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Faculty Development and Student Learning

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Faculty Development and Student Learning

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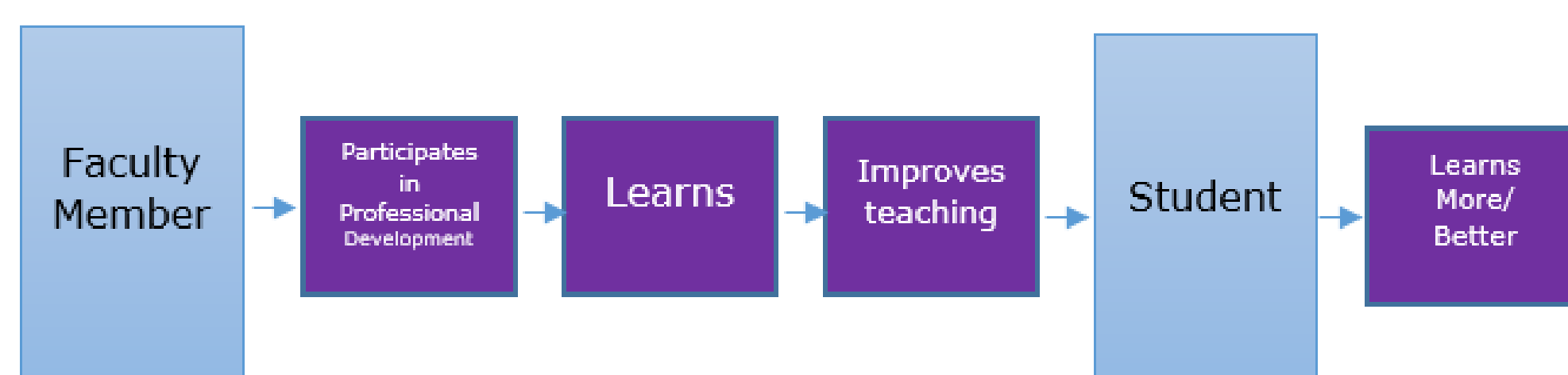


Abstract

Does faculty development impact student learning? Most faculty in higher education want to improve their teaching skillsets and they participate in the faculty development program offered by their institution. Most faculty also devote time outside of a formal faculty development program to improve their teaching skillsets. What are the impacts of these efforts on student learning?

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) uses an end-of-course evaluation form in all faculty development courses. The Center further requests that participants in instructional practices courses complete a 60-day follow-up evaluation that asks the faculty member to reflect on course content, how the course impacted them professionally, and how their participation in class and new knowledge has impacted student learning. Participants are also asked to provide examples of how they have been able to apply what was learned.

Direct Path Model



The Direct Path Model shows a logic model connecting professional faculty development to improved student learning (Condon, 2016).

