

**EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF TERTIARY LEARNERS: STRATEGIES AND
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Opportunities for tertiary researchers to engage in professional growth episodes of a purely academic and curricular nature may be abundant and effective. Not so common, however, are opportunities through which university teachers may participate in long term, nonthreatening professional development initiatives to examine, compare, and improve their skills of instruction. The Teaching In Focus Project at The University of Lethbridge was a three-year project intended to facilitate an interfaculty educative dialogue specific to present and potential teaching effectiveness. This paper studies a variety of teaching characteristics contributing to optimum learning in a tertiary environment, and then examines the experiences of several University of Lethbridge professors as they attempt to parallel their own teaching habits with these characteristics of effectiveness. In addition, it links their experiences during the Teaching In Focus process with conditions highlighted in other effective professional development initiatives, and uses this comparison as a basis for the consideration of several facilitative conditions necessary for effective teaching-focused professional development at the tertiary level. Links are formed between research findings and reviewed literature in order to suggest conclusions regarding the question, “In what way is university teaching effectiveness impacted by participation in faculty development programs that promote professional self-examination, collaboration, and action research?”

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INTRODUCTION

Institutionally widespread and fiscally supported programs with the intent of enhancing professional growth of tertiary educators specific to teaching effectiveness have often been difficult to identify in North American universities. For a number of reasons examined more thoroughly in the literature segment of this study, teaching improvement initiatives are frequently short-term ventures, externally imposed, and punitive in nature, characteristics which can create a reluctance by some administrative and tenured personnel to encourage their conception and sustainability. However, in cases where long term, voluntary, and affirming efforts have been documented, gains in teaching effectiveness as perceived by participants, peers, and students have been significant, as has been the valuing of professional collegial interaction, reflection, and collaborative debriefing. In examining the professional development process of instructors at the tertiary level, this document will begin with an overview of one such initiative at The University of Lethbridge. It will then proceed by reviewing a body of literature relevant to the relationship between teaching effectiveness and professional growth involvement. Next, an explanation of the method of data collection will be outlined, accompanied by an interpretation of findings collected through interviews and artifact analysis. Lastly, links will be formed between research findings and highlights of the reviewed literature to suggest conclusions regarding the question, “In what ways is university teaching effectiveness impacted by participation in faculty development programs that promote professional self-examination, collaboration, and action research?”

The Teaching in Focus initiative was created as an opportunity for professors and instructors to meet in a nonjudgmental forum for the purpose of examining their teaching practice. Members of the group met frequently and regularly over a three-year period to engage in a cyclical process involving self-reflection, shared educative dialogue, exploration, and implementation of researched teacher effectiveness strategies. Participants brought a variety of disciplinary expertises to the group as a whole. Thus, barometers of effective teaching and assessments of success of the initiative were not linked to any one particular departmental area, but rather viewed transcendentally as contributing to raising the educative knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the larger academic community of the host university. In the reflective stage, participants deliberated individually, and then as a group, on semi-autobiographical themes such as “Why do I teach?”, “How do I teach?” and, “What do I want to change about my teaching?” In the initial absence of a common educative language, these discussions were of a nature that illustrated general inexperience in intercollegiality and analysis specific to teaching. Existing protocols for collegial teaching dialogues were limited, as were experiential contexts and frameworks for professional goal setting specific to teaching effectiveness at the tertiary level, resulting in a fragmentation of understanding surrounding the practice of teaching. During this shared dialogical phase, participants recognized the critical nature of professional intercollegial trust, and were encouraged to practice and refine skills characteristic of an “objective supporter,” including suspension of judgement; authentic curiosity and listening; and assumption of ownership for one’s teaching choices.

Analysis of videotaped teaching incidents, peer observations, team teaching, and this reflection and educative dialogue combined with the expertise offered by Faculty of Education members to provide impetus for the examination of a body of research surrounding pedagogical thought. Members organized and attended seminars that addressed teaching issues. Several spoke at conferences to share their experiences of educational growth while others articulated their learnings through journal submissions. The result of this examination was a return to the reflection stage--now with an added element of heightened awareness, knowledge, and ownership. From this cycle emerged an ability of the group to identify its collective purpose: "The authentic affirmation of colleagues in their efforts to improve teaching." As well, members identified five specific goals relative to that purpose, namely:

1. To define parameters of ownership and responsibility in teaching
2. To use an action-research model as a method of inquiry
3. To engage in an investigation of student evaluation issues
4. To create a climate of collaborative collegiality
5. To enhance opportunities to improve teaching

Subsequently, a relatively long term and broad based commitment was established to engage in continued efforts that would improve individual teaching effectiveness and professional growth plans.

As much as possible, the Teaching in Focus group functioned relatively autonomously. From its conception, its existence was supported by both the Dean of Education and, in a limited fiscal sense, by the office of a senior university administrator who viewed the initiative as "an organic movement to achieve a change in culture." As

with counterparts in some of the most successful professional growth programs, each of these leaders chose strategies to affirm the important work of the project without exercising immediate or autocratic control over its evolution. One result of this, and many other similar initiatives where a public administrative sanctioning exists for attempts to increase teaching effectiveness, was the expansion of membership in the group to 22 faculty members through invitational, and voluntary recruitment. As the academic community witnessed this validation of efforts to nurture thoughtful and innovative research-based teaching, so too did many of them come to view as important the observation, discussion, exploration, and understanding of teaching and learning within their university context.

The Teaching in Focus cohort created a nonthreatening, professional environment in which members became familiar with collecting their own teaching experiences as data to inspire an action-research investigation. Although participants represented six distinct faculties, diversity of membership contributed to a uniform and well-substantiated teaching-learning-teaching praxis often characteristic of successful professional growth programs. Furthermore, diversity of content expertise and pedagogical knowledge strengthened group commitment to seek a common educative dialogue that would facilitate the unique needs of individuals in their pursuit of teaching excellence, while simultaneously creating a general technical awareness common to the experience of teaching rather than discipline. (For a detailed outline of representative TIF activities, refer to Appendix A.) As observed by Edgerton (1990, p. 1),

Faculty members come to us strong in content and blissfully ignorant of anything having to do with theories of learning or strategies of teaching rooted in

pedagogical knowledge. In their knowledge of their disciplines, as the old saying goes, they stand on the shoulders of giants. In their knowledge of teaching, they stand on the ground.

All too often this lack of foundational pedagogical knowledge and teaching experience renders tertiary teachers defenseless against attacks of their teaching effectiveness, and often results in consequent defensiveness towards remediation and growth opportunities. Although professional development programs may be available to encourage change and growth, participation is commonly sporadic and short term.

This study will examine the intriguing praxis of teaching and learning among a group of professors participating in a process of professional self-examination of their instructional effectiveness within the Teaching in Focus Project. Its intent is to inquire into the process of collaborative reflection and awareness of instructional activities through which a number of university teachers analyze, then reconstruct and reinterpret their teaching experiences, and, further, to contrast and compare data with a body of research surrounding professional development and teacher effectiveness at the tertiary level. The standard field interview case study method examines the professional practice of several university instructors who voluntarily participated in an ongoing faculty development program with the intent of examining their own teaching practices. Although the qualitative nature of the investigation assumes a certain inductivity, it focuses on the question, "In what ways is university teacher effectiveness impacted by participation in faculty development programs that promote professional self-examination, collaboration, and action research?" More germane to success of future extensions of this study are attempts to illustrate how the processes experienced by the

Teaching in Focus cohort parallel those identified in documented efforts in other academic communities, and how other similar efforts may be successfully initiated and prolonged.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is little revelation or controversy in the assertion that education at all levels is presently undergoing systemic change. Some view this change as apocalyptic, while others assert that it is metamorphic. Some attribute political motives to change; others view it as a reflection of larger sociocultural phenomena. Regardless of the nature of transition, several directions have been advanced to guide this change, including integration of technology, revisions of curriculum, creation of unique learning populations, altered leadership styles, and re-enveloping of funding. In the past, while tertiary education institutions may have appeared immune to many of these external considerations, (they were seen, in fact, as some of the last bastions of self-contained tranquility, tradition, and status quo) that may not be said to have held true in this last decade. Postsecondary institutions are now feeling a pressure similar to that experienced for many years by publicly funded primary and secondary education programs to do “more with less.” At the same time, they are searching for ways, strategically and proactively, to manage the intrusion of corporatism into their hallowed halls. Whereas in other eras most students sat through lectures designed to stimulate passive intellectual curiosity, often with the goal of perpetuating or contributing to a body of knowledge specific to one discipline, more recently, “clients” or “consumers” have begun to demand

more efficient “information delivery systems” to ensure maximum “value” from their education, with a view towards improving their “marketability.”

The original concept of “university” was not necessarily one of special community development, but rather a quest for discovery and scholarly excellence. Even before the impact of Greeks and Romans, Confucius articulated the vision that all citizens could engage in the investigation of higher level thinking and more remote ideals than were present in their otherwise utilitarian lives. When Plato and other ancient Greeks established their secluded and monastic institutions of higher learning, they removed the “groves of academe” (Clinchy, 1994) from mainstream education and, consequently, from such mundane realities as accountability. Since that time, the chasm between post-secondary institutions and those of “lower learning” has transcended that original physical isolation to one of perceived intellectual and ethical superiority. A central philosophy of that isolation was a quest for the learned elite to deal less with workday realities and more with abstraction and theory, over time resulting in a closed and highly traditional society that was almost impervious to external changes. If universities historically have been intransigent to a point of near-stagnation, the present “looking glass” atmosphere may cause an even greater turning inward. More optimistically, however, it may provide enormous opportunities for growth of function in the institution itself and, more importantly, among individual members.

Perhaps one of the most damaging incongruencies of function in postsecondary systems is the conflict between two components of a professor’s job: between teaching and researching. As Ison (1995) states, “This distinction gives rise to particular practices, reward systems, and clichéd arguments of the value/importance of one, the other, or

both.” In reference to the value of action research in moderating this conflict, Emerson (1996) suggests that the internal structure and values of postsecondary institutions, particularly in regards to tenureship qualifications, are factors that may inhibit, or even disallow, conciliation between the two activities.

Yet, even in a rather hostile anti-education environment, it is the teaching aspect of professorship that is currently experiencing an insurgence of attention and innovation. As Lewis and Duffy (1996) point out, “Good teaching is in vogue again...” (p. 641). If effectiveness and inspiration in teaching are, in fact, “in vogue,” then the use of multiple teaching methodologies at the tertiary level may come to be seen as not just a pleasant diversion for students and instructors, but a necessity in optimizing the student learning that Plato and many other master teachers have sought.

It is the intent of this review to provide a synopsis of historical and recent observations regarding effective tertiary teaching, focussing primarily on the following three issues: (1) What teaching strategies are most favored by postsecondary instructors and what additional strategies are seen to be most contributive to effective learning? (2) What learning experiences do university and college students most frequently perceive as inadequate? (3) What faculty development models are used most frequently and appear most effective in improving undergraduate teaching?

In the broadest sense, this overview will seek to confirm the proposition of William Butler Yeats that teaching is not merely “...the filling of the pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

Changing Roles

All teaching strategies were known at the epoch of Aristotle,
but educators are only now discovering them.
All learning strategies were known at the epoch of Aristotle,
but students are seldom allowed to discover them.
Teaching is hard work--it is also fun.
Learning is fun--it is also hard work.
The teacher works harder than the student, therefore, has more fun.
Students who don't have fun learning, don't respond to teaching.
Students who have fun learning, don't need teaching.
Therefore, there is no such thing as teaching-
There is only learning.

E. Hussain, University of New Brunswick

This quotation adeptly illustrates an intricate and complex praxis within the learning and teaching relationship. The implication that teaching and learning are cyclical and dynamic activities engaged in by students and instructors alike is certainly a departure from more traditional views of instructorship. Historically, established views of the activities associated with teaching as being essentially monostrategic and disciplinarian may be likened to "...the systematic beating of learning into dumb subjects" (Eble, 1988b, p. 3). Embedded in this view is the anticipation that the activities of learning and teaching are frequently and predictably as painful as a "beating" for participants, and should be avoided if possible, or endured at best. Behaviors characteristic of avoidance or endurance are commonly observed among professors on whom classroom responsibilities are forced, particularly if they interrupt other scholarly activities perceived to be of greater importance. In fact, The Holmes Report (1986) refers to the status of tertiary teaching as "dreary." It contends that universities "strive to hire qualified academic specialists, who know their subjects well and do distinguished research. But few of these specialists know how to teach well, and many seem not to care" (p. 16). Within this type of system that has routinely devalued teaching effectiveness at the expense of almost any form of research, this web of beliefs-- although

disturbing to educators-- is hardly surprising; nor is persistence of the “tried and true” strategy of incessant lecture. Rejection of the usefulness of teaching activities other than lecture frequently implies dismissal of the concept that perpetual cause and effect inextricably link teaching and learning. As Angelo (1990) suggests, “Teaching without learning is just talking. It is common practice, nonetheless, for faculty to assume that when we are...talking, our students are learning...” (p. 75). Similarly, Erickson (1984) contends that “teaching, therefore, involves considerably more than detailing the instructional techniques of telling things to students” (p. 2).

Contemporary views of a teaching/learning relationship characterized by pluralism and interdependency rather than homogeneity and irrelevance are causing reflection among some college and university instructors on their knowledge-disseminating activities, and a questioning of whether those activities are of an authentic teaching nature. Just as learner characteristics are diverging, so too might views of teaching diverge to encompass a multitude of strategies to accommodate the arena rather than the cloister, the masses rather than the elite. Since tertiary institutions are finding increasing difficulty in denying the changing context in which they exist, and even more difficulty justifying the “celibate orthodoxy” (Ashby, 1958) they have historically advocated, a reconsideration must be given to the *reason* for their existence, and transformation of function, then, might realistically accompany this transformation of purpose.

Henderson (1969) outlines several possible purposes of modern postsecondary institutions, including the encouragement of learning for learning’s sake, the training of qualified professionals, the production of ethical leaders, and the bridging of academic

and practical. However, if any such transformation of purpose is to include the enviable goal of improving teaching and learning, attention should be given to defining those terms and portraying activities which indicate when one, the other, or both are occurring.

