

S.N.A.P. AND T.W.I.L.: NO MATTER WHAT YOU CALL IT, NEW PROFESSORS GET SUPPORT*

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1 Introduction

In the first decade of the new millennium tenure track junior professors are experiencing the same challenges evident in the 1970s and 1980s when the need for higher education faculty development was recognized on campuses throughout the United States (Fink, 1984). Not much has changed since Robert Menges (1999) discerned that anxiety, time pressures, isolation, tension in personal relations, and dissonance about the rewards they receive from their work were common dilemmas of new and junior faculty. Professionals accustomed to accomplishment and success, as are most new to the School of Education professoriate, find it disquieting to be a newcomer and a rank amateur (Dinham, 1999; Johnson & DeSpain, 2004). Time has moved on, but workplace challenges for new and junior faculty have not. The beginning assistant professor is still often in a professional quandary, trying to understand the tenure track expectations, especially in the area of scholarship (Johnson & DeSpain, 2004).

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Faculties in the Schools of Education at the University of Xyyyy (UUU) and Uuuuu (SSSS), have, for the most part, transitioned from working as K-12 school practitioners to university tenure-track positions. With the exception of writing a dissertation, many new education faculty members have little experience with scholarly writing for publication. Since earning tenure and promotion requires that professors regularly publish scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals, this poses a challenge, and junior faculty often lack the mentoring support they need (Schuster, 1999; Fink, 1984).

The efforts of two non-tenured professors, Dr. Xxxxx at the University of Xyyyy, and Dr. Ooooo, at Uuuuu resulted in the initiation of faculty development programs in their respective Schools of Education that offered structured support for junior faculty to become more comfortable and prolific in research and scholarly writing. This was accomplished through the formation of similar professional learning communities which were called S.N.A.P. – Support Network for Assistant Professors and T.W.I.L. – Thinking, Writing, Inquiring, and Learning. Both groups have been well received by junior faculty and supported by school administration. The story of how the two assistant professors connected with each other and collaborated follows.

The research on the full-year S.N.A. P. program at UUU was presented by Dr. Xxxxx at the 2008 National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) Conference in San Diego, California. A paper describing the S.N.A.P. program was accepted for publication (Xxxxx, Shores, & Ivankova, 2009, in press). That presentation and paper captured the interest of another non-tenured professor, Dr. Ooooo, from Uuuuu (SSSS) and sparked an interest in her to pursue support to pilot a similar program at SSSS. Thus, the Thinking, Writing, Inquiring and Learning (T.W.I.L.) initiative was born.

This paper will present the T.W.I.L pilot program which was modeled after the S.N.A.P. program at UUU. The pilot program was developed by four non-tenured faculty members at Uuuuu during the spring, 2009 semester. The T.W.I.L pilot program was an exploratory study conducted with the expectation of obtaining information from non-tenured faculty needs that would be used to prepare a year-long peer mentoring program for non-tenured faculty during the 2009-2010 academic year.

2 Description of the Project

The T.W.I.L program began with Dr. Ooooo, assistant professor at Uuuuu (SSSS) School of Education (SOE), approaching the Director of Diversity and Faculty Development and sharing the results of the S.N.A.P. program - discovered at the 2008 National Council of Professors of Educational Administrators' (NCPEA) Conference. When the 2008-2009 academic year began at SSSS, there was no structured, formal faculty peer mentoring program in place for the twenty-nine SOE new faculty members under tenure track contracts. Dr. Ooooo, who became the lead investigator for the T.W.I.L. pilot project, personally experienced the same professional challenges Dr. Xxxxx had highlighted in her presentation and paper. It confirmed for her that she was not alone, nor different, in her anxieties and feelings typically experienced by other newcomers to the professoriate, especially in the area of scholarly writing. Dr. Ooooo suggested that the Director review Dr. Xxxxx's NCPEA conference materials with the hope of support for initiating a similar program for all non-tenured SOE faculty at SSSS.

