

Title:

Faculty Academy at Washington and Lee University

Leader:

Jeff Overholtzer, joverholtzer@wlu.edu

Abstract:

Faculty Academy will consist of a two-week program of workshops, including a keynote speaker and focused sessions featuring information technologists, faculty members and librarians as co-presenters. The workshops will help faculty members hone their information fluency so that they are better equipped to incorporate information fluency elements in their classes. A follow-up component will deploy students to help faculty members continue curricular projects started during the Academy. In addition to directly assisting faculty members, these students will act as peer mentors for students in courses taught by those faculty members.

Description, including rationale:

Faculty Academy is an ambitious program of linked activities, with several goals:

- to ensure course redesign is accomplished for sound pedagogical reasons
- to equip faculty members with technology and information fluency skills. Faculty members must be proficient in the use of information technologies to find, analyze and present information so that they can incorporate these activities in their courses
- to provide ongoing assistance to faculty members in their efforts to enhance and incorporate information fluency in their courses

The following elements will be included in Faculty Academy – to be held in August 2002 – in order to achieve those goals:

1. Keynote speech by Randy Bass, (or similar expert in use of technology for teaching, learning, and acquiring information fluency). He will describe a process of instructional design and provide specific guidelines on setting pedagogical goals.
2. Following the presentation, instructional technologists will meet with faculty members and help them devise a plan for implementation of technologies in specific fall course. The plan will include a recommendation for attendance of specific workshops during the Academy.
3. A series of hands-on workshops will be held. Workshops with a particular emphasis on information fluency are indicated with a red asterisk (*)Examples:
 - a. **Copyright considerations in producing course materials.** Practical guidance by librarians on use of text, images and other materials to conform with Fair Use provisions of copyright law. *Taught by librarian.*
 - b. **Technology in the classroom.** Learn how to use technology available in many University classrooms on the undergraduate campus, including VCR and DVD players, computer and projection device and touch-panel controls. Learn procedures to reserve a technology-equipped classroom or to arrange for deployment of equipment such as a laptop computer and portable projector in any classroom. *Co-taught by instructional technologist and faculty member*

- c. **Course assessment with Flashlight Online.** Create on-line student surveys for course assessment with Flashlight online. Choose from more than 500 validated questions or create original ones. Data from the surveys is compiled and can be analyzed on-line. *Co-taught by instructional technologist and faculty member*
 - d. *** Doing research with online surveys.** Instruction in use of survey software, and guidance on survey design and implementation for academic research by faculty and students. *Co-taught by instructional technologist and faculty member*
 - e. *** Web publishing track.** Series of workshops on use of Web tools for teaching and learning, to include: Publishing materials with FrontPage; Options for creation of "electronic reserve" materials for courses; Web-based class discussions. *Co-taught by instructional technologists, librarians and faculty members.*
 - f. *** Quantitative analysis track.** Instruction in use of quantitative and statistical tools for teaching and learning. Includes instruction in use of software such as Excel, Mini-tab and SPSS as well as in use of library databases to find quantitative data. *Co-taught by instructional technologists, librarians and faculty members*
4. Student assistants will be available for technical assistance and hands-on help to participants in Faculty Academy. Survey data on technology education activities show a strong need for follow-up assistance after workshops. Students trained by and working under the direction instructional technologists and librarians would help provide that assistance. This aspect of Faculty Academy provides a more general implementation of the successful ACS Information Fluency grant project, "Using Peer Mentors to Promote Information Fluency," which was implemented in winter term 2002 at Washington and Lee. In that project, student mentors helped equip students in a statistics class with research, data analysis and data presentation skills.
5. Follow-up: faculty demonstrations. Our experience shows that events that facilitate informal sharing of information concerning instructional technology are a valuable adjunct to formal events such as workshops. The "Users of Web in Teaching" group (see <http://wlu.edu/~wit>) has exposed more than 100 faculty participants to specific uses of instructional technology, with frank discussion of successes and failures. The presentations by faculty members, which are documented on a Website, show specific uses of technology in a course setting and can be readily adapted by other faculty member in their courses. One weakness in the program is that faculty presenters have not always invested adequate time and effort to document their efforts in a way that others can learn from these efforts. Stipends would be provided to faculty presenters as an incentive for them to prepare reports following a carefully prescribed outline (pedagogical goals, reasons for use of specific technologies in the course, assessment information, including successes and failures). These reports on the Web will be available not only to the W&L community but also to all ACS institutions.

Promotion and planning:

A four-member Technology Education group (a subcommittee of W&L's Academic Computing Advisory Committee) already is providing guidance on all aspects of Faculty Academy, including content, organization and promotion.

Faculty Academy organizers will use well-established channels for the promotion of such events. These channels include Web pages (see <http://computing.wlu.edu/services/training/index.html> for example), Campus Notices (a type of broadcast e-mail) and paper mailings.

All events, including detailed outlines, will be available on the Web for use by faculty participants as well as faculty members in other ACS institutions. This material, in combination with the Web-based faculty presentations described in point 5 above, will provide ample materials to ACS institutions desiring to borrow and learn from the events of Faculty Academy.