Defining Teaching

From B.F. Skinner's vantage point, "Teaching is simply the arrangement of contingencies of reinforcement" (1968, p. 5). In sharp contrast, Eble (1973) parallels teaching with artistry, in that "...both proceed to some degree by testing directions, pushing on when things work out favorably, and pulling back when they do not" (p. 37). Later, Eble (1988a) defines teaching as "...a presence of mind and person and body in relation to another mind and person and body, a complex array of mental, spiritual and physical acts affecting others" (p. 10). Brookfield (1986) supports this characterization of the interactive nature of teaching by describing it as "...essentially a transactional encounter in which learners and teachers are engaged in a continual process of negotiation of priorities, methods, and evaluative criteria" (p. 20). One veteran educator defines teaching as the art of instilling a sense of curiosity about one's world and in enhancing the skills necessary to perpetuate this curiosity. John Locke (1693) also speaks of teaching in terms of learner curiosity, and admonishes teachers to be particularly careful not to damage or inhibit its development.

Because interactivity and instilling curiosity are frequently viewed as difficult to objectify, many authors (Dinmore, 1996; Dressel, 1982; Henderson, 1969; Sorcinelle, 1991; Troy, 1957) prefer to "list define" teaching by outlining extensive characteristics that may be used to determine if teaching is, in fact, occurring. These lists, however, often show a preoccupation with the "doing," to the exclusion of the "being."

That is, in these attempts to technify the act of teaching, many definitions do not always attend to the human essence that is vital to the act of teaching and that provides the foundation for any acts of “doing.” This is evident, for example, in Webster’s (1988) succinct and open- ended definition of teaching as an act “causing another to understand” (p. 1015). Within the contexts of this paper, then, teaching will be viewed more expansively, albeit more subjectively. Tentatively, it will be considered the process of creatively and enthusiastically engaging in the shared learning of skills, information and values with the goal of expanding the hearts and minds of participants.

This definition implies, of course, that learning and teaching are reciprocal activities of the teacher and the learner. As previously stated, to deny the importance of this reciprocity is to ignore the impact that students may-and should- have on the “heart and mind” of their teacher. As well, it is to refute the ongoing process of improvement and enrichment of the “heart and mind” of the teacher relative to the teacher’s professional responsibility for growth and lifelong search for knowledge. To teach is to learn. Such is the nature of the “calling” of teaching.

Defining the Teaching/Learning Cycle

Erickson (1984) believes that effective postsecondary teachers do not offer the same course twice. Because contexts and content are constantly in flux, as is the relationship between the instructors’ knowledge and awareness, each experience uniquely impacts the teacher. An effective teacher is one who recognizes the positive potential of those experiences in facilitating growth and who, through the power of professional reflection, may abstract, experiment with, and re-experience. Simply put, teachers are learners. By the very nature of inconsistency and frequent incongruency that exists in

every student, classroom and lesson, they must learn. The alternative is to kill the inspiration of curiosity attributed to effective teachers.

From whom is the teacher learning? Svinicki (1990) implies that teachers learn primarily from themselves. Her cycle of teacher learning begins and ends with the classroom experience, while interim steps involve rational reflection, prediction of the immediate future, and experimentation. Similar praxical cycles are put forward by Brookfield (1986), Freire (1985), and Dewey (1916).

However, these are not intended to limit the scope of teacher learnings to self-analysis. Students also teach teachers, on both a formal knowledge-based level and an informal values-based one. A teacher who is willing to engage in constant learning and teaching undoubtedly has a role in modeling to students this highly sought skill. This, of all, may be the greatest lesson of the teacher. As Van Doren (1958) points out, “The teacher who does not love to learn will never cause anybody else to do so. And whether he is aware of it or not, he will be teaching best when his students see that he is learning too” (p. 8). Yet, that a dichotomy rather than an entwinement exists between teaching and learning has long been upheld in tertiary institutions (Klapper, 1959), and is often forwarded when proposing the notion that undergraduate educators do not need support and training in improving their teaching practices.

Defining doing and being

Teachers at all points along the effectiveness continua complete multitudinous tasks on a regular, ongoing basis, from taking attendance to exploring values. Consequently, opportunities to observe quantifiable activities are numerous. Not only can teachers be observed “doing” lab clean up, evaluating assignments, and tutoring, they are

also “doing” text ordering, committee contributions, and researching. The importance of a select few of these activities has been elevated to the degree that many tertiary teachers-- similar to many leaders-- become “Master Doers” (DeBruyn, 1997). They are highly skilled in the technical completion of massive amounts of tasks that, although important, do not necessarily reflect the traits of authentic educators. Simply, they deal predominantly with “things,” occasionally to the extent that students become categorized as one of these many “things.” Although such tasks are vital components of an institution’s functioning, their completion is only a superficial part of the act of teaching. Some professors are so adept at this “doing” capacity that they may be advanced into coveted positions within the university structure because of this skill. However, activities on which these Doers are focusing a predominant amount of time are not always the activities or behaviors in which effective teachers engage. Additionally, dealing with things is, of course, far less demanding than with actual students, since “things” are far less likely to get sick, make errors in judgement, disagree, plot, scheme, or subvert.

Authentic and effective teachers show a respectful but appropriately mild concern for things, and deal with them as chores and routines whose successful completion is necessary as only one facet of effectiveness. For them, teaching deals with people and implies far more esoteric qualities of “being” such as enticing, influencing, and inducing. These “people skills” are of paramount importance in effective tertiary teaching. As DeBruyn (1997) states: “...things cannot inspire, stimulate, influence, care, or share. But people can” (p. 8). And teachers must. To teach with “being,” therefore, is to acquire and exercise the moral wisdom essential in influencing students to a higher level of functioning and, ultimately, to a higher level of consciousness. The growing scarcity of

educators capable of this onerous task is evident, and may be exceeded only by the lack of individuals who recognize the complexity of the challenge.

It has been widely debated whether “being” may, or should, be professionally developed. Would it be desirable, or even possible, to deliver a faculty workshop entitled “Exuding Passion and Enthusiasm in Your Teaching”? Yet, undergraduate evaluations repeatedly use adverbs such as enthusiastic, motivating, positive and encouraging when describing superior instructors. Likewise, few faculty members would consider much academic value in sessions entitled “Increasing Sensitivity and Approachability Toward Students.” Again, however, these two qualities are consistently outlined by undergraduate students as essential in facilitating learning. There is little research to support the premise that these virtues can be workshopped as internalized qualities in teachers, which may fuel the debate of nature versus nurture and make more difficult the task of hiring future tertiary teachers. Implications abound for a predicted future of universities characterized by a scarcity of professors, particularly if evidence arises to suggest that effective teachers with “being” cannot necessarily be mass produced through postgraduate or postdoctoral programs.

The writings of Kenneth Eble (1988a) illustrate an exploration of this personal essence of effective teachers. That joy and an optimistic outlook toward life characterize this virtue is evident. “If there is no place for pleasure in teaching, surely our learning has failed us altogether” (p. 4). Conversely, says Eble, “I have never encountered any evidence that a dull and stodgy presentation necessarily carries with it an extra measure of truth and virtue” (p. 13). McKeachie (1974) adds support to these contentions in stating “...probably no one thing is more important in education than the teacher’s

enthusiasm and energy” (p. 10). Mary Flaherty (1957) agrees. “Enthusiasm in a teacher is contagious, and it is this quality more than any other which is responsible for students wishing to follow in the footsteps of the master...” (p. 137). These qualities of personality, however, have long been devalued in tertiary teaching because achieving a scientific, objective truth so highly revered in universities and colleges implies, and often demands, a certain detachment and isolation. Yet, as Eble (1980) points out, “...the development of a truly admirable teaching style involves development of character...” (p. 8). Morrill and Spees (1982) refer to this quality as “humanness,” while in the context of this paper it is referred to simply as “being.”

Implications of Developmental Stages

One set of educational theories that has flourished post-modernly is that of developmental stages (Erickson, 1968; Perry, 1970; Piaget, 1972). A common trait of these and similar theories is an element of transience, inasmuch as they view cognitive and emotional development as nonpermanent phases possessing mutually exclusive characteristics. Several of these stages are deemed more or less desirable in attaining educational objectives. The stage of adolescence, for example, is viewed as a tumultuous and rebellious time during which teachers can simply hope to tolerate abhorrent anti-academic and anti-social behaviors. The characteristics expected of learners at this developmental stage may inhibit teachers from utilizing abstract, analytical activities in favor of concrete, structured strategies. Unfortunately, when teachers attribute unique and inflexibly exclusive characteristics to any one developmental stage, pedagogical restrictions may become entrenched. Not only do expectations begin to formulate about the behaviors, thought processes and academic capabilities of learners, but teaching

methods, too, can begin to reflect predictable and monostrategic patterns. Expansive, creative, risk-taking behaviors of teachers can be limited when they believe they may be implementing methodologies inconsistent with a particular developmental stage. One need only observe the decline in variation of teaching strategies from kindergarten through university to verify the existence of these limitations. Tactile, experiential learning, common in primary grades, decreases almost to the point of exclusion at the tertiary levels. Henderson (1969) observes that,

Some of the best teaching takes place in infant schools and kindergartens. But as we proceed through the primary and secondary schools it seems to deteriorate; and when we come to the university, it appears that it no longer matters at all! (p. 9)

The Holmes Report (1986) makes reference to similar monostrategic teaching styles involving the passing on of a quantifiable body of knowledge experienced by some university students as “naïve and simplistic” (p. 27). It describes this style of addressing developmental stages of learners as one-way teaching.

A critical aspect of such models is their tendency to assume that whether or not learning takes place in any particular class is primarily an outgrowth of the students who happen to be there. The teacher’s responsibility is only to develop and deliver lessons in some reasonable fashion; the onus for learning rests with the students. The characteristics of the student group and the individuals in it thus influence the lesson and mode of delivery only modestly. The teachers’ responsibility basically

ends when they have told students what they must remember to know and do....This conception blithely overlooks one of the most critical aspects of quality teaching--the extent to which the lesson is appropriate for the particular students for whom the teacher is responsible and for whom the lessons should be crafted.

(p. 28)

Although some pre-adults may have developed the ability to think reflectively and abstractly (Ault, 1983), as well as to assume the huge responsibility for self-directed education and purely intrinsically motivated learning, as many as 50% of undergraduate students may not have yet developed this capacity (Gray, 1984). Similarly, in categorizing undergraduate students according to Piagetian cognitive development, Lucas (1990) found that a majority do not attain competence at the abstract/theoretical stage until their third or fourth year of post secondary education. Therefore, teaching that is based on lecture dissemination of abstract notions, and on the assumption that all students should be able to synthesize higher level concepts, may be superficial. Successful learning for many tertiary students cannot be void of experiential, active learning. Teaching methods that exclude strategies appropriate to concrete operational development may be as ineffective with many post-secondary students as they are with many middle school learners. More importantly, the converse may also hold true. That is, the exclusion of teaching strategies that facilitate concrete thinking may be as harmful to undergraduate as it is to primary learning. It may be as important to provide preoperational elementary students with opportunities for analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as it is necessary to do so for formalized adult learners. In addition, simulations, role play, discussions, and problem solving may be as essential to the

effectiveness of university teaching as visual aids, minilectures, and rote practice are to middle school teaching.

Several historical and contemporary learning theories suggest that multistrategic teaching is desirable for students of all ages. As early as 1960, Gibb concluded that effective learning must be experienced-based, while others propose that successful learning may not be as dependent on a developmental stage as on consistent facilitation of processes of awareness, feedback and reinforcement (Miller, 1964); interrelatedness of old and new knowledge (Knox, 1977); and supported self analysis (Brundage & Mackeracher, 1980). Rather than viewing learning and learner readiness as linear and composite, recent theories have suggested that, while age and grade level may be one factor influencing a teacher's choice of methodologies, that may be superseded by the inherent learning style of individuals regardless of their chronological age or stage. Pintrich and Johnson (1990) state that the effective teacher is acutely aware of these learning styles and they advocate the use of a number of instruments to determine learning context, in particular the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory. Similarly, Gardner's (1983) theory of Multiple Intelligences seeks to guide pedagogical choice by outlining seven ways that postsecondary students may learn. Although these learning preferences may increase in scope with an individual's age and experience, a typical tertiary class may be composed of students who will be learning in as many different ways as those may in an early childhood class. Consequently, Gardner implores tertiary teachers to incorporate a wide variety of teaching methods in attempting to facilitate learning opportunities for the greatest possible number of students. His suggestions for

techniques such as assignment and evaluation negotiation, group work, and multisensory experiences at the tertiary level will be discussed in an upcoming section.

Developmental stage learning theories may provide helpful insights into the learning set of some tertiary students. More likely, however, their use in justifying over-dependence on a single teaching strategy may lead to limited knowledge dissemination rather than creative and expansive teaching innovations. Their judicious use must be recognized and balanced when instructors are choosing appropriate learning experiences for undergraduate students.

Effective Methodologies: Ways of Doing

Studies abound which verify that the vast majority of academic staff in universities has no formal training in the teaching role (Emerson, 1996; Saroyan, 1996; Stahle, 1996; Weimer, 1990). As Klapper (1959) observes:

The large classes, the inexperienced teachers, the long teaching day, the heavy teaching assignments-- these are not the primary causes of ineffective teaching in our colleges and universities today....The fact remains that our teachers in institutions of post-high-school levels have not been prepared to teach. (p. 228)

The teaching style of many instructors originates in the positive or negative nature of their own experiences in the classroom, and these experiences alone may nurture mediocrity at best (MacKenzie, Eraut, & Jones, 1970). George Drops (1996) refers to the process of relying on past learning experiences to provide a foundation for future teaching as "...[ineffective because] it gives the test first, and the lesson later" (p. 528). What are the teaching skills that university instructors may develop to increase their

effectiveness, and-- tangentially-- are they unique to tertiary teaching? The answer to the latter is more clearly becoming, "No!" For decades, teachers from early childhood education to high school have been implementing strategies that are recently being discovered to be equally as effective with tertiary students. Conversely, it appears that many of the precepts upon which "ideal" teaching is based have been only haphazardly implemented in much of post secondary education.

What can be said about the message conveyed by a teacher who is willing to explore and experiment with innovative teaching strategies? Although the concern that some professors express for their teaching and their students is genuine enough, it is often limited (Lee, 1970) in both breadth and depth of understanding and, more importantly, in congruence with actions surrounding teaching. A teacher's actions will always speak louder than words. To illustrate, few can hide behind a façade of rigidity and superiority while secretly upholding flexibility and humility. Similarly, teachers who have authentic concern for negotiation and social constructivism can, only with great difficulty, teach in a manner that is teacher-centered and didactic.