The Director saw possibilities in the S.N.A.P. study, and with support from the SSSS School of Education Dean, suggested that a committee of non-tenured peers be organized to design, implement, and evaluate a non-tenured faculty peer mentoring support pilot program. The program would be designed to relieve uncertainties, anxieties, and feelings of isolation that new professors experience, and to encourage scholarly writing productivity. A small monetary commitment was made to support the program. Dr. Xxxxx was invited to SSSS in October, 2008, to meet with the Director and newly formed four-member committee of non-tenured faculty. In addition, she led a brown-bag lunch session for all faculty, describing what UUU had learned from their S.N.A.P. program. In October, 2008, the committee had no name and no definitive goals, but the committee did have an interest and enthusiasm to provide assistance for their peers and themselves on the tenure track journey.

Following Dr. Xxxxx's campus visit, the four-member peer mentoring committee met to establish goals, decide on a project name, and begin work developing an initial needs assessment. They also planned a series

of brown bag lunch and learn experiences for all non-tenured SOE faculty for the Spring 2009 semester. The peer mentoring program committee for non-tenured faculty development agreed on a name: Thinking, Writing, Inquiring, and Learning: A Non-tenured Faculty Peer Mentoring Program—called T.W.I.L. for short. The goals decided upon were:

- (1) Establish a multidisciplinary professional learning community for non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with the purpose of providing professional support for scholarly writing. Participation in the learning community will be voluntary.
- (2) Provide non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with varied opportunities to develop their skills in scholarly writing, submitting articles for publication, and constructing/initiating manuscripts through interactions with faculty mentors, journal editors, and each other.
- (3) Provide non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with materials and tools that will assist them with scholarly writing.
- (4) Develop thinking, writing, inquiry, and learning (T.W.I.L.) circles that meet consistently in order to undertake new efforts that will result in scholarly productivity.

The T.W.I.L. committee met monthly to design and implement a pre- and post non-tenured faculty survey. In addition, four monthly brown bag lunch and learn presentations were planned: Tenure, Promotion, and More (January), Grants 101: Funding Research (February), Resources for Scholars (March), and Perspectives and Directions in Journal Publication: Updates and Tips (April). The brown bag informational sessions were designed to guide and encourage non-tenured faculty at various stages on the tenure track to become more comfortable, informed, and prolific in scholarly writing. Brown bag sessions also provided monthly opportunities for networking among non-tenured and senior faculty. In addition, the T.W.I.L. committee members, representing four of the five SOE departments, established a collegial professional working relationship with the newly appointed SOE Director of Diversity and Faculty Development and among themselves. All non-tenured faculty in the SOE were invited to participate in all T.W.I.L. events and participation was voluntary. Faculty members were not asked to commit to attending any or all of the brown bag sessions.

The T.W.I.L. program was primarily, by design, a peer mentoring program. However, an invitation was extended through the all-school email to all senior faculty members who, on occasion, attended and when requested, served as brown bag session presenters.

The T.W.I.L. initiative provided the venue for this exploratory study. The rationale for the study, literature review, methodology and assessment, results, and discussion of the study follows.

3 Rationale for the Study

Newcomers to higher education continue to be hired for expertise in their field of study. Yet, the same experts, no longer plagued by the anxiety of finding a job, become rank amateurs on the new campus (Menges, 1999). They transform anxiety about being able to “get a job” into anxiety about being able “to keep that job.” They are often frustrated by the differences in their own expectations and the university’s expectations for them (Aguirre, 2000; Johnson & DeSpain, 2004). Nearly all new faculty on tenure tracks experience concerns about meeting established minimum scholarly activity requirements (Turner & Boice, 1987). New faculty are not prepared for this, as noted by Adachi-Mejia (2009): “In academia, a key metric by which professors are measured – prolific writing- is not formally offered in academic training” (p. 6).

In addition, studies show that the presence or absence of collegiality in the higher education setting is a new faculty retention factor (Ambrose, Huston, & Norman, 2005; Zhou & Volkwein, 2004; Erickson & Rodriguez, 1999; Menges, 1999). Turner and Boice (1987) reported that new faculty arrives with high expectations regarding the quality and quantity of collegial interactions with veteran faculty. New faculty members are not proactive in initiating informal professional interaction with colleagues and rarely seek advice. Mentoring is a crucial component of successful faculty careers (Sorcinelli, 1985; Wylie, 1983). Studies have shown that mentoring may have been desired by as many as 86% of new faculty members, but only one-third of them actually had a mentor (Boice, 1992; Bouquillon, Sosik & Lee, 2005). It has been reported that new faculty are often disappointed at the lack of mentoring, support, and encouragement they receive

from their veteran colleagues (Turner & Boice, 1987; Fink, 1984). As new faculty struggle to survive the tenure process, they need support. Support can be provided through mentoring and/or successful faculty development programs – programs built on information gained from those being served. Researchers have concluded that the success of new faculty interventions hinges on a willingness of faculty developers to seek out new faculty and become familiar with their individual needs and concerns (Turner & Boice, 1987).