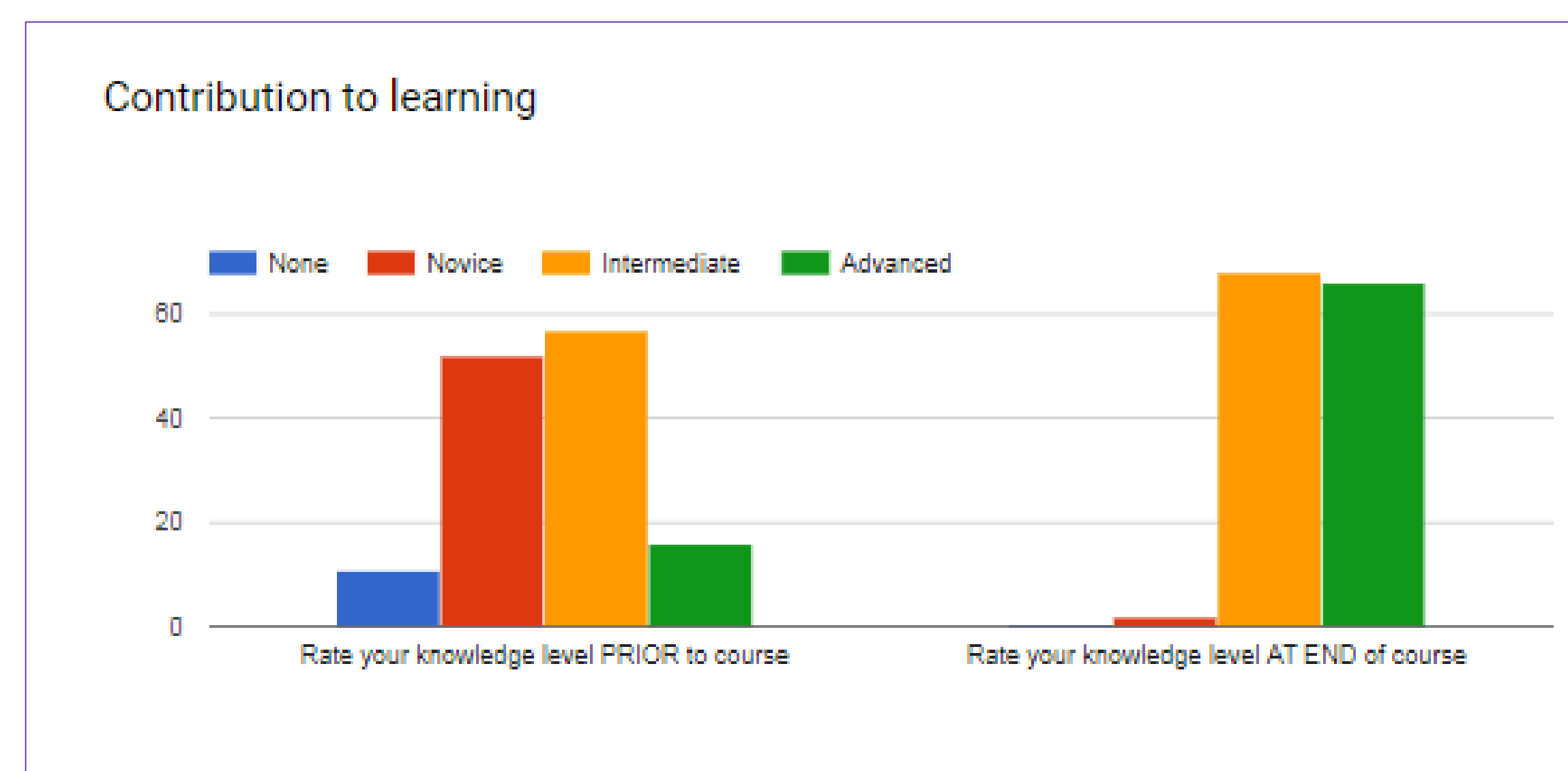
Hypothesis

Faculty members can learn to become more effective teachers. Faculty development has measurable impacts on teaching. Both statements are made in Faculty Development and Student Learning: Assessing the Connections (Condon, 2016).

Results

Condon (2016) goes on to report that (1) faculty consistently self-report learning gains aligned with workshop goals at the end of faculty development experiences, and (2) that faculty members can look back at past development opportunities and describe changes in their teaching aligned with these goals.

In the Center for Teaching Excellence, we ask faculty members to rate their knowledge level prior to and at the end of a course. The chart below shows consistent progression between levels.



The Center for Teaching Excellence

The Center for Teaching Excellence offers 15 faculty development courses to improve faculty skill sets and enrich the teaching toolkit of our faculty members. Here are some responses from the 60-day follow-up evaluations:

- “I plan to revise my PowerPoints with less verbiage and more pictures, and use more real-world examples in recorded presentations.”
- “Most valuable was re-thinking and re-considering how feedback to students is vital to their development.”
- “I have used a lot more feedforward in my teaching this past semester and have provided more examples to students.”
- “First, to understand my preference of cognitive apprenticeship and, second, to realize how one can alter the pedagogy to fit the class being taught.”
- “This course gave me an opportunity to teach an online class to students from another country. The course prepared me in understanding the culture as well as how to communicate to global learners.”
- “I have been able to use the information learned about my skills to continue to challenge myself to grow professionally. I am more mindful of how I might interact with students and colleagues and help them grow as well.”

For more information on our courses, visit our website at <https://institute.franklin.edu/page/Center-Teaching-Excellence-Faculty-Development>.

Three Challenges

A study of Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education members (Sorcinelli, 2006) found that the top three challenges confronting faculty members and the most important issues to address through faculty development services and activities are:

1. The need to engage in learner-centered teaching
2. The integration of technology into teaching and learning
3. The assessment of learning outcomes

CTE Addresses Challenges

The Center for Teaching Excellence at Franklin University strives to address the challenges faced by our full-time and adjunct faculty members. We provide instruction on all three of the topics reported by POD (see Three Challenges, left) as well as offer a Resource Repository of materials to strengthen knowledge on a wide variety of topics. For more information, visit the Resource Repository at <https://institute.franklin.edu/all-cte-resources>.

References

- Condon, W. (2016). *Faculty development and student learning: assessing the connections*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372>
- Sorcinelli, M. (2006). *Faculty development: The challenge going forward*. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/faculty-development-challenge-going-forward>

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