphasized that these programs must be available to the majority of faculty [21].

If an institution of higher education has a goal of increasing online instruction, the administration must invest in faculty development, particularly through institutional policies that provide for adequate resources for effective professional development. This study revealed that while many institutions are effectively supporting faculty through investing in faculty development programs, this support is not universal, and institutions looking to expand online education must be cognizant of the need to invest in faculty in order to maintain and improve the quality of online education programs.

VI. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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