The T.W.I.L. program, like S.N.A.P., was designed to address the common concerns of non-tenured faculty. All new SSSS SOE faculty members were invited to complete a needs assessment, participate in informational meetings, and network with peers, senior colleagues, seasoned researchers, writers, and editors. The T.W.I.L. program was formed primarily to provide support for increased scholarly writing productivity, a requirement for promotion and retention in every department of the SSSS SOE. However, it also provided a venue for collegiality, mentoring, and stress-relieving support for those in the tenure process.

The T.W.I.L. pilot program was conducted to assess the extent to which the goals of the program were initially being met, to ascertain perceived program development needs and wants of non-tenured faculty at our university, and to provide recommendations to university administration about continuation of the T.W.I.L. project for the 2009-2010 academic year.

4 Literature Review

Every year junior faculty under tenure track contracts throughout the United States arrive in their new positions excited to begin their careers in academia. They have dedicated years to career preparation and are hired for the expertise they bring to the institution. Many soon discover there is a disconnect between their expectations and the expectations of university decision-makers about the retention, promotion, and tenure requirements (Aguirre, 2000; Johnson & DeSpain, 2004). They do not find the quality and quantity of mentoring and collegiality they had expected (Turner & Boice, 1987; Fink, 1984), and they soon transform the stress they once experienced in being able to find a position into stress now related to whether they will be able to keep that position (Menges, 1999). Sanacore (2006) has written that, “the most challenging expectation for junior faculty is getting published” (p. 1). They are faced with the imperative to publish or perish (Glatthorn, 2002; Sanacore, 2006) and do not proactively seek the mentoring, collegiality, and support they need to be successful in their new positions (Turner & Boice, 1987).

In addition, junior faculty members, like all human beings, have three basic psychological needs: to be capable, to be contributing, and to feel connected to others (Adler, 1930). In order for new and junior faculty to be successful, these needs must be met. Newcomers to the professoriate often find themselves wondering whether they are capable of handling the teaching, research, and service requirements of the institution. New professors want to contribute to the work of the department, school, and professional field. They want to feel that their work matters and is going to make a difference. They want to feel connected, and be an engaged part of the faculty. As noted by Xxxxx (2008), “collegiality and feeling connected to others both professionally and personally may seem optional, but studies have found that it enriches the experiences of joining a faculty (p. 9).”

4.1 The Need to be Capable

New faculty need to feel a sense of being capable and competent early in their careers. However, newcomers to higher education are often unclear about retention, promotion and tenure requirements. There is an ambiguity in the professoriate: one is hired for one purpose, expected to carry out another, and prized for achieving a third (Fink, 1984). Teaching, research, and prestige are independent variables. When the new faculty members realize this incongruence, clarify the demands of retention, promotion, and tenure requirements, and understand that institutional expectations may differ from their expectations, they may feel less than competent and capable.

New faculty experience a great deal of job-related stress. In a longitudinal study of new faculty, Sorcinelli (1994) found that unrealistic expectations and inadequate feedback, recognition, and rewards were factors that contributed to new faculty stress. Menges (1999) noted faculty want affirming feedback, telling them

what they are doing right, corrective feedback to help them improve, and clarifying feedback to clarify expectations. They need feedback and want to know if they are viewed as competent.

The kind of feedback sought by new faculty can often be given by a mentor. Boice (1992) reported 86% of new faculty members in his study wanted a mentor, but only one-third of them actually had one. He proposed two reasons for the low frequency of mentoring. First, only a small number of faculty members find a mentor on their own. Secondly, few campuses provide mentoring in a systematic and effective way. In recent years, due to the discovery of the many psychological, social and career-related benefits that mentoring provides for protégés (Bouquillon, Sosik & Lee, 2005), mentoring has received more attention from both researchers and practitioners. However, Boice's (1992) finding of low percentages of faculty actually having mentors is still a reality. Bode (1999) proposes a possible reason why mentoring might not be taking place: "Perhaps newcomers wish to hide their ignorance and uncertainties from members of their own department" (p.124). New faculty may feel vulnerable and have doubts of their capability to meet the tenure process requirements.