The instructional strategies and techniques that are adopted by a teacher bespeak his attitudes about himself, his students, and their respective roles in the teaching-learning process. They bespeak his belief about how people learn and, therefore, about the proper techniques one utilizes to help learning occur. (Crow, 1980, p. 41)

Therefore, if skill development is to proceed among tertiary teachers, investigation and metaphorical analysis of teachers' personal and professional philosophies may be critical in promoting awareness as well as congruence.

Content and Expertise

One component that is often thought to be at the heart of effective teaching is academic credibility. Students' responses, as drawn from a random sample of course evaluations completed at The University of Lethbridge in various faculties over a three-year period, appear to view this as an important determinant of a successful learning experience through use of descriptors such as "knowledgeable," "well-learned," and "content-aware" when describing esteemed teachers. Undoubtedly, content familiarity and delivery expertise in any discipline should be seen as requisite to effective teaching (Dinmore, 1996; Ryans, 1960). Early analyses of student ratings (Downie, 1952; Gadzella, 1968; Musella & Rusch, 1968) cite knowledge of content as one of the most frequently identified qualities of effective teachers. However, it may be an overstatement to conclude that it is a statistically significant factor in determining teacher effectiveness. Although Henderson (1969) suggests that "...the cross fertilization and inspiring effect of mixing research and teaching should not be lost..." (p. 148), it appears that the link between increasing content knowledge via research and increased teaching effectiveness may not be causal. For example, Svinicki (1990) states that "...learning more about your content will not automatically make you a better teacher..." (p. 5). Similarly, the Holmes Report (1986) asserts that assuming content knowledge to be the major criterion necessary for effectiveness "does not equip [instructors] with the understanding or skill necessary to teach that knowledge to someone else" (p. 64). The Report moderates the importance of content expertise by contending that "Competent teaching is a compound of three elements: subject matter knowledge, systematic knowledge of teaching, and reflective practical experience" (p. 62). Milton (1976) found little relatedness between the

activities of teaching and researching, while in a more recent meta-analysis of 44 studies correlating scholarship and teacher effectiveness, Feldman (1987) documented that “...scholarly accomplishment or research productivity of college and university faculty is only slightly associated with teaching proficiency” (p. 296). Furthermore, the latter authors intimate that a majority of modern academic research is not only uncomplimentary to the teaching function, it may actually be antithetical to it based on the isolation and academic pigeonholing required during graduate and postgraduate studies. Research endeavors to provide praxis between theory and practice are infrequently recognized as credible, and even less frequently integrated into the mainstream knowledge of university teachers.

Rather than departmentalized content expertise and academic superiority, it may be the organization and use of teachers’ knowledge that contributes to effectiveness (Ryans, 1960; Costin, Greenough, & Menges, 1971). To illustrate, Eble (1973) observed of a colleague:

This lecturer is undoubtedly one of the best that one is likely to hear on a university campus. Nevertheless, there was little evidence that he understood that teaching should result in an interplay of mind on mind; that a class hour should be for the students an active hour; that the instructor should contribute something-- the fruit of his scholarship and experience-- which the students cannot attain for themselves by their own reading. (p. 240)

This observation appears congruent with findings of a study conducted by Glaser (1968) reporting that the most common criticisms of teaching performance by undergraduate students include complaints of lectures that are boring, ill-prepared, ill-delivered, and

outmoded. Not only is this sterile dissemination of knowledge harmful to the spirit of the learner, it is most often ineffective in instilling long-term knowledge. Chickering and Gamson (1991) found that although 80% of post secondary class time is devoted to content lecturing, students exit class with only 42% of the lecture material, of which they forget 50% within two months. Consequently, it appears that content mastery is significant only in providing a framework around which the university teacher may make more informed decisions regarding appropriate course objectives, essential and nonessential curriculum, and learning outcomes. In fact, little or no mention is made of content expertise among qualities outlined in several Teacher Excellence Awards (Dinmore, 1996; Gaite, 1996). This may imply that the weighting of content mastery as a quality of paramount importance among effective teachers needs to be reconsidered, particularly if it is promoted to the exclusion of many other teaching virtues.

Communication

By including verbal, nonverbal, and written competencies as expected and evaluated skills, most preservice teacher training programs verify the significance of strong communication skills that are consistently illustrated by effective teachers. Early writings (Highnet, 1950) include clarity of communication in lists of competencies necessary to university teaching. Although the type of communication alluded to at that time was most frequently one-way and lecternal in nature, it was nonetheless viewed as a primary skill. As a more expansive view of communication evolves so, too, do the skills required of effective teachers. Granrose (1980) includes the cyclical communication process of speaking, listening, and responding as one of the most essential qualities of notable educators. Similarly, Chickering and Gamson (1991) emphasize communication

of expectations and curriculum to be one of seven essentials of effective university teaching. However, feedback from student evaluations demonstrates a more fundamental concern regarding a lack of basic verbal delivery skills in tertiary teachers (Henderson, 1969; Pascarella, 1980). That teachers must be proficient at explaining, questioning, responding, projecting, clarifying, directing, and instructing seems apparent to many. However, there may be cause to doubt the suggestion that these skills are being widely demonstrated by most tertiary teachers.

Because effective cyclical communication is primarily social in nature, the necessity for effective teachers to be constantly cognizant of personal communication skills becomes closely linked with awareness and nurturing of interpersonal relationships with students. Teachers who excel in this area may also be more likely to demonstrate an attitude of openness, and to encourage opportunities for interaction with students both in and out of the classroom. More importantly, the appearance that instructors value this kind of interaction is seen as another reflection of teachers' beliefs about the nature of students, and the role they accord to them as participants in the learning process. If paradigms of teacher/student relationships are more horizontal than vertical, interaction and communication tend to reflect equality and respect for others' contributions. However, if the relationship is predominantly hierarchical, the values and type of communication between teacher and student will alter dramatically, frequently at the expense of satisfaction and learning. As Horrigan (1961) points out,

Students do not like teachers who do not plan their courses well, do not explain clearly...or are just plain dull. But the blackest trait a teacher can have is

disrespect for the students. He encounters acute disapproval if he talks down to them or otherwise belittles them. (p. 80)

University and college students are presently graduating into an economic culture that increasingly values corporate teamwork, work place collaboration, and shared problem-solving. Opportunities to observe teachers with superior communication skills and to practice these skills are vital in facilitating the development of successful and contributive citizens. Tertiary teachers who devalue or negate the importance of their own responsibility to model and promote effective two-way communication may be omitting a significant aspect of the liberal education necessary to undergraduate students. As Raushenbush (1970) states, "...a system of education that gives students no opportunity for learning that lies in the ongoing and regular interaction between teachers and students will give its students a truncated and distorted education" (p. 197).

Lesson Composition

Most would agree that one of the desirable goals of a college or university education should be the fostering of eventual intellectual emancipation. It would seem reasonable to assume that a majority of lessons planned and taught by the tertiary teacher would include a version of this objective as a primary focus. Congruently, if goals such as academic independence are to be encouraged, organization and presentation of lessons should reflect activities which facilitate understanding, then abstraction, and then emancipation (Dinmore, 1996). Smith (1987) suggests that if this progression is truly embraced by tertiary teachers, they must make consistent and frequent references to such objectives throughout lessons, and particularly in the set induction or "settling in" (p. 55) portion of the lesson. Similarly, Murray, Gillese and Lennon (1996) define a competent

lesson as one in which the teacher “communicates the objectives of the course to students, is aware of alternate methods or strategies, and selects methods of instruction that...are effective in helping students to achieve the course objectives” (p. 2). They consider two major flaws in tertiary teaching to be failure to give students the opportunity during class time to practice the skills and knowledge that will be tested, and failure to use instructional methods that are inconsistent with process-oriented objectives.

Many effective teachers refer to lesson and course objectives in advance organizational lists provided at the beginning of a lesson. These achieve the dual purposes of providing students with a framework for ensuing learning, as well as clarifying teachers’ perceptions about the procedures of the upcoming lesson. Also in the introduction, effective teachers may include repeated rehearsal and review of previous learnings (Erickson, 1984), sometimes referred to as “review/preview.” Erickson adds that because one crucial concern of many professors is the perceived lack of instructional minutes, this strategy is necessary in optimizing available class time. In addition to review techniques, Reddick (1994) found that the initial phase of the lesson is critical in establishing a tone of negotiation and curiosity by allowing flexibility in the upcoming lesson based on student input regarding what *they* hope to learn.

During the developmental stage of the lesson, effective instructors will design activities aimed at introducing new concepts, or at extending the depth and breadth of understanding of previous material. McKeachie (1974) states that material provided in the bulk of the lesson must be offered to create understanding. Only after that understanding is achieved are students able to proceed to a level of memorization of constructs. Because this memorization is sometimes-- although not always-- essential,

many strategies have been forwarded to assist this process during the lesson including storytelling, use of rhymes and mnemonics (Erickson, 1984), use of multimedia and other visual aids (Donovan, 1961; Henderson, 1969; Smith, 1987).

A skill frequently illustrated by effective teachers during inspiring presentations is that of *physicality*. This can be observed as teachers move toward students when asking questions, circulate throughout the room to enhance interpersonal proximity, and figuratively appear to reach out to students. Although some critics may view these activities as coming precariously close to representing *performance* rather than teaching, others would agree with Eble (1988a) that teaching is occasionally a performing art. Inasmuch as a performer seeks to engage the audience, so, too, does the teacher engage learners through the use of voice, action, and physical presence.

One of the most common criticisms of university lessons is failure to identify significant points, or to clarify the message that some material is of less or greater value relative to assessment (Henderson, 1969). Eble (1973) identifies a need for effective teachers to simplify content and to utilize their considerable content expertise in delineating a relatively few number of essential concepts when organizing lessons.

Lastly, effective teachers do not overlook the important external and internal motivation that must be present during a lesson to enable learning to proceed. Many researchers (Brookfield, 1986; Gamson, 1991; Mason, 1988) cite the positive impact of verbal and written praise as a source of external motivation most commonly associated with behavioral humanists such as Carl Rogers and B.F. Skinner. McKeachie (1974) also expresses the importance of inviting conditions appropriate to external motivation by supporting Rogers' concept of unconditional positive regard. Teachers are able to

facilitate these conditions through practices such as acknowledging students by name, greeting them at the door upon their entry, making comments expectant of success rather than failure, and accepting uncertainty and questioning as a normal part of the process of learning. Erickson (1984) concurs, stating, “Good teaching triggers the...motivational resources of each student” (p. 84). Perhaps it could be argued that external motivation is not the responsibility of the tertiary teacher; yet, it seems it is precisely that responsibility that must be nurtured before internal motivation and subsequent intellectual emancipation can be achieved. Students who enter the undergraduate arena possessing high levels of self-motivation will learn in spite of moderately effective teachers. However, for the vast majority of college and university students, effective teachers employ practices which “[do] not allow the dull job of getting a degree simply to become an end in itself” (Henderson, 1969, p. 10).

Pluralist Teaching

“Over indulgence in lectures should be classified as a drug addiction on the part of both the giver and the receiver” (Lee, 1970, p. 155). The theory is not new that successful learning, through effective teaching, is not monostrategic and passive but, rather, multiphasic, pluralistic, and active (Gamson, 1991). However, it is one that has garnered renewed interest through research in intellectual architecture and, specifically, through observations of constructivist classrooms. Educational theorists from Dewey (1938) to Piaget (1970), to Vygotsky (1978), Feuerstein (1980), and Gardner (1983) have suggested versions of highly effective teaching that proceed in a constructivist mode of experiential, multifaceted learning activities.

Through observing traditional lecture methods, researchers have noted shortfalls in student understanding and the existence of a great deal of passive knowledge across all ages and grades, including colleges and universities (Gardner, 1991). Constructivist theory suggests an active engagement in learning may lead to better student understanding, retention, and application of knowledge. Perkins (1999) further suggests that constructivist teaching unlocks great storages of “inert knowledge” (p. 8), previously inaccessible to learners, as they attempt to relate theory to the world around them.

Because constructivist learning is an activity which frequently fosters “social energy” (Canavan, 1996, p. 349), and is frequently characterized by student collaboration and discovery, tertiary teachers may need to reconcile a perceived conflict between curricular dissemination and student independence. This relinquishing of authority may engage the teacher in interesting reflections upon professional philosophies relative to issues of power, control, and expertise but may be necessary in combating what many faculty identify as one of the most serious student deficiencies, that is, “immature or undeveloped thinking” (Fulwiler & Jones, 1979, p. 308). The use of constructivist methodologies may also increase the likelihood that more students will engage in thought processes illustrative of the entire range of Bloom’s (1984) taxonomy from knowledge, through analysis and synthesis, to evaluation and prediction. Lucas (1990) refers to this process as a progression from concreteness to abstraction, and one that can be facilitated when teachers present material utilizing a plethora of strategies. At its most effective, it is a process that can encourage transformation in the view of undergraduate students about the way they think about thinking.

Types of interactive and participatory activities are varied, and, occasionally, more appropriate to some disciplines than others. However, the informed use of multistrategic methods is usually less limiting than liberating for the student and the teacher. For example, Ehrmann (1995) cites lessons in diverse disciplines such as psychology and engineering that incorporate characteristically constructivist strategies such as peer teaching and jigsaws, situational inquiry studies, and collaborative projects. Similarly, Mason (1988), Sherman (1996), and Travis (1996) advocate tertiary teaching which incorporates opportunities for student collaboration in case studies, peer tutoring, and even test feedback, while Hamachek (1969) and Crow (1980) offer a veritable dictionary of strategies from audiovisual lectures and on site visits, to writing exercises. Henderson (1969) is yet another author who focuses on a multitude of teaching strategies including the use of sociodramas, debates, clinical practice incidents, buzz groups, experiments, and field excursions. Theories supporting the use of these alternate strategies incorporate some basic maxims, namely that learning most effectively proceeds from (1) known to unknown, to known presentation of material, (2) simple to complex back to simple skills, (3) whole to part to whole concepts, and (4) concrete to abstract thinking skills.

Less collaborative, high discovery methods are proposed by Baskin (1970) whose earlier suggestions for methodological restructuring include the use of independent field study, interdisciplinary study, and traditional independent study. The use of independent study has often been promoted as one of the truest forms of learning since the goals and responsibility for intellectual stimulation rest on the students' shoulders. If, as some would suggest, the primary function of a university education is to develop articulate,

insightful, confident, and intelligent students, a reinvestigation of monostrategic teaching may be in order. As Fleege (1961) states, “If the...student is to become accustomed to bearing the main burden of his own education, it is necessary that the instructor learn to keep himself in the background” (p. 24).