If a mentoring program is not in place, new faculty support can be provided. Fink (1984), in his seminal study of new faculty, presented a list of eight types of support that new faculty could receive and asked them to what extent they were given. The supports that could be provided included:

1. being invited to a colleague's classes
2. colleagues offering to visit their classes
3. colleagues discussing general teaching problems
4. colleagues explaining local resources
5. colleagues carefully explaining criteria for performance evaluations
6. colleagues discussing particular courses and teaching
7. colleagues inviting one to professional events
8. colleagues inviting one to social events (p. 51).

New faculty participants in Fink's (1984) study reported low support in all areas. However, in the same study, when senior faculty were asked for their perceptions on how often these supports were offered to new faculty, they perceived that they were provided quite often. One possible explanation for the differences was that faculty who had been in the organization for some time may have believed that such supports were not very important, or that, if they were, newcomers could get them on their own. "However, the new teachers may feel a much stronger need for assistance, and they may not be at all sure how to get it" (Fink, 1984, p.51). Without appropriate and timely feedback, new faculty may feel insecure about their competency.

4.2 The Need to Contribute

Another basic need of all new faculty is the need to contribute professionally to the department, school, and field of study. One of the most daunting challenges in becoming competent as a new professor is the expectation to produce scholarly writing (Sanacore, 2006). Boice (2000), in twenty years of studying new faculty, found that almost all failures of new hires had little to do with lack of expertise in a faculty member's field of study. Instead, failures came from not knowing how to manage enough writing publications in modest amounts of time, as well as not learning how to elicit effective collegial support. In a study by Sorcinelli (1994), many new faculty found that their senior colleagues were generally encouraging, but newcomers did not receive any concrete help with scholarship, such as offers to collaborate on a research program or to review a manuscript or grant proposal, or with teaching e.g., sharing syllabi, and visiting a classroom.

There may be an assumption in higher education that new faculty will arrive knowing how to produce scholarly articles, therefore, help in this area is not provided. Boice (2000) asks:

Why does advice for new faculty often exclude writing? Tradition

assumes that professors already know how to work as writers; new faculty, after all, have almost always written a thesis or dissertation. So, custom limits most advice for new faculty to teaching because teaching seems less sufficiently mastered (p. 103).

In Boice's (2000) study of hundreds of novice professors at a variety of campuses, he found this assumption to be disastrous. The majority of new faculty struggled as beginning scholarly writers. During years one and

two, over two-thirds of them produced nothing that “counted,” despite their plans for substantial output in scholarly writing. For many newcomers, this lack of productivity continued into years three and four, and often well beyond.

Boice (2000) cited reasons why most new faculty struggled with writing. Those reasons included:

1. New faculty did not learn how to write with fluency and constancy in graduate school
2. They too often learned to work in isolation
3. Writing, by nature, seemed difficult to them
4. Writing remained mysterious to them
5. Most had mistaken ideas about the nature of writing
6. They approached writing with all-or-none thinking
7. New faculty feel too busy to write
8. They reject simple, efficient ways of writing as counterintuitive

Boice (2000) found that exemplary new faculty modeled better ways of working at writing. They got writing underway by learning to work in brief, daily sessions that seemed extremely short at first. Their constancy and moderation produced more manuscript pages in the long run, with more likelihood of publication in refereed and prestigious journals. They were able to feel the sense of contribution to the profession through their publications.

4.3 The Need to be Connected

A third need common to all new faculty is the need to feel connected to others. Common first year concerns of new faculty include feelings of loneliness, isolation, and lack of social and intellectual connection to others (Sorcinelli, 1994). Gabelnick et al. (1990) observed that “there is a deep hunger among faculty members for more meaningful, collegial relationships and more conversational structures in our institutions” (p. 86). Yet, there has been relatively little attention paid in the literature to faculty development strategies that assist new faculty members in building skills in collegial networking (Akerlind & Quinlan, 2001).

New faculty desire intellectual companionship. Fink (1984) found that only one-third of new faculty in his study had someone with whom to discuss ideas and professional concerns. Those who did not said that it had a negative effect on their professional satisfaction. Two-thirds of them said that this lack had affected their performance as professors. Participants who had found intellectual companionship received high course evaluations from students and higher assessments from chairpersons and colleagues.

The three human needs of being capable, contributing, and feeling connected (Adler, 1930) are said to be universal. Most faculty in new jobs likely experience these needs, whether or not they are articulated. New faculty need support and encouragement that they do not always receive, as noted by Schuster (1999):

Nurturing faculty may be as old as universities, but its importance, arguably, has never been greater. This assertion is grounded in the confluence of realities: the swiftly changing conditions of the academic life to which the faculty must adapt and the escalating pressures on faculty to produce in terms of both more effective teaching and higher rates of scholarly productivity. The ‘ol treadmill, by almost all accounts, has been gathering speed. Yet the efforts to provide support for the faculty has not been nearly commensurate (p. xiv.)

Providing this support, in the form of a peer mentoring professional learning community faculty development program was the goal of the SSSS T.W.I.L. program.

5 Methodology and Assessment

The T.W.I.L. pilot program was a one-semester exploratory study (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006), using the S.N.A.P. program conducted at UUU during the 2007-2008 academic year as a model. All 29 non-tenured faculty in the SSSS School of Education were invited to participate in all components of the T.W.I.L. program, but not required to commit to participating in any or all components of the program.

A university IRB approval was granted to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. Information from the participants was collected at two stages in the program: An initial needs assessment and a post T.W.I.L. survey. Both electronic surveys were made available to all non-tenured faculty members on the SOE shared network drive and all non-tenured faculty members were invited and encouraged to complete both surveys.

Data were collected to assess any changes in scholarly writing confidence levels and scholarly writing productivity. Data were also collected on the impact that the four brown bag sessions had on non-tenured faculty scholarly writing productivity.

Assessment of T.W.I.L. was based on Berk and Rossi's (1990) concept of program evaluation wherein "... evaluations are concerned with whether or not programs or policies are achieving their goals and purposes" (p. 15.) The previously described T.W.I.L. program goals were established by non-tenured faculty committee members prior to the beginning of the semester. The goals were modeled on the S.N.A.P. goals, but modified to meet the needs and professional support areas of the T.W.I.L. non-tenured faculty committee members and their peer colleagues at SSSS.

5.1 Needs Assessment

The initial electronic survey (needs assessment) was designed by the T.W.I.L. committee, posted on the SOE shared network drive in late January, and left open for non-tenured faculty input until mid April (See Appendix A). The purpose of the initial survey was five-fold: (1) To gather demographic information from the 29 non tenured faculty members in the School of Education, (2) to find out non-tenured faculty confidence in four areas of scholarly writing (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion), (3) to gather their self-reported performance rating as a scholarly writer, (4) to assess their current and past publication record, and (5) to glean answers from two open-ended questions: What topics would you like to be covered to improve your performance as a scholarly writer? and What do you expect to gain from attending the meetings?

5.2 Post T.W.I.L. Final Survey

The four-member T.W.I.L. committee designed and orchestrated the four brown bag sessions based on their personal professional non-tenured faculty experiences and what they "heard" from their non-tenured colleagues. The sessions were designed to address basic, generic informational needs of non-tenured faculty. The post -T.W.I.L. survey was designed to evaluate the impact of the brown bag sessions on participants' scholarly activity, along with gathering information on scholarly publication confidence and productivity (See Appendix B).

The data from both surveys were analyzed for patterns and trends using basic statistical procedures (Gravette & Wallnau, 2007), and the text data was aggregated by two T.W.I.L. committee members agreeing on common themes generated from initial survey open ended questions. Data from both surveys was analyzed to develop a specific plan recommendation for a full-year peer mentoring program for the 2009-2010 school year.

6 Results

6.1 Survey Respondents

There were 29 potential T.W.I.L. participants in five School of Education departments. Participation in survey completions and/or participation in any or all of the brown bag sessions was voluntary. The only commitments made to the T.W.I.L. program were those of the four non-tenured faculty members who became the core of the peer mentoring professional development initiative. Hence, those who responded to the surveys were not necessarily the same respondents: 19 (65.5%) responded to the needs assessment initial survey and 15 (51.7%) responded to the T.W.I.L. post survey; however, only 12 (41.4%) of the non tenured faculty responded to both surveys.