Self-responsibility and the development of internal learning-reward mechanisms are two benefits of multistrategic teaching. Brookfield (1986) maintains that collaborative and cooperative strategies must be encouraged in undergraduate classrooms as a way of promoting and modeling the ethical responsibility of teachers as a method to expand social awareness and tolerance. Teaching strategies that are authoritarian, static, and predominantly power-centered can propagate passive cultural attitudes about leadership, openness, and awareness, while those that encourage critical consideration may be facilitating more emancipatory thinking. He proposes that:

If [learners] of widely differing classes and ethnic groups are actively exploring ideas, beliefs, and practices, then we are likely to have a society in which creativity, diversity, and the continuous re-creation of social structures are the accepted norm. By contrast, if...inquiry, reflection, and exploration are the prerogative of a privileged minority [then we] are likely to be static, ossified, and hierarchical. (p. 1)

Proficient use of constructivist, multistrategic techniques appear to be necessary in university and college classrooms if students are expected to think, to question, to reflect, and to interact productively with others upon graduation. In education generally, one barrier to this questioning and reflection is a fear of being “wrong” which has traditionally been accompanied by undesirable consequences. In the present climate of

accountability, being wrong often carries even more severe consequences. However, as Brooks and Brooks (1999) point out, “...being wrong is often the first step on the path to greater understanding” (p. 24). It is that *understanding*, not merely knowledge, which innovative and effective tertiary teachers will seek to promote.

Creating Relevance

Although intellectual relevance has not always been a sought-after objective of educators at many levels of instruction, it is in tertiary institutions where isolationism has been particularly evident. While in the past this may have served a necessary function in advancing positivist research, benefits derived may have been at the expense of the interconnectedness of knowledge, the links to students’ realities, and the interdependence of faculty. Decades ago, the Rockefeller Report (1958) recognized the need for interdisciplinary curriculum and interdepartmental faculty by stating, “We cannot afford to have our most highly educated people living in intellectual isolation from one another without even an elementary understanding of each other’s intellectual concerns” (p. 17).

Glatthorn (1997) defines relevance as a teacher’s contextual understanding of curriculum and considers it as one of seven essential types of knowledge demonstrated by highly rated teachers. Curriculum relevance, in particular, was found in early research (Klapper, 1949) to be a significant consideration when students described effective teachers. His findings delineate relevance as the interrelatedness between things learned and things being learned, and consider it to be an important link made by instructors because “...the multiplicity of the world is not only expanded, but the student’s capacity to deal with that multiplicity is enlarged” (p. 79). Slightly more recently, Glaser (1968) also cited irrelevance of content to be a significant concern of college students.

Several strategies have been devised to counteract the irrelevance created by overcompartmentalization of knowledge and to build a triangulation between teaching, learning, and reality (Canavan, 1996). Most frequently, universality is created through cross-disciplinary strategies wherein learning incidents encompass elements of several subject areas. Occasionally this can occur through a rudimentary reorganizing of materials and an updating of content knowledge (Eble, 1980). More likely, it will require the integration of innovative learning activities and technology. Boehrer and Linsky (1990) advocate the case study model traditionally used in law and medicine to facilitate knowledge interactivity. More simply, the use of illustrations and examples will create a connection with the world outside the classroom. Morrill and Spees (1982) outline 21 methodologies they feel necessary for basic “certifiable” tertiary teacher competence, from illustrative stories to individualized programming. All of their suggested approaches are designed to improve student achievement by creating relevance. Similarly, Perry (1970) suggests that by encouraging active rather than passive learning, undergraduate students may progress from authority dependence and concrete morality to a position of relativism and recognition of interdependence and universal relevance.

Another technique in creating relevance for a growing number of undergraduate students is integration of technological devices and processes within the teaching arena. Although some may feel that our present society places an alarmingly high value on technological advancement to the extreme of near-simultaneous invention and obsolescence, a reality for many students is familiarity and dependence on the machines of technology. Constructing relevance between highly abstract and sometimes obscure concepts, and a body of vocationalized knowledge of “cold, hard reality” is a challenge

for teachers at all levels, but, perhaps, particularly in universities and colleges. Teachers must reflect on an institutional and personal level about desirability and capacity for integrating a seemingly endless stream of technology and make informed educational decisions about inclusion or exclusion in their classrooms. On the cusp of the technology tidal wave, Collier (1974) proposed that technological integration is significant to effective teaching only "...insofar as it elicits active responses from students, to help them find meaning within themselves" (p. 33). As with all "ways of doing," the judicious use of technology to emphasize interconnectedness, and ultimately to enhance learning, must be viewed as one of many facets in the multistrategic approach taken by effective tertiary teachers.

Manipulating the Environment

"A non-authoritarian atmosphere...has the advantage of not only being similar to the workplace, but also putting the learner back into the driver's seat" (Schot, 1991). Being "in the driver's seat" will most often occur in environments where learners are producers rather than reproducers; that is, where students are problem solvers and practitioners foremost and, less importantly, regurgitators. What is being proposed is a learning environment of trust, sharing, risk-taking, creativity, and guidance in which undergraduates will progress from superficial understanding to metalearning (Wielenga, 1996). Open learning environments promote the reflection that is vital in attaining the synthesis and evaluation processes of metalearning. Mason (1988) contends that the promotion of this type of learning environment may be the most critical variable influencing student achievement.

Additionally, research indicates that open learning environments are more conducive to learner initiative and independence (Watson, 1961). Eble (1988b) claims that tertiary teachers tend toward an exaggeration of environmental discipline to the neglect of directed freedom. Erickson (1984) supports the facilitation of freedom by suggesting that effective teachers will adjust the learning environment to one that weakens, not strengthens, the umbilical cord of learner dependency. By elevating the mental and physical restrictivity of learning environments and simultaneously negating independence, university teachers are denying themselves the joy of receptivity and responsiveness of primary learners whose poems, drawings, and other creations are an ultimate illustration of trust and self-expression. Where self-directedness and self-renewal are desirable, a noncritical, authentically curious environment is beneficial. As with grade school students, learning scenarios that encourage belonging and self-worth can facilitate heightened creativity in the tertiary setting.

To encourage interrelationships and creativity, Smith (1987) contends that effective teachers must attack the sterility of most university classrooms and consciously manipulate the environment by regrouping desks, displaying artifacts and posters, or by leaving the classroom altogether for other learning incidents. Similarly, Mason (1988) suggests that instructors must consciously attend to the lighting, room size, and other aspects of the physical environment when considering maximum teaching effectiveness. Crow (1980) states that this physical manipulation will result in removing the professor's presence from "psychological bigness" to "psychological smallness," thereby creating a situation more conducive to interactivity, trust, and belongingness to a learning community (Lucas, 1990).

Assessment Techniques

Undergraduate learners in many disciplines appear to believe that their experiences are less than fulfilling relative to the assessment of their knowledge, skills, and attitudes. More specifically, Ron (1996) reports a high level of student dissatisfaction concerning lack of opportunities for input regarding evaluation, scarcity and infrequency of feedback regarding progress, and perceived existence of a “closed environment” surrounding discussion of evaluation. In earlier writings, Glaser (1968) contends that ill-fitting evaluation schemes and instruments are of utmost concern to undergraduate students. In response to external demands for more objective and standardized accountability of graduate competencies, many post secondary educators are reconsidering the exclusive use of traditional empirical evaluation instruments. A conclusion that may be drawn from these and similar findings suggests that the coordinated use of both authentic and empirical tools is viewed as increasingly valid and valuable not only in student assessment, but also in promoting skills and self awareness within students.

Consistent with the goal of generating a body of professional knowledge that may inform future interactions, Brook (1996) recommends use of reflective diaries in professions such as medicine, physiotherapy, and education. Writing of this style encourages an internal dialogue which is later deliberated upon and analyzed, and which may guide an evaluator in a number of ways. The most common uses are process based, although several search for competencies, skill improvement and goal setting (Shon, 1983). Nola and Huber (1989) suggest a more systematic reflection involving initial data collection and subsequent remediation. Regardless of the nuances of application, the

concept of reflective action by students as an assessment tool is not new. Early writings by Dewey (1933) describe reflection as an essential form of thinking, initiated by doubt and perplexity, resulting in purposeful inquiry and problem resolution. Its credibility has increased recently at the tertiary level as a component critical to higher level thinking, and valuable as a teaching and evaluation instrument.

Another form of authentic assessment encourages learners to apply creative and higher level thinking skills to real life scenarios. Recently, this type of instrument has been referred to as the “performance-based assessment” through which collaborative situational analysis is facilitated. One advantage of this type of tool is the formation of cognitive dissonance and subsequent problem solving that enable students to transcend low level skill and cultural biases (Flores & Singleton, 1996). The performance-based assessment also achieves another objective often attributed to post secondary education, that is “...learning which is derived from situations and not from the study of subjects” (Lindemann, 1926). Because contemporary tertiary education may need to focus not only on the acquisition of knowledge, but also on validating students’ experiential learning as a reference for future learning, the collaborative scenario analysis facilitated through the performance-based process can be increasingly effective in maximizing student learning in this direction.

An additional authentic assessment tool recommended for promoting lifelong learning in undergraduate students is outlined by MacAlpine (1996). He encourages peer assessment to achieve objectives in improving communication, cooperation, and confidence. In his study, peer evaluation is implemented as a method of facilitating constructive critique and self-evaluation skills in engineering students. In addition to

increasing motivation, MacAlpine also suggests that peer evaluation may decrease the expertise intimidation frequently accompanying “stand and deliver,” professor-directed learning.

Similarly, Vorst (1996) asserts that tertiary education must refocus attention from teacher-directed to student-centered processes. In order to achieve the skill enhancement he views critical to a university education, he proposes evaluative strategies such as case study analysis, experiential problem solving, and site specific analyses as assessment techniques. Spicuzza (1996) views these skill-focused outcomes as ones that may be achieved through portfolio development. In his study assessing students’ reactions to portfolio usage, he concludes that because the process of assembling a professional portfolio is both selective and reflective, it is an exercise in empowerment. He extends that conclusion to state that portfolio development used in all disciplines may cause self-assessment, self-motivation, and self-respect necessary to increase the likelihood of employment success. Furthermore, benefits may be observed when tertiary teachers themselves become participants in this process as a means of illustrating their appreciation of lifelong learning.

Regardless of the specific instrument chosen, research based on Skinnerian programming emphasizes that assessment should be frequent, specific, and essentially positive (Gaite, 1996; Gillett & Bell, 1996; Murray, Gillese, & Lennon, 1996) with a feedback loop that is closed, not left open or ragged. Granrose (1980) argues that an additional component of cyclicity must be included if the teacher is to be effective. The nature of cyclicity implies that student achievement on multiple informal and formal evaluative incidents should have a direct and immediate impact on the upcoming content

and strategies chosen by the instructor. He suggests that the final extension of this professional data collection and deliberation is action research encompassing a mindful and informed process of professional problem solving and growth.

Each of these changes in assessment is a valuable addition to a teacher's repertoire in ensuring the learning success of students. Each one, however, also assumes a fundamental change in the view of professors, and their relationships with students. The relationships they foster will affect the way students think about authority, and the way they think about thinking. Over time it may become a tangible indicator of professors' essence as educators.

Effective Interpersonalities: Ways of Being

The previous section describing "Ways of Doing" has touched upon a number of observable or quantifiable qualities of effective educators. While many of these may be "trainable" qualities, other types of characteristics may not. Arguably those rather empirical competencies, in and of themselves, do not complete the profile of effective teachers. Is there a quality of love, energy, or quiet passion that surrounds inspiring teachers that may not be quantifiable? Many teachers and learners believe so (Jones, 1986). Granrose (1980) refers to these skills most obtusely as "the greater mysteries" of teaching (p. 28). The greater mysteries, or the "essence," involves a precarious balance between heart and mind; between feeling and doing; between philosophy and technique. An aura of enthusiasm, authentic caring, and joy surrounds "real" teachers and renders them immediately identifiable from those who have interrupted research activities to teach and be taught. This joy is frequently the result of a genuine passion for teaching. It does not necessarily reveal itself in comedic or dramatic teaching. It does, however,

illuminate and transfer an energy, inspiration, and enthusiasm to learners of all ages and embraces many of the following characteristics.

Empathy

This is a quality that may best be described as generosity of spirit. Brookfield (1986, 1995) frequently refers to authentic concern and respect as primary qualities of effective teaching practice. Similarly, Knowles (1980) advocates a respectful empowerment of learners as one prerequisite to learning. Subsequent to compiling studies by Hildebrandt (1971) and Murray (1985), Sorcinelli (1991) concluded that concern and interest about students' and their progress is one of seven most necessary qualities of highly effective tertiary teachers.

Other descriptors of this virtue include statements regarding mentoring, relating personal experiences, interest in students' diversity, negotiatory conflict resolution, and participation in student sponsored activities. Fleege (1961) refers to these collective activities as sensitivity to the needs, feelings, abilities, and goals of students. Similarly, Morrill and Spees (1982) expand upon Hamachek's (1969) concept of empathy by stating,

Effective teachers appear to be those who are, shall we say, "human" in the fullest sense of the word...They are empathetic, more democratic than autocratic, and apparently are more able to relate easily and naturally to students on either a one-to-one or group basis. (p. 344)

More recent writings (Glatthorn, 1997; Litke, 1995; Tuckman, 1996) identify this quality as an understanding of and consideration for student contexts.

Klapper (1959) extends the concept of empathy to include inspiration and affirmation of self worth. An empathetic teacher is "...one who can draw out the learner's own sense of who he is, help dignify it, enlarge it, and keep before him the possibilities of who he might be" (p. 90). The issue of self worth and esteem as prerequisite to true learning is one which is frequently identified in educational journals (Educational Leadership, January, 1998; September 1998), yet is one which tertiary teachers have not always assumed as a consideration or responsibility. However, theories forwarded by Maslow indicate that adult learners, like child and adolescent learners, require fulfillment of several physical and emotional needs before they are able to achieve higher levels of thinking and learning. A consequent implication for college and university teachers is that they may consider relating respectfully and affirmingly to students as a method of increasing achievement, learner satisfaction and overall effectiveness. As Greenleaf (1991) summarizes, "People grow taller when those who lead them empathize and when they are accepted for what they are, even though their performance may be judged critically in terms of what they are capable of doing" (p. 21).

Approachability

This virtue has been viewed in the past as simple physical availability, often indicated by open door office hours scheduled by professors. Eble (1988b) and others (Erickson, 1984; Ryans, 1960) have extended descriptions of this indicator to include more expansive aspects of emotional openness and availability. After examining studies by Murray (1985) and Hildebrandt (1971), Sorcinelli (1991) concluded that approachability, interest, and invitation of alternate views were among the most essential qualities of effective tertiary teachers.

In a previous section, reference was made to the importance of efforts to decrease emotional sterility, and the “psychological bigness” of university instructors, by having them step down from the podium and circulate among learners to teach in Ghandian rather than Hitlerian style. Not only does this send discreet messages about confidence, it also speaks to achieving approachability through decreasing physical proximity between student and teacher, which is often a factor contributing to emotional proximity.

Nonverbal incongruencies also contribute to students’ perception of inapproachability of professors. For example, some students may interpret a joke told with a severe expression as hilarious dry wit but, perhaps more frequently, others may see it as an insincere and unsuccessful attempt to build rapport and to portray humanness and availability. Several researchers (Brookfield, 1986; Donovan, 1961; Gamson, 1991) speak of approachability in terms of “meeting them on their level of interest” (Henderson, 1969, p. 137). Eble (1973) refers to this as an energy of “reaching out” (p. 41). In addition, Eble (1988a) often refers to the need for effective teachers to develop a personality or, better yet, to become aware of their already existing one. He contends that any attempt to void or deny one’s personality in pursuit of the total objectivity often perpetuated in the isolationist atmosphere of graduate and postgraduate programming, may ultimately do more harm than good to the students’ perception of accessibility.

Enthusiasm

It has been suggested that skills must be *taught*, but enthusiasm can only be *caught* from a teacher who loves to learn. Many early writings examining effective tertiary teaching (Conley, 1957; Troy, 1957) attempt to create synonymity between enthusiasm and the ability to motivate. For example, Flaherty (1957) states, “the ability to

inspire and motivate is the essence of good teaching” (p. 136). Similarly, he observes that “Enthusiasm in a teacher is contagious, and it is this quality more than any other, which is responsible for students’ wishing to follow in the footsteps of the master...” (p. 137).

Keig and Waggoner (1995) identify a teacher’s use of tone and language in persuading and motivating as one of the key indicators of enthusiasm and effectiveness. In addition, the presence of a physical or intellectual energy is often identified as an overt display of enthusiasm (Erickson, 1984). For example, Fleege (1961) contends that an “aptitude for vicariousness “ (p. 22) may be the most important quality of effective tertiary teachers. Similarly, Crawford and Bradshaw (1968) cite findings that list enthusiasm and energy as two of the four most frequently mentioned qualities of effective teachers, according to student rating assessment tools. Although he cautions against equating motivation and entertainment, McKeachie (1974) agrees that frequent enthusiasm is often a positive reinforcement of learning. Boehrer and Linsky (1990) also advocate the importance of stimulating the affective domain through elevating class dynamics and, thus, motivation.

It may be possible, however, that the prerequisite to both energy and enthusiasm may be the degree of positiveness of outlook that an instructor is willing to share. For example, Smith (1987) emphasizes that teachers who anticipate that the lesson will be a pleasurable experience for all lead effective classrooms. Eble (1988a) insists that modeling pleasure in the teaching and learning cycle is critical to effective teaching. Barth (1990) contends that “...what causes teachers...to spring out of bed at 6:30 a.m. is not the preparation for, administration and scoring of, and remediation of tests” (p. 39). Energy, vigor, and enthusiasm are functions of the anticipation of contributing to and participating positively in communities of learners. As Barth continues, “The fact of the

matter is, of course, that the adult must be alive in order to help the child [learn]" (p. 42). In a study of most commonly identified descriptors included in students' ratings, Mason (1988) found that one consistently listed criterion was the teacher's use of praise and encouragement to motivate students. Yet, the true nature of enthusiasm might well have been described by Hightet (1950) several decades ago when he suggested that "...teaching is not like sublimely inducing a chemistry reaction: it is much more like passionately painting a picture, or making a piece of music.... You must throw your heart into it" (p. 6).

Negotiatory Spirit

In a dissertation designed to prepare individuals for positions as college teachers, Hardy (1976) noted that there appear to exist four teacher prototype attitudes surrounding instructional negotiation. The first is discipline-centered and allows no modification regarding concerns of either the student or the teacher. The second is instructor-centered wherein the decisions in class revolve around the assumed superiority of the instructor, with no consideration of the need for negotiation. Next, the student-centered cognitive attitude assumes that intellectual development of the learner is foremost, and is exclusive of emotive factors. Because content and style are focused toward objective achievement, negotiation is minimal. Lastly, in the student-centered affective spirit, personal, and social development of the learner is seen to be an important contributor to the cognitive process and, consequently, is unique and reasonably negotiable.

Long ago, Klapper (1959) insisted that participatory and negotiatory decision-making by students was at the heart of the type of teaching advocated by Socrates and Aristotle. If one accepts that the contemporary postsecondary classroom brings with it a

divergence in individual realities such as never before seen, then an alteration in attitudes regarding such things as the spirit of negotiation of many instructors may promote change in the direction of increased generosity.

Moral Imperative

Granrose (1980) refers to this quality as “moral insight” (p. 29) while Eble (1973) writes of teaching as a moral act that involves a conscious awareness of one’s self, tempered by a healthy attitude of self-efficacy. Eble contends that this moral awareness contributes to a sense of proportion and perspective illustrated by effective teachers. “He knows more, has more to balance, and balances more skillfully. He also does many things very well: writing, acting, designing structures, digging in the garden...” (p. 53).

Similarly, in writing of healthy institutions that may facilitate profound learning, Barth (1990) acknowledges the importance of “posing one’s own problems, risk taking, humor, collaboration...and the presence of a moral purpose” (p. 44). Greenleaf (1991) writes extensively of moral purpose, preferring to label it “ethical foresight” and “prescience” (p. 24). By this virtue, effective teachers must make a “better than average guess about *what* is going to happen *when* in the future” (p. 24), and feel an ethical compulsion to take action to improve the future.

The recognition may not be widespread that the art of teaching at all levels is so potentially powerful and influential that one needs to proceed through it full of care, respect, and thought. This idea alone, however, will instill in some of the very best educators a poignant sense of moral responsibility for the hearts and minds that they are impacting.

To conclude this section, Greenleaf (1991) has said of dissecting the act of teaching that “The danger, perhaps, is to hear the analyst too much and the artist too little” (p. 11). While it seems reasonable to be stringent in one’s empirical deconstruction of teaching, it would also appear somewhat superficial to evaluate teaching effectiveness solely through quantifiable attributes. Teaching of students, be they of primary or undergraduate age, is a craft the foundation of which is emotive, not mechanical, in nature. Attempts to technify teaching may result not only in less effective learning, but also in the misconception that a life of teaching can be void of feeling. Through recognition of teaching excellence that rewards interaction and enthusiasm (Dinmore & Rohrer, 1996; Gaite, 1996), the teaching profession in colleges and universities may also begin to promote recognition of effective teaching as a craft as well as a science.

Faculty Development Efforts

Gaff (1975) may have been one of the initial explorers of faculty development programs utilized as instruments to enhance teaching. He defines faculty development activities as “...enhancing the talents, expanding the interests, improving the competence, and otherwise facilitating the professional and personal growth of faculty members, particularly in their roles as instructors” (p. 187). Furthermore, Gaff suggests that this growth is possible as a sustainable initiative if faculties are motivated through an affirming, low risk environment presided over by nonthreatening and nonevaluative colleagues. He also suggests that programs of this nature are more effectively developmental rather than remedial in nature. That is, their mission may not be as critical in identifying and helping less-than-effective teachers as in collegial sharing of expertise for the health of the entire university community.

Seldin (1993) defines faculty development efforts as those containing an eightfold opportunity for growth in the following areas:

1. Development of a wide variety of teaching skills repertoire
2. Creation of links between the processes of teaching and learning
3. Enhancement of interpersonal skills particularly as they are related to student/teacher rapport
4. Improvement of communication skills specific to discipline and pedagogy
5. Fostering greater intrinsic satisfaction in teaching
6. Improvement in self-monitoring and self-adaptation skills
7. Facilitation of a faculty educative dialogue to assert commonality of purpose
8. Provision of sympathetic and knowledgeable feedback

This notion of community and collaborative development is supported by Eble and McKeachie (1985). Their research indicates that a sense of faculty empowerment and ownership of the development initiative characterize successful professional growth programs. Consequently, programs based on autonomy, independence, and personal initiative may more likely create internal motivation for teaching excellence than external motivators based on power structure and reward systems. Because these external motivators are a frequent source of professional intercollegial envy, they are sometimes viewed as contributing to persistent isolationist and protectionist practices among faculty. Morill and Spees (1982) support the contention that workable faculty development plans may need to become relatively independent of external reinforcement and domination. They suggest that

...voluntary participation and administrative nonintervention are best accomplished through the use of a faculty standing committee composed of instructors who are self-directed, motivated, professional, and genuinely interested in faculty development. This committee should be given a free hand to involve other faculty and staff members in various instructional, personal, and institutional improvement projects. Most importantly, the committee members should be given...visible support by the institution. (p. 27)

An illustration of their Discussion Model of Faculty Development follows:

Figure 1.

<u>Areas of Faculty Development Programs</u>		
<u>Instructional Development</u>	<u>Professional Development</u>	<u>Personal Development</u>
Focus on courses	Focus on faculty as scholars	Focus on teachers as individuals
-----	-----	-----
Improves teaching and learning; creates environment conducive to effective teaching	Updates knowledge of discipline; acquires specific skills and techniques	Promotes personal growth and interpersonal relationships
-----	-----	-----
Workshops	Conferences	Personal counseling
Seminars	Research and reading	Support groups
Observations	Leaves and exchanges	Discussions
Learning resource centers	Community involvement	Seminars and classes
Teaching centers		

Lack of cooperation and collaboration among teachers often leads researchers to advocate the purposeful implementation of structures that facilitate interdepartmental dialogue surrounding the dynamics of teaching. In an analysis of 71 reported professional development programs, Levinson-Rose and Menges (1981) examine improvement efforts in five general categories including (1) Faculty Project Grant Programs, (2) Workshop and Seminar Programs, (3) Student Rating Programs, (4) Practice with Feedback Programs, and (5) Concept Based Training Programs. Although changes in teaching behaviors varied with each type of program, each was rated as generally successful in creating short-term improvements in teaching activities. However, they cite a major difficulty in establishing professional development projects as the lack of collaboration that occurs and contend that such collegial experiences are necessary in yielding significant changes in teacher effectiveness. Similarly, Edgerton (1990) supports the creation of new dialogical infrastructures within the academy to nurture and reinforce professional discourse about teaching expertise and excellence. In addition, he suggests strategies such as peer observation, videotaping, and portfolio development as strategies that may help develop Shon's (1983) ideal "reflective practitioner." Fink (1984) also contends that successful professional development must allow time for creative reflection surrounded by opportunities to seek help, and by prospects for support in improvement efforts. In the past, evaluation of teaching effectiveness relied heavily on student questionnaire assessment. Because these tend to be inordinately behaviorist in nature, Saroyan (1996) also proposes a model of assessing teaching competency based on boosting pedagogical expertise, and experimenting with variations in teaching strategies through professional reflection. Although four of every five faculty development

approaches studied were externally initiated and conducted (Angelo, 1989), several researchers support the individual rather than institutional seeking of feedback, and view professional reflection as essential in this path of improvement (Menges, 1991).

Reflective teaching supported by nonjudgmental collegial conversation is a process also investigated by Amundsen (1992, 1993). She incorporates collaborative faculty discussion through a process of practice-centered inquiry involving observation, realization, and questioning. Amundsen concludes that this process is more likely to facilitate sustained periods of reflection, which contribute to improvement in various aspects of teaching. Both Amundsen and Wilson (1990) conclude that a faculty discussion group which engages in educative dialogue is necessary in addressing reflection and experimentation, and that participation in such programs is more likely to foster a substantial and sustained change in perspective about faculty teaching practices.

In a consolidation of studies by Eble and McKeachie (1986), and Menges (1991), Seldin (1994) suggests that successful teaching improvement programs exemplify several common characteristics. More specifically, he advocates that initiatives be designed for long term impact, but have interjections of short term reinforcement. They need to be structured with flexible and open-ended approaches to meet individual schedules and learning styles. Administration can demonstrate support by articulating clear, publicly visible support for the program. Participants exercise significant autonomy in shaping their development plans, and frequently do so within the context of an advisory group. Substantial numbers of faculty are involved in the design of the program at its conception. Lastly, excellence in the increase of teaching effectiveness is recognized and rewarded.

If a general, though not quantitatively conclusive, belief exists that tertiary teachers require support and training to improve less than effective practices, why do such efforts not occur with more urgency and frequency? MacKenzie, Eraut and Jones (1970) suggest at least four strong roadblocks to professional growth initiatives. Firstly, there exists little agreement as to what constitutes “good” teaching, resulting in measures of popularity, exam results and student evaluations that often become erroneously consolidated under descriptors such as “effective” or “competent.” Related to inconsistent interpretation of teacher effectiveness qualities is the existence of a relatively small body of empirical data supporting the premise that specific strategies are more or less influential than others. Additionally, the heretofore widely held assumption that a mutually exclusive dichotomy exists between teaching and learning is only recently being questioned. But perhaps most damaging is the view that tertiary teaching is a duty incidental to and frequently conflicting with the life of scholarship. Language supportive of this view speaks of “research opportunities” versus “teaching loads.”

In a similar study of challenges to professional development, Geis (1991) contends that many tertiary institutions exhibit conditions that may more often neutralize or negate initiatives to increase professional growth. Several other researchers draw similar conclusions. For example, Finkelstein and LaCelle-Peterson (1993) suggest that “... current American faculty... are ready to focus on teaching, but perceive their campuses to be inhospitable climates for that endeavor” (p. 3). In reaching a similar conclusion, Rice and Finkelstein (1993) state that there exists a need for “...multifaceted organizational structures that will encourage [professors] to broaden their horizons, approach their work in a different and imaginative way...” (p. 17). It is due to this rather

unaccommodating atmosphere that Geis suggests several institutional structures must be present to encourage the success of faculty development programs, including (a) existence of facilitative context, (b) appropriate senders of feedback, (c) positive perceived purpose and nature of the message, (d) recipient readiness, and (e) patterns of consequences. More specifically, he advocates an institutional culture of at least moderate maturity that demonstrates receptivity to either the goal or the process of the proposed renewal program, and that encourages feedback that is clearly formative, rather than summative in nature. This climate will likely display a transparency of purpose containing few hidden agendas regarding such issues as merit evaluation and tenure qualification. Ideally, the heterogeneous group charged with discussing feedback will be perceived as competent and expert counselors who are able to craft a plan of growth which is concrete, descriptive, specific, immediate, and diagnostic. Meaningful growth will more likely be experienced by voluntary participants who are seeking a medium in which they may cultivate professional rejuvenation through a process which plans for the setting of individual and future goals of a cyclical and consequential nature.

In a study with a slightly different perspective on roadblocks to faculty development efforts, Boice (1991) identifies assumptions and qualities of new and tenured faculty that impede their teaching effectiveness and which consequently limit their perceptions of professional growth. Specifically, these “slow start” teachers equate their own “good” teaching with content dissemination. Their perspective that improved teaching effectiveness equates with improved lecture notes appears to lead to the conclusion that their most important professional goal is to achieve a state wherein classes require no preparation or emotion. They may teach in a defensive rather than a

proactive mode, causing them to blame mediocre or bad student performance and ratings on external factors such as poor class size or lack of administrative support. Low confidence regarding their ability to build rapport with students results in lectures that are typically overprepared in terms of content amount and which consequently leave no consideration of classtime for interactive or collaborative scenarios. These assumptions also contribute to beliefs and behaviors about many faculty development programs as unassociated with their perceived activities of professorship, or which are primarily participated in by faculty who need assistance with expanding their understandings of content.

Seldin (1994) outlines three barriers to efforts to increase faculty effectiveness. He suggests that the overly generic nature of many teaching improvement programs often prevents them from catering to an individual teacher's highly specific needs. Additionally, some teachers fail to recognize a need for improvement in their teaching, either out of unawareness of the profile of desirable teacher qualities or out of their subjective perception of themselves as already achieving or surpassing effectiveness. Lastly, Seldin states that a belief exists that general pedagogical foundations do not contribute to discipline-specific practices and, therefore, are difficult to relate and apply to any one particular course.

Some attempts to develop teaching skills among faculty have been described as "the learning to see, leading the blind" (Emerson, 1996, p. 631). However, Erickson (1984) proposes a more optimistic view of professional development programs for faculty, stating that the "... instructional diversity we see on every campus is a clear reminder that the individual teacher is the cook in charge of the kitchen. Each, however,

will benefit from knowing more about the principles of pedagogical nutrition...” (p. ix).

Yet, as Klapper (1959) points out, the fact remains that “... teachers in institutions of post-high-school levels have not been prepared to teach” (p. 228). Because many universities possess inherent value systems that are counterproductive to creative and innovative teaching, many initiatives in staff development have been suggested, yet many have been rejected. While traditional university structures have disproportionately rewarded research efforts, the more progressive are now recognizing and rewarding excellence in teaching. As one example, the University of Colorado has created the President’s Teaching Scholarship Program which rewards research only if it illustrates a unique link between teaching theory and practice (Theall & Franklin, 1991). In light of demographic predictions that the numbers of new faculty required by tertiary institutions over the next five years may be as high as fifty per cent of the current faculty membership, attempts to create praxical and relevant faculty development paradigms are becoming a critical consideration in sustaining and improving teaching effectiveness at colleges and universities.

Development Models

Several faculty development programs have been suggested that attempt to build a viable bridge between teaching and researching. One process that has gained credibility in facilitating that link is the action research model. When conducted through stages of reflection, questioning, data gathering, and remediating, teaching can be increasingly viewed as a research and development portion of the professional activities of a professor rather than a distinct and unrelated responsibility. In a study at Massey University, Emerson (1996) concludes that “This action research... provided a structure which

allows staff to evaluate their present practices in teaching to refine their strategies in light of their experiences, their context and current thinking in the field” (p. 624). Similarly, Svinicki (1990) suggests a cyclical framework for improving faculty effectiveness that includes a process of reflection, abstraction of reality, experimentation of practice, and renewed reflection.

Brinko (1991) observes that most effective faculty development incorporates the instructional consultation model, and that when this is coupled with student evaluations the change in teacher effectiveness behaviors quadruples (Menges & Brinko, 1986). Brinko’s model of instructional consultation includes a four-stage process of initial contact, conferencing, information gathering, and debriefing/planning. Although the model appears linear, it may certainly lend itself to a more cyclical mode of consultation congruent with other reflection, plan, and action models.

Another model of faculty development proposed by Brinko is referred to as the product model, through which the teacher is requested to predetermine an end result or product, and a consultative expert is asked to come up with a course of action for achieving that end product. In the prescriptive model, the consultant is viewed as the “identifier, diagnoser, and solver of problems” (p. 42), and the teacher is simply the receiver of advice. Through the collaborative model, a more synergistic relationship is sought wherein both consultant and teacher work together to identify, diagnose, and suggest solutions for which the teacher will retain responsibility for achieving and evaluating. The belief that personal conflict may exacerbate professional competency is the foundation of the affiliative model wherein the professor will seek a type of consultation more illustrative of counseling. Brinko’s final model of development is referred to as

confrontational because it encourages dialogue of a challenging nature through which the consultant plays the role of the devil's advocate to encourage debate and dialogical questioning, and then solidification of teaching philosophies and practices.

Weimer (1990) outlines a detailed model of data collection, which she contends will facilitate professional growth and result in increased teaching effectiveness.

Although the size and composition of the collaborative group suggested by Weimer is not clear, she describes a process through which teachers may safely develop instructional awareness, gather information relative to teaching activities through peer observation or videotaping, implement alterations and, finally, assess effectiveness. Lewis (1991), while proposing a similar model, advocates that instructors must first be involved in exploring their own teaching preconditions; that is, investigating course content, facilities, and learner contexts, prior to developing an instructional awareness of greater breadth.

As a result of a study that investigated "quick starters," or new faculty who appear to have easily mastered the nuances of the teaching professor's professional life, Boice (1991) concludes that such individuals demonstrated several qualities of note. These teachers began by verbalizing an optimism about students and their achievements and a more general lack of complaints regarding the campus and colleagues. They demonstrated a relaxed pacing during lectures that encouraged higher levels of student participation, and integrated much of their research interest into course content. This caused them to exude high energy, a sense of humor, and interest in a broad range of disciplines. The disposition of these individuals to seek advice and engage in critical educative dialogue regarding their teaching practices resulted in more frequent interactions with colleagues and students. More importantly, however, Boice believes

that "...the habits, intellectual skills, and attitudes that distinguish these exemplary new hires are basic and teachable" (p. 115), and that a mandatory program of peer collaboration and mentoring may be facilitative in identifying and developing those habits, skills, and attitudes in other faculty. Boice's intervention process in encouraging "quick start" qualities among senior faculty includes activities of investigating and pursuant rebalancing of time management between teaching, writing, and interaction. In subsequent writings, Boice (1990, 1993) continues to emphasize the importance of professional development intervention through the notion of advanced mentoring during critical incident analyses early in professorial careers and then consistently from mid-to-end career growth. Ideal career experiences that he suggests will nurture the growth of both exemplary and disillusioned faculty include opportunities for travel and exploration, readily accessible social networks with colleagues, and finding success in action-linked publication. Furthermore, Boice suggests that these mentoring experiences may be twinned with growth contracting to encourage merit pay raises and promotions.

Beard (1990) describes a faculty development model at the University of London Institute of Education that facilitates growth in experimentation and innovation among teaching faculty. The University Teaching Methods Research Unit has been established to meet the demands by faculty for an improvement in their standard of teaching. Its mission is to create opportunities that increase teaching effectiveness. More specifically, its goals are outlined as:

1. Promoting an improved understanding of students' difficulties in learning and of the contributions that psychology makes to education

2. Establishing fruitful professional dialogues between individuals interested in teaching methodology
3. Initiating research into multistrategic teaching
4. Developing improved assessment techniques

Beard describes the process of professional growth in achieving these objectives as including an aspect of collection and dissemination of information through which professors read and discuss innovations in teaching, attend conferences to reinforce and perpetuate collaborative dialogue, produce and circulate monographs to sympathetic audiences, and attend courses regarding appropriate and innovative teaching methods and assessment instruments.

Another process outlined at Kent University (Lewis & Duffy, 1996) is analogous to the formative and summative evaluations of professional teaching staff conducted throughout Alberta in the past several decades. With the initiation of a “Teaching Award” program, a series of evaluative classroom visitations are conducted and professors are subsequently awarded grants to conduct research relating to improvement of their instructional practices. Monthly workshops and discussion groups are convened to review practical and theoretical findings of faculty, and to update grant projects.

These types of internally initiated programs conform to Stahle’s (1996) definition of effective teacher development programs at the tertiary level. Through an experiment at the University of Helsinki, he began the “Quality Without Compromise” project to encourage ongoing discussion and mutual growth among teachers through “open systems dialogue.” The goal of such dialogue is to “integrate information collectively instead of only defending one’s approach.” Stahle reports promising success with this type of

dialogical self-renewal programs, particularly among members of the Faculty of Medicine.

Palmer (1999) reports similar success in increasing an educative dialogue and awareness through a triangular conversational process surrounding topics that do not exclude teaching techniques, but venture into more truthful and personal insights. He describes a process wherein faculty are encouraged to reflect upon and write about teaching incidents in four thematic areas: (1) critical moments in one's own teaching and learning, (2) the human condition of teachers, (3) metaphors and images of the act of teaching, and (4) autobiographical reflection on superior teachers as role models. He reports,

Every faculty I have ever visited contains a wealth of wisdom about teaching that waits to be tapped. If we would practice these modest graces of conversation, encouraged by leaders who invite us and by topics that engage us, good talk about teaching will flourish-- and good teaching will have a better chance to flourish as well. (p. 8)

In advocating that "Knowledge is something people do together," Duffy (1996) proposes similar collegial efforts to increase teaching effectiveness. From peer metaphor analysis to "think aloud" videotaping, to teacher behavior inventories, she proposes a theory of group triangulation of data to establish an ongoing spirit of collaboration rather than competition in teacher development programs. Palmer (1999) warns against the decrease in this collegial socialization of professional growth and development, and refers to the increasing isolation of faculty as the "privatization of teaching."

Privatization creates more than individual pain; it creates institutional incompetence as well. By privatizing teaching we make it next to impossible for the academy to become more adept at its teaching mission. The growth of any skill depends heavily on honest dialogue among those who are doing it. Some of us may grow by private trial and error, but our willingness to try and fail is severely limited when we are not supported by a community that encourages such risks. The most likely outcome when any function is privatized is that people will perform the function conservatively, refusing to stray far from the silent consensus on what “works”-- even when it clearly does not. That, I am afraid, too often describes the state of teaching in the privatized academy. (p. 1)

In efforts to recognize the necessity of professional growth participation, the University of Wollongong has instituted mandatory course requirements for all faculty members on the theme Improving University Teaching. Tasks of the course include journal writing and reflective practice, experimental teaching under observation, curricula reviews, and portfolio completion. In a very different part of the world, supporters of the pre-capitalist Russian post-secondary structure did not appear to believe that university teachers are born with innate teaching skills. A large majority of new and tenured faculty in the former U.S.S.R. were expected to attend mandatory technical institute training courses in teaching pedagogy simultaneous with other professorial responsibilities (Henderson, 1969).

Farmer (1993) describes similar efforts of mandatory participation at King's College that redesigned the faculty reward system to combine both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators through three types of programs. Curricular reform involved development of

course syllabi through team rather than individual efforts as well as implementation of performance-based assessments and action research in classrooms. Performance Appraisals of a formative, developmental nature are conducted on a five-year cycle based on goals established by individual faculty in a Professional Growth Plan. This strategy is implemented "...to release creativity by empowering faculty to personally control their own career development" (p. 49). Lastly, the Merit Pay Program is based on a voluntary and summative evaluation of activities that exemplify effective teaching, scholarly work, and community service. Farmer reports results of improved faculty morale, an increase in teaching portfolios, several major course revisions, an increase in collaborative dyads and leadership, and an improvement in publication manuscripts.

Jackson and Simpson (1993) report similar successful results after implementation of the Senior Teaching Fellows Program at the University of Georgia. Established with the goal of improving the quality of undergraduate teaching, the program enables eight senior faculty members to meet to become familiar with instructional issues and to broaden their perspectives as teachers. This relatively sustained effort involves a year-long process of retreats, biweekly dinners, meetings with university administration and culminating activities during which time professors plan, implement, and self-evaluate an instructional improvement project. Jackson and Simpson suggest that keys to the acceptance and thriving of their initiative include thoughtful planning, administrative support, development of trust and an esprit de corps, and the freedom of individual participants to seek their own agenda dependent on their unique needs.

Adaptability, flexibility, and dynamic contextual suitability appear to be characteristic of many successful development initiatives. In her investigation of

contemporary multi-year consortia projects, Alfano (1994) describes faculty development programs of diverse purpose and process. These programs vary from faculty training with the goal of increasing freshman retention levels at Borough of Manhattan Community College; to a four step teacher training process in the Associate Program for Adjunct Instruction at College of the Canyons; to a Scholarship and Professionalism Program at Brevard Community College where faculty are funded for four to six week technology training internships at corporate or community sites. In outlining these programs, Alfano advocates that the diversity of the teaching faculty must determine the needs and uniqueness of professional growth projects, and concludes that, “Today faculty development projects are sometimes the only avenue to relieve pressures caused in increases in student enrollment, diversity concerns, student unpreparedness, and the combination of decreasing budgets and heavier workloads” (p. 3).

Smith and Smith (1993) agree that addressing specific and unique needs is crucial in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse faculty. They report that although faculty have many interests in and requirements of professional development programs, a commonly cited concern among teaching staff at colleges and universities is the isolation, lack of community, and sense of not belonging they experience. Smith and Smith contend that if left unattended, this concern may progress toward exasperation, disillusionment, and eventual alienation of faculty and state that, “This isolation, tolerable at age thirty, becomes deadening by age fifty” (p. 82). They outline two programs that they assess as particularly effective in promoting belongingness and in providing opportunities and challenges for faculty to experience incremental, long-term professional growth. The New Jersey Department of Higher Education (NJDEH) collaborates with the New Jersey

Institute for Collegiate Teaching and Learning (NJICTL) in working statewide with faculty through Joseph Katz's (1988) Partners in Learning Program. This program revolves professional activities around the question "How do students learn?", and promotes teacher collaboration through classroom observation, student interviews and collegial discussion. Smith and Smith identify four strengths of this process, including its ongoing nature, faculty empowerment and ownership, and its potential for transformation. However, perhaps the most optimistic finding regarding this initiative is its potential to illuminate the "essence" of participating teachers by encouraging revitalization, re-energization, and reinvestigation. As one participant expressed,

The Program can get you out of a rut-- going to class, presenting prepared material, giving exams, grading them, reading papers. It makes you think more about teaching, beyond the mechanics of a given class. You can become more experiential, and you have interested faculty members back you up or set you straight....Partners in a great, on-going dialogue on teaching.

(New Jersey Institute for Collegiate Teaching and Learning, 1991, p. 9)

The second initiative cited by Smith and Smith (1993) in combating the isolationist environment of tertiary institutions originates at the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education where curriculum development, faculty growth and well-being, and institutional change are primary and interrelated goals. A key characteristic of this program is its emphasis on the learning community model. The foundational element of this model is the restructuring of the educational environment to one that promotes high levels of interdisciplinary coherence, and intense professional interactions between students and faculty. This is achieved by involving all

faculty in some degree of collaborative planning and teaching in which faculty work together on a daily basis to plan curriculum, design and critique assignments, and discuss and evaluate students. Smith and Smith contend that The Center has been successful because

“It emphasizes long-term issues rather than short-term projects. It concentrates on building enduring relationships, networks, and teams rather than working with random individuals. The Washington Center’s eight-year history suggests that its approach is very effective in revitalizing faculty and improving undergraduate education” (p. 87).

Each of the aforementioned faculty development programs illustrates several features that appear necessary to benefit tertiary teachers. Firstly, most efforts attempt to confront compartmentalization and departmentalization by suggesting a new collegial social structure that facilitates a more expansive view of instructors-as-educators within the institutional community. Secondly, many approaches foster a type of authentic educative dialogue based on reflection and the collaborative sharing of insights. Often this activity is promoted through an open and creative restructuring of timetables, meeting agendas, and faculty retreats. Next, most effective efforts are student-centered with a focus on changing classroom practice. In whatever form they may take, these initiatives appear to keep the educational experiences of the student at the heart of the process of change. Lastly, professional growth is viewed as a slow and gradual, developmental process. Teaching, learning, and community building are assumed as related, complex, long-term processes in necessary and inevitable professional change.

This review has investigated three issues surrounding the effective education of undergraduate learners in colleges and universities. First, theories of developmental stages and learning have been offered with the intent of providing a context for the learner qualities encountered at the tertiary level. Piagetian development and Gardnerian learning are of particular significance in this regard. Next, a number of criteria of teaching effectiveness have been outlined based on student evaluations, as well as educational psychology research. These criteria are categorized as technical “ways of doing.” They include teacher skill in areas such as communication, lesson composition, and content relevance, as well as more esoteric “ways of being” including such qualities as approachability, empathy, and enthusiasm. Lastly, an exploration of several faculty professional development programs has been conducted with the intent of outlining qualities that appear to consistently indicate success in facilitating growth toward teacher effectiveness in tertiary institutions.

The craft of teaching is one engaged in by many; effectively so by some, robustly and passionately by few, and with reverence, courage and wisdom by even fewer still. Because of the systematic and traditional nature of their educational experiences, many college and university instructors are fortunate if they are able, without additional training, to intuitively bring but a few skills of effectiveness to their initial teaching practice. Most simply parrot the teaching styles and methodologies that are paramount in their own memories of learning, and often those recollections are accompanied by a positive or negative emotive perspective. Established, ongoing professional development programs to encourage greater teaching effectiveness among instructors and faculty do exist, and many thrive. However, widespread recognition of their importance in

contributing to increased student learning by enhancing pedagogical awareness has frequently been overlooked, resulting in a lack of time, desire, and economic or social reward to participate in such efforts on a committed, long-term basis. Add to this the enormous increase in institutional populations and class sizes, facility and timetabling challenges, and funding decreases, creating a situation of limited opportunity in which many institutions find insufficient fiscal cause to create, develop, and support growth initiatives in teaching.

Yet, with a pending influx in the proportion of beginning and intermediate teachers at all levels of public education, including undergraduate and graduate levels, it may be increasingly important for educational decision makers to re-engage in a consideration of establishing Professional Growth Centers and Programs within colleges and universities. This may be particularly necessary if a desire exists to develop and maintain the academic integrity and quality of learning in post secondary institutions. While the predicted wave of young, energetic instructors may bring a fresh and optimistic approach to teaching activities, it is suggested that they may quickly become engulfed in an institutional culture of the type that reveres solitary research to the exclusion of gregarious and interactive teaching. It is crucial to the long-term effectiveness of these teachers that they be given opportunities early in their careers to expand--or at the very least, to establish--a foundational pedagogical awareness.

Benefits of professional development participation by faculty are widely cited. Not only can such a process enhance an instructor's teaching and learning, it overtly exemplifies this beneficial cycle to students. Continued learning on the part of faculty may be a prerequisite for growth toward teaching transformation. That is, faculty

members who participate in development programs broaden their repertoire of teaching techniques and, consequently, improve their teaching abilities. Because enthusiasm is rarely maintained in isolation, faculty development initiatives may elongate initial periods of teacher vitality in colleges and universities, as well as contribute to a renewed sense of community. Faculty who participate in growth projects may become more deeply engaged with students and colleagues as well as becoming more interdisciplinary and universal in their view of disciplines. In addition, professional growth programs in which faculty assume more responsibility and are thus empowered to achieve professional and institutional improvement may immunize teachers from the tedium of repeatedly teaching multiple sections of the same courses in the same ways. Effective development efforts may promote and rekindle creativity by providing alternate perspectives on what is possible, desirable and necessary to the activities of teaching.

By locating, organizing, and leveraging the large pool of teaching talent scattered throughout tertiary institutions, professional development programs and centers have the potential to become much-needed energy amplification systems. Additionally, when structures and opportunities for productive educative dialogue are recognized as valuable, the resultant synergy produced by the efforts of beginning and veteran teachers has further potential to create a new sense of priority and possibility in the effective teaching of university and college students.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

It was the intent of this study to gather data from long-standing Teaching In Focus cohort members surrounding the process of effective professional growth relative to teaching improvement among tertiary teachers. This project proceeded by identifying, contacting, and interviewing several university professors from various faculties at The University of Lethbridge with the objective of examining issues regarding tertiary teacher effectiveness and professional development initiatives. The interviews occurred over a three-month duration from February to April, and incorporated both structured and conversational components. Firstly, the standard survey portion of the interview outlined demographic and sequential aspects of the teachers' classroom experiences through questions such as, "Why did you choose to participate in this professional development activity?" Pace and direction of the second, more in-depth conversational interview included open-ended comparison and contrast questions revolving around the observations, feelings, experiences, perceptions, and insights of the participant. Samples of such questions include,

1. What does an effective teacher "look" like?
2. How do you describe your teaching style?
3. What feelings did you experience when examining your teaching?
4. What changes did you make to your teaching through this professional development program?
5. What challenges to your teaching effectiveness do you routinely encounter?

The open-ended questions used to frame the interview conversations focused upon gaining an understanding of present teaching techniques and practice, eliciting perceptions of the relationship between teaching practice and student learning, identifying attempts to modify teaching practices based on professional development involvement, examining incentives to seek professional growth in teaching activities, and drawing conclusions about the value of that professional development experience.

Interview questions were open-ended with the intent of collecting anecdotal exemplars relating teaching competencies and professional development initiatives paralleling those cited in the literature review. Additionally, the open ended nature of questioning was intended to allow opportunities for respondents to voice opinions about events, and to propose insights into certain occurrences as a tool for guiding further inquiry (Yin, 1984).

Another characteristic of this interview format was its focused nature. That is, the respondents were interviewed for a moderate period of time which, for contextual reasons, were rather fixed in duration. Although conversational in nature, the interview tended to follow a certain set of chronological, and rather linear, questions derived from the case study protocol. (For specific examination of the interview instrument, refer to Appendix B.)

Responses to interviews were scribed and analyzed for thematic convergence and divergence. Additionally, analytic memo writing occurred during interviews, as well as subsequently during thematic analysis. Several other artifacts were analyzed for thematic convergence, including three extensive written subscriptions by members of the interview group, and one video analysis of a teaching incident with accompanying reflection.

In addition, findings from a previous study (Townsend & McHugh, 1994) were synthesized into these interview results to provide data relative to two themes, specifically,

1. In what ways do tertiary teachers traditionally proceed in increasing their teaching effectiveness?
2. What processes and conditions most likely encourage increased teacher effectiveness?

Analysis of data followed Neuman's (1997) suggested process for qualitative data analysis, namely (a) thematic conceptualization, (b) open coding, (c) axial coding, and (d) selective coding. Detailed descriptions of each of these stages of analysis follows.

Thematic Conceptualization

Concept formation is an important step in data analysis, and begins during the literature search and interview phases. In the case of this study, the literature review established a foundation for identifying major concepts regarding tertiary teacher effectiveness, and characteristics of professional development initiatives that appear to facilitate integration of those qualities. During the interview stage, these themes were voiced repeatedly and provided a framework of thought for ensuing conversation. In turn, the concepts that were formulated during interviews established further guidelines and perspectives for analysis of written artifacts. Although ideas and evidence at this early stage appeared as mutually exclusive, this phase of analysis reflects Miles and Huberman's (1994) suggestion that researchers begin the coding process with a tentative list of concepts to be supplemented or discarded as the actual multiphasic coding begins. A result of this thematic conceptualization stage was a broad categorical organization of

teacher effectiveness and professional growth features prior to progressing to the next coding analysis phases.

Open Coding

Open coding is typically performed during a first pass through recently collected data, in this case through the interview responses and written artifacts. In an attempt to categorize a diverse mass of critical events and themes, data collected in this study was initially identified in terms of two large umbrella themes related to the research question. These themes were referred to as “Qualities of Teaching Effectiveness”, and “Characteristics of Professional Growth.” All frequently repeated terms and key events were indexed under one of these general categories. Also noted during this stage were comments identified during the interview process regarding conditions extraneous to the actual conversation.

During a second pass through the data, a more specific set of observations was highlighted in an attempt to begin to concretize the conversational abstractions. Using the categorization of the previous two themes, data was organized according to the guidelines outlined in Table 1.

Table 1.

Interview and artifact data categorization

<u>Characteristics of Teacher Effectiveness</u>	<u>Characteristics of Professional Growth</u>
teacher effectiveness profile	reasons for professional growth involvement
insights gained about effectiveness	roadblocks to successful teaching
alterations made in teaching style	qualities of professional development

At this point, analytic memos began to express observations about the coding process itself. (For samples of these types of memos, refer to Appendix C.)

Axial Coding

During this subsequent pass through the collected data, connections between concepts were formed. An example of one such thematic link was the investigation of a newly raised set of relationships shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

Consequential Linkages through Axial Coding

Reasons for involvement related to teaching effectiveness	Professional Development Involvement	Consequences of involvement related to teaching effectiveness
---	---	---

This type of analysis led to further sequential speculation, for example, “If A + B then C?” That is, if certain professional qualities are present in a tertiary teacher, is an effective professional development experiences likely to create the impetus for a resultant

change in teaching behaviors toward those associated with researched teacher effectiveness? Further causes, consequences, conditions, and interactions were speculated upon as clusters of connections began to occur, and were thus noted in analytic memos.

Selective Coding

During this final pass through data, previous coding was scanned and scrutinized with the intent of identifying selected cases that appeared to consistently uphold the comparison and contrast relationships identified during axial coding. This overall analysis began to help formulate several core generalizations and elaborations upon the causes of that thematic convergence. Specific to this study, analysis contributed to findings supporting conclusions concerning several aspects of university teaching and professional growth, including statements surrounding:

- Current undergraduate classroom practices.
- Processes of tertiary professional development.
- Perceptions of instructional excellence before and after involvement in professional growth programs.
- Effective characteristics of faculty development programs.

Consistent with information outlined in the Introduction, the significant framework in guiding data collection was the question, “In what way is university teacher effectiveness impacted by participation in faculty development programs that promote professional self-examination and action research?”

FINDINGS

Subsequent to the initial open coding examination of interview and artifact data, interview responses were clustered in web format around several broad concepts.

Concept webs were representative of four major themes, namely:

- Respondents' outline of characteristics illustrating tertiary teacher effectiveness
- Respondents' perception of incentives for participation in professional growth projects
- Respondents' identification of roadblocks to effectiveness impacted by participation in development initiatives
- Respondents' description of modifications in teaching resulting from participation in teaching focused professional development

Findings specific to each of these themes are presented by identifying several defining categories of responses in each, by indicating the number of respondent references made to each thematic sub-category, as well as by providing textual explanations and examples of conversational anecdotes that appeared to be representative of interview and artifact data.

Qualities of Tertiary Teacher Effectiveness: Knowledge

Table 3.1.

Characteristics of Effective Tertiary Teachers:

Knowledge Attributes

	Number of references
• Content expertise	11
• Understanding of learning pedagogy	10
• Research productivity	2

As outlined in Table 3.1, the most commonly cited indicator of effectiveness relative to teachers' knowledge appears to be expert control of material within a specific discipline or content area. Respondents offered an almost equal number of references when expressing their perceptions regarding the importance of understanding the student-as-learner as interpreted through a specific discipline, in addition to knowledge of teaching pedagogy, including experience outside of the academic realm as either a teacher or field worker. One respondent referred to this type of pedagogical knowledge as "understanding and meeting learner objectives," another as "not unnecessarily over-intellectualizing content when students are not ready," yet another as "attending to process skills which facilitate learning." These statements were made relative to a limited learner context, that being the perceived restrictions imposed by a specific discipline area in a teacher's understanding of the student-as-learner. A comment illustrative of this type of content-specific pedagogy is "You may know how to teach Geography well, but how does that help me teach Chemistry?" Of the ten references made, six were statements

illustrative of this discipline-specific understanding of learning, while the remaining four were directed at the importance of understanding the nature of the learning process in a general pedagogical context independent of discipline area or preferred teaching style.

Research productivity in isolation, unless directly related to teaching and pedagogical issues of significance to the activities of an instructor, appeared to be perceived as a relatively unimportant characteristic of effective tertiary teachers. As one education professor suggested, research may be important only inasmuch as “students know and appreciate that your research is being done, and that it will enhance your teaching.”

Qualities of Tertiary Teacher Effectiveness: Skills

Table 3.2.

Characteristics of Effective Tertiary Teachers:

Skill Attributes

Number of references

- | | |
|---|----|
| • Implements multistrategic methods | 16 |
| • Values learning | 14 |
| • Creates relevance (content and context) | 11 |
| • Conducts appropriate evaluation | 6 |
| • Demonstrates adaptability | 6 |

Table 3.2 indicates the most frequently referenced skill characteristic of teacher effectiveness includes activities of planning and delivery of a wide variety of learning

experiences for students which, despite institutional configurations which militate against them, incorporate multiple forums, venues, and strategies for learning. Examples of restrictive configurations include class size, suitability of learning space, and lack of equipment, and will be discussed more specifically in the thematic section entitled “Roadblocks.” Several multistrategic methods of teaching were suggested by respondents as ways of combating these logistical challenges, including use of “practical anecdotes,” “coaching methods,” “critical thinking,” and “action research.” The next most frequent number of responses support the importance of activities that demonstrate a teacher’s value for continual and life-long learning including attending teaching conferences, sharing one’s own experiences with colleagues and students, and a willingness to accept the experiences of students as learnings for the teacher. Another perceived characteristic of effectiveness cited often appears to be a teacher’s ability to engage students in the learning process of particularly difficult concepts by linking nonacademic or practical examples with theoretical or abstract content, thereby creating a content-specific, yet context-general, frame of reference for the material. One respondent refers to this skill as creating a classroom “where content mirrors reality,” another as “using questioning of practical scenarios to demonstrate relevance,” and yet a third as encouraging a “marriage between the rational and the non-rational.”

Although cited occasionally and specifically in regards to “fairness and transparency,” evaluation and assessment issues were not mentioned as frequently, and appear equal in importance with the ability of the teacher to demonstrate

flexibility and adaptability in meeting learner needs and in responding to students' concerns.

Qualities of Tertiary Teacher Effectiveness: Attitudes

Table 3.3.

Characteristics of Effective Tertiary Teachers:

Attitudes

	Number of references
• Approachability/rapport	15
• Teacher/student interdependence	9
• Empathy for student values	8
• Respect for self and students	6
• Enthusiasm	2

The most frequently referred to attitudinal characteristic of effective teachers identified in Table 3.3 was the ability to portray approachability, to create rapport, and to establish a learning community within the classroom where student/student and teacher/student interrelationships are valued, respected, and facilitated. One professor referred to the establishment of this milieu as one that “ensures the academic safety of students,” while another respondent spoke of a “willingness to enter into a meaningful two-way learning relationship.” Perceived as less important by respondents, yet still significant, is the need for tertiary teachers to relinquish power issues by creating an

interdependent state of learning rather than an umbilical dependency of students on the teacher. This process is referred to by one respondent as “dealing with the alpha dog syndrome,” and embodies the notion of facilitating an atmosphere of student ownership and empowerment involving the teacher as a guide rather than as a sage. In addition, it encompasses the attitudes of respect and empathy necessary to “remember what it was like to be a student”.

Relatively few references were made to teacher enthusiasm, energy, and inspiration as being indicative of attitudes exemplified during effective teaching incidences, however, several respondents spoke indirectly of the importance of “getting students excited about the topic.”

In summation, a general portrait of the effective tertiary educator as perceived by these respondents characterizes a teacher as one who is informed about discipline content, yet is able to link that expertise with analysis and synthesis of practical experiences and relevant anecdotes; one who understands the intricate nuances of learning and teaching, and who appears to appreciate the cyclical nature of the learner-teacher process, yet possesses the pedagogical expertise to assume the role of leader in the learning process; one who illustrates a working knowledge of a wide variety of teaching strategies, yet is able to identify and adapt presentation methodology to suit the learner and the context; one who embodies approachability and friendliness, yet respects a healthy educational interdependence between the teacher and learner; and one who expresses empathy for students’ realities, yet maintains high expectations for academic achievement. Having identified these

virtues, what then prevents tertiary teachers from achieving such admirable competencies?

Roadblocks Common to Achieving Effectiveness in Teaching

Respondents categorized challenges to their teaching effectiveness in three ways: as institutional, referring to systemic and university-wide phenomenon that may overtly or subliminally inhibit professional growth and development efforts; as professional, referring to individual or departmental factors effecting decisions about worklife priorities; and as personal, referring to pressures extraneous to campus life that effect decisions and priorities surrounding worklife. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 outline these findings.

Table 4.1.

Challenges to Increasing Teaching Effectiveness:

Institutional Obstacles

Number of references

- | | |
|---|----|
| • Lack of rewards for teaching | 12 |
| • Tenure and promotion considerations | 12 |
| • Lack of professional development programs | 6 |

Perceived lack of widespread and recognizable reward systems for the effective teacher, in addition to insufficiently public or accessible extrinsic rewards, were referred to frequently during conversations regarding institutional roadblocks that individuals

must overcome to become effective tertiary teachers. These references frequently appeared embedded in conversations expressing concern surrounding the tenure and promotion process, and weightings or considerations in tenure promotion that are perceived as diametrically opposed to teaching competence. As one respondent stated, “This results from a four hundred year tradition of bad teaching supporting an ideological paradigm that there is only one correct way to teach.” Rewards that *do* exist were described by one respondent as “politicized,” and by another as “rewarding mediocrity in teaching, and excellence in researching.” The next most commonly referenced roadblock was the lack of availability of ongoing and broad-based professional development programs, particularly those that exist on a non-threatening and non-judgmental basis to non-tenured faculty. Awareness of such programs is identified as an issue, as is indiscriminate administrative sanctioning of such programs through overt funding efforts.

Table 4.2.

Challenges to Increasing Teaching Effectiveness:

Professional Obstacles

Number of references

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| • Isolation | 10 |
| • Culture of research | 6 |
| • Workload | 4 |
| • Lack of teaching training | 3 |

Professional roadblocks most frequently cited describe the encouragement of an isolationist and overly competitive academic culture in combination with an engrained system of research vilification. One respondent stated that the professional culture is “structured competitively to promote distance and isolation through research.” Most respondents made at least one referral to their struggle with making professional decisions based on external pressure to achieve acceptance by supporting one or both of these cultural mores. In addition, increased workloads were often identified as professional obstacles to teaching reflection and resultant improvement, as illustrated through several statements such as, “I’m just too busy,” or, “My workload allows no time for teaching reflection.” Although not expressed as frequently, some respondents felt a level of discomfort with their professional lack of training in the area of education, however, each of these observed that this lack of training is not necessarily perceived by departmental colleagues, nor their academic support system, as an issue of common concern. One respondent suggested that professional growth participation based on increasing teaching effectiveness is viewed by colleagues as “fluffy.”

Table 4.3.

Challenges to Increasing Teaching Effectiveness:

Personal

Number of references

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • Lack of role model | 8 |
| • Fatigue /indifference | 4 |
| • Fiscal considerations | 1 |

The most commonly cited personal obstacles to increased teaching effectiveness were those surrounding the lack of opportunities of the respondent to observe, either as a learner or as a colleague, effective teaching in an appropriate environment of objective analysis. This absence of role modeling or mentoring of teaching skills in tertiary scenarios causes respondents to defer to a style of teaching based on “teaching as I was taught.” Several respondents extended this lack of role modeling to include a negative version of this deferral, that is, “Because I was taught badly by Teacher X, I will make sure I never use that style of teaching myself.” Memories of personal learning experiences were frequently described as less than inspirational, and some respondents linked this lack of enthusiastic and energetic role models with a reprioritization favoring research over teaching activities. For some respondents, the stress and fatigue associated with raising families and maintaining a personal balance in homelife affected their level of commitment as well.

It appears that obstacles to professional growth associated with teaching effectiveness are numerous and varied. While most respondents acknowledge teaching effectiveness to be an indicator of success in the academic arena, many also concede that incentives to achieve teaching mastery are sparse. What, then, would cause them to participate in professional development opportunities where tertiary teaching is examined for the purpose of counteracting obstacles to increase effectiveness?

Incentives or Reasons for Participation in Professional Development Opportunities

Table 5.

Participation Incentives

Number of references

- | | |
|--|----|
| • To improve teaching through proactive remediation | 17 |
| • To satisfy a curiosity about tertiary teaching | 9 |
| • To become involved in a professionally social activity | 6 |
| • To conform to external pressure | 4 |

The most significant reason for involvement in teaching-focused professional development initiatives appeared to be an internal and authentic interest in the act of teaching in general, or in one's own teaching in specific. As Table 5 indicates, the most frequently cited responses were those which reflect participation of a voluntary nature, that is, involvement in teacher-focused professional development as a result of an interest and commitment to those activities surrounding teaching, rather than resulting from administratively imposed efforts to remediate substandard teaching. Thus, the responses underscore the value of safe and intrinsically imposed proactivity, rather than threatening and extrinsically imposed reactivity. Several respondents spoke of "engaging with others who were risk takers" as a mirror to proactively examining teaching practice, while one

professor described this proactive involvement as one which “gave me the permission to take the time to think about my teaching.”

Several respondents included the phrase “curiosity about teaching” when describing their motivation to volunteer for a professional development project. This curiosity was often defined as a desire to explore the realm of teaching and educational pedagogy, however, one respondent described it as “an inquisitiveness about life,” while four others viewed this curiosity as “an interest about a forum for collegiality.” These notions may also be seen as grounded in a foundation of interest surrounding the interactivity and collaborativity of some teaching experiences. One respondent described the experience as a “way to increase social contacts,” while another reported feeling “envious” and “left out” when not initially involved in the Teaching in Focus professional development episodes.

It appears that the majority of respondents participated in this professional development initiative as a result of internal, not external, factors and because inclusion appeared to hold the promise of focusing on improving or increasing awareness of teaching effectiveness within a professionally social atmosphere.

Having participated for varying periods of time in teaching focused professional development, what, then, were respondents’ perceptions of changes that resulted from examination of their own practices?

Changes in Teaching Resulting From Teaching in Focus Experience

Respondents reported a number of changes in professional practice specific to their teaching activities. These perceptions cluster around two sub-themes: practical

alterations and pedagogical shifts. The first includes those activities of teaching that may be considered overt in nature, that is, those which are changes or additions to practices of planning, organization, and delivery. The second involves alterations in thought, that is, re-examination of perceptions that signify changes in attitude, outlook, or frame of mind and which then may affect subsequent behavior. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 outline findings in each of these categories.

Table 6.1.

Results of Professional Development:

<u>Practical</u>	Number of references
• Increased teacher-student interaction	18
• Increase in multistrategic style	6
• Increased in teaching confidence	6
• Increase skills of observation and awareness	2

The most frequently cited change in teaching activities subsequent to the Teaching In Focus (TIF) professional development episode was the respondents' perception of increasing levels of interpersonal interactions with others, primarily with students but also with colleagues. Several described this as a shift in focus of the essential purpose of their teaching from one fixated exclusively on end-product and retention, to one nurturing concern with the process of learning and with the teacher-learner relationship that best facilitates learning. Some respondents described this change as "becoming a facilitator" or "getting the teacher out of the attention," while one

respondent now feels able to answer the question, “How do I get out of the way of students’ learning?” Others interpreted their increased interaction as improving levels of teacher-student communication via electronic or face-to-face modes. One respondent reported using journals and exit notes as a matter of course with students after observing an increase in teacher-student interaction accompanying this strategy. Another has implemented an on-line class discussion component in an attempt to increase interaction with students. Three respondents spoke of increased incidents of team-teaching and collegial peer assessments as indications that incidents of professional interaction have increased as a result of their professional development experiences.

Repeated references were made to respondents’ increased attempts to incorporate a wider diversity of instructional strategies as a result of TIF discussions. While one respondent definitively stated that use of lecture delivery systems have become infrequent and have been replaced by discussions, poster presentations and peer evaluations, another more simply expressed feelings affirmed through discussions about “what works, and what doesn’t work.” This affirmation to experiment with innovative strategies “outside of my normal comfort zone” was also reflected in references to feelings of increased professional confidence. One respondent described this as feeling “not so critical of myself,” while another stated that Teaching In Focus participation “made me a better teacher because I now have much more knowledge about my teaching.”

Table 6.2.

Results of Professional Development:Pedagogical

Number of References

- | | |
|---|----|
| • Expansion of view of learning | 17 |
| • Expansion of dichotomistic view | 12 |
| • Elaboration of teaching reflections | 9 |
| • Re-examination of institutional structure | 5 |

After examining pedagogy, teaching styles, and philosophies during professional development discussions, many participants cite the greatest insights and changes in perspective resulted from incidents of educational dialogue surrounding the nature of students and the students' role in the learning process. Several express a newly formulated belief that instructors must become more student-centered and learner-directed in teaching philosophy, thus rendering them more responsive to the educational needs of students. Often this was accompanied by statements of belief that tertiary teachers must make greater attempts to model various ways of knowing, skills, and attitudes deemed desirable for learners to integrate. Several spoke of "flexibility and adaptability" to describe this accommodation, one participant referred to this modeling as a "partnership," while others speak of a "co-op model" or simply "practicing what you preach." In addition, frequent reference was made to a developing belief that tertiary teachers consider re-examination of authority and dominance issues by shifting the

spotlight away from the instructor-as-performer to one highlighting student-as-teacher strategies. One respondent referred to this in a broad sense as “getting out of the directive mode,” another as “learning to back off.” The dichotomistic view of teacher-as-teller and student-as-thinker appears to be a philosophy challenged frequently and significantly by respondents as a result of reflection and insights they experienced during TIF discussions.

In addition, participants reported a shift in view regarding professional reflection to one of increased appreciation for the role and effectiveness of the reflective practitioner. Several described the reflective process as a way to “maintain positive spirit and energy”, and one respondent in particular viewed its role as one of “reaffirming synergy and a pioneering spirit of testing paradigms.”

All respondents reported feeling generally positive about their professional development involvement, and indicated that they would unequivocally participate in similar efforts in the future. Several pointed out that culmination of the Teaching In Focus project did not terminate their own professional growth as teachers. One respondent credited TIF participation with providing the incentive to write a book, another with creating long term interfaculty bonds, and yet another with facilitating plans to create an on-site professional development center.

DISCUSSION

In examining the professional development process engaged in by some instructors at The University of Lethbridge, several teaching characteristics appear consistent with broad-based observations drawn from a larger body of literature. These characteristics will be discussed and compared within categories parallel to those outlined in the Literature Review, namely:

- Content and Expertise
- Pluralistic Teaching
- Creating Relevance
- Assessment Techniques
- Empathy and