Descriptive data for all surveys

		Survey		
Department	# non-tenured	Initial	Post	Both
C&I	5	2	1	1
EL	5	5	3	3
Psych	7	7	5	5
SECD	8	5	4	3
KHE	4	0	2	0
Total	29	19 (65.5%)	15 (51.7%)	12 (41.4%)
Female		52.6%	53.3%	41.7%

Table 1

At least 40% of the non-tenured faculty in each department participated in the initial survey with the exception of Kinesiology and Health Education department (n=0). In addition, there was at least one non-tenured faculty member from each department who participated in the post-survey. None of the non-tenured faculty members from KHE completed both surveys. On the other hand, there was at least one representative from the other four departments who completed both surveys. Lastly, there was an equal number of males and females who responded to the initial and post surveys and slightly more males responded to both surveys.

6.2 Initial Survey/Needs Assessment

Qualitative Findings

Responses to the question, “What would you like to have covered to improve your performance as a scholarly writer?” were reviewed by two members of the T.W.I.L. committee and five topics emerged from the 23 comments from 19 respondents: Non-tenured faculty want help in (1) developing ideas, writing, and analyzing data (N=10), (2) collaboration opportunities (N=5), (3) Mentorship (N=2), (4) finding the right journal for publications (N=2), and (5) time management (N=2). Two respondents were unsure or did not know what they wanted to be addressed to assist them with their scholarly publications. Faculty wrote comments such as, “I would like to receive inservice in writing qualitative research, including, but not limited to, biographical writing and the use of interview in qualitative writing.” They also wanted help in “finding a mentor” and “how to prioritize papers.”

Eleven of the twenty-one responses to the question, “What do you expect to gain from attending the meetings?” contained comments about achieving publishing success and manuscript feedback. 10% (N=2) of the responses cited learning about the tenure process requirements and 10% (N=2) noted they expected to find collaborative opportunities and collegial relationships from attending the meetings. In addition, 5% (N=1) of the responses indicated peer mentoring was expected and 5% (N=1) specifically named grant writing knowledge as expected outcomes from attending the T.W.I.L. meetings. 15% (N=3) of the respondents expressed uncertainty of their expectations. Some examples of comments related to what faculty expected included, “Knowledge of the rules of the tenure journey,” “Support in my writing, new information, wisdom from seasoned professionals,” and “Exchanging ideas and getting inspiration.”

Initial Survey Descriptive

In addition to collecting demographic data, the initial needs assessment survey collected respondents' confidence in writing the introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections of scholarly publications. In the aggregate, 100% of the respondents felt at least moderately confident in writing the introduction,

90% felt at least moderately confident in writing the methods and results, and 95% reported being at least moderately confident in writing the discussion.

On a one to ten point scale, respondents were asked to rate their performance as a scholarly writer. One respondent did not respond to this question. Of the faculty members who responded, no one rated themselves between one and three, 5.6% (N=1) rated him or herself as a four, 88.9% (N=16) of the respondents rated themselves as “mediocre,” i.e. in the five to eight range, and no one rated themselves as a nine. One individual (N=1) rated him or herself as a perfect ten (5.6%).

Respondents were asked to give the number of current publications to their credit, the number of publications submitted, and the number of articles published last semester (Fall, 2008). Current publications for the 19 initial survey respondents ranged from 0-15 with a mean score of 5.17. Publications submitted last semester (Fall, 2008) ranged from 0-4 with a mean of 1.68. The number of articles published last semester (Fall, 2008) ranged between 0-3 with a mean score of 0.94.

Change Analysis

The post T.W.I.L. survey was designed to assess four areas: (1) confidence in ability to write each section of a manuscript on his/her own, (2) performance as a scholarly writer, (3) respondent’s publication record, and (4) evaluation of the impact each of the four brown bag informational sessions had on the respondent’s scholarly writing. In order to compare the pre and post survey results of respondents’ confidence in writing, confidence as a writer, and scholarly submissions and publications, only the results of the 12 non tenured faculty responding to both surveys are reported (See Table 2).

Means and standard deviations for the scholarly writing questions in the pre- and post survey.

	Pre (SD)	Range	Post (SD)	Range
Introduction	4.42 (0.90)	3-5	4.50 (0.67)	3-5
Methods	3.92 (1.17)	2-5	4.25 (0.75)	3-5
Results	3.75 (1.22)	2-5	4.25 (0.87)	3-5
Discussion	4.17 (0.72)	3-5	4.33 (0.78)	3-5
Overall	6.36 (1.21)	4-8	6.67 (1.44)	3-8
Submissions	1.50 (1.09)	0-3	1.17 (0.72)	0-2
Publications*	0.73 (0.79)	0-2	1.00 (1.21)	0-3
*One participant did not respond to this question				

Table 2

There was no change in the respondents’ confidence in their ability to write each section of a manuscript over the one semester program implementation. Although changes were not statistically significant, the “results” change score was approaching significance ($p=.082$). Whether this change is due to T.W.I.L. or not cannot be determined from this pilot study. Furthermore, the change in overall confidence as a writer rating and the number of submissions and/or publications were not statistically significant

The final segment of the post T.W.I.L. survey was designed to give the respondents an opportunity to evaluate the impact, if any, of the four brown bag sessions on their scholarly writing productivity (see Table 3).

Impact ratings for the four Brown Bags.

	BB1 (n=8)	BB2 (n=5)	BB3 (n=4)	BB4 (n=6)
None	1	1	0	1
2	0	1	0	0
3	0	0	1	0
Moderate	1	1	1	0
5	2	2	1	0
6	1	0	1	2
Substantial	3	0	0	3
Average (SD)	5.50 (2.05)	3.40 (1.82)	4.50 (1.29)	5.67 (2.34)

Table 3

Note: BB1=Tenure, Promotion, and More; BB2=Grants 101:Funding Research; BB3= Resources for Scholars; BB4= Perspectives and Directions in the Current Publication Process

The brown bag sessions were titled: “Tenure, Promotion, and More,” “Grants 101: Funding Research,” “Resources for Scholars,” and “Perspective and Directions in the Current Publication Process.” Participants were asked to rate the impact on their scholarly writing of each session on a one-to-seven scale: one represented “no impact,” four represented “moderate” impact, and seven represented “substantial” impact. Overall, three of the four brown bags were rated as having more than a moderate impact on individuals’ scholarly writing.

7 Discussion

The response to the formation of the Thinking, Writing, Inquiring, and Learning: A Peer Mentoring Program for Non-tenured Faculty has been positive. The T.W.I.L. committee developed a professional learning community among themselves resulting in peer mentoring for scholarly writing among committee members representing four of the five SOE departments. Comments from brown bag sessions attendees, especially those who attended the Tenure, Promotion and More session were overwhelmingly positive. Comments from non-tenured and tenured faculty who participated in T.W.I.L. were positive about having the opportunity to hear requirements and expectations of tenure and promotion in one setting. Inviting all faculty to T.W.I.L. brown bag sessions and involving senior faculty in the session presentations gave junior faculty opportunities to network among themselves and with senior faculty across disciplines.

T.W.I.L. was a one semester pilot program designed as an exploratory study to gather information as the semester progressed about non-tenured faculty’s needs, interests, writing confidence, scholarly writing productivity and non-tenured faculty response to structured brown bag lunch and learn sessions. The lessons learned will enrich future T.W.I.L. activities. For example, having a pre-set, established T.W.I.L. professional development time on the SOE calendar will set aside and protect the time non-tenured faculty have committed to the T.W.I.L. program. The Dean has already made this accommodation to the 2009-2010 SOE academic calendar.

The proof of the T.W.I.L. administrative support and effectiveness can be measured in university SOE leadership commitment to continuing and expanding the T.W.I.L. program and the scholarly writing productivity of the participants – the core purpose for creating the peer mentoring program.

The Dean of the SOE has included the T.W.I.L. program continuance as one of the school’s goals for the 2009-2010 academic year. The Associate Dean for Diversity and Faculty Development provided a positive

evaluation of the group's work by stating, "The Dean is very excited and supportive of the T.W.I.L. program and has included T.W.I.L. in her School of Education goals for the 2009-2010 academic year." (Dr. Bill Searcy, personal communication, July 13, 2009). Perhaps the greatest indicator of success is the willingness of non-tenured faculty serving on the T.W.I.L. committee to continue serving in this leadership service capacity.

The following is a recap of the four goals of the Teaching, Writing, Inquiring, and Learning: A Peer Mentoring Program for Non-tenured Faculty and the notation of their achievement:

7.1 Goal 1

Establish a multidisciplinary professional learning community for non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with the purpose of providing professional support for scholarly writing. Participation in the learning community will be voluntary. MET: The T.W.I.L. committee was formed and monthly meetings held.

7.2 Goal 2

Provide non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with varied opportunities to develop their skills in scholarly writing, submitting articles for publication, and constructing/initiating manuscripts through interactions with faculty mentors, journal editors, and each other. MET: A variety of programs through the brown bag lunch and learn programs were offered throughout the semester (see Description of the Project).

7.3 Goal 3

Provide non-tenured faculty in the School of Education with materials and tools that will assist them with scholarly writing. MET: The Director of Diversity and Faculty Development, with funding from the Dean, established a professional library. The library is maintained outside his office for easy accessibility. The library contains books such as *Faculty in New Jobs*, *Advice for New Faculty Members*, *The Work of Writing*, and the *Publish & Flourish* text and DVD. The education research librarian conducted one of the brown bag sessions- Resources for Scholars - wherein multiple resources for scholarly writing were explained. *Cabell's Directories* are available for all faculty use.

7.4 Goal 4

Develop thinking, writing, inquiry, and learning (T.W.I.L.) circles that meet consistently in order to undertake new efforts that will result in scholarly productivity. NOT MET: The T.W.I.L. committee decided early in the semester that trying to achieve all goals during the pilot semester was too ambitious. It was decided to table this goal, garner information from the initial and post T.W.I.L. surveys, and focus on this goal for the 2009-2010 full-year T.W.I.L. initiative.

Ultimately, in the minds of the authors and T.W.I.L. committee members, the group was formed to give support and encouragement to non-tenured faculty so they might experience connection, capability, and contribution. The positive working relationship among the T.W.I.L. committee members is an affirmation of the power of peer mentoring over a period of time as short as five months. Evidence of this is the fact that two committee members worked together to present at a state conference and two worked in a mentoring relationship resulting in a reflective paper being accepted for publication. The encouragement and support from the Dean and the positive comments from session panelists and participants encourage the continuation and expansion of the T.W.I.L. program.

8 Summary

When new faculty enter into a tenure track position at SSSS, they are expected to accomplish the work of writing and publishing in an effective and timely manner. Non-tenured faculty in new jobs at the university

come with varied backgrounds, confidence and experience in scholarly writing, and willingness to participate in structured support programs.

The T.W.I.L program provided structure and tangible support for helping junior faculty clarify university expectations for retention, promotion, and tenure. The program provided multiple opportunities for non-tenured faculty in the school of education to increase their knowledge, resources and skills to increase scholarly writing productivity.

The primary purposes of T.W.I.L were (1) to learn from non-tenured faculty what faculty development needs they had and (2) to provide support and encouragement to non-tenured faculty so they might experience capability, contribution, and connection with the ultimate goal of increasing scholarly publications. Boice (1991) tracked four successive cohorts of new faculty at a large state university and found that “new faculty needed at least three years to feel a real part of campus (p. 49)”. T.W.I.L. was piloted for only one semester, but it was clearly ascertained that continued peer mentoring, faculty development support, and encouragement for faculty new to the professoriate is needed, wanted and recommended.

Next steps in subsequent years of T.W.I.L. will likely include:

1. continuation of the professional learning community monthly meetings focusing on topics recommended by non-tenured faculty,
2. development of T.W.I. L. professional writing communities,
3. collaboration between participants in new research programs in the School of Education across disciplines and across the SSSS campus,
4. co-authoring endeavors among participants,
5. sharing of “best practices” from this program with the professional community at large at regional and national conferences and international presentations,
6. celebrating ceremonially as each T.W.I.L. member attains tenure and promotion, and
7. continually adding members to the cohort of new faculty T.W.I.L. members.

The initiators of the T.W.I.L., like those of the S.N.A.P. program at the University of Xyyyy, are committed to continuing a program of peer mentoring which offers support for new faculty to become competent, contributing, and connected published authors.

[Click Here to access Appendix A-Initial Needs Assessment Survey²](#)

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²See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m32617/latest/AppendixA.pdf>

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³<http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/spring2006/Sanacore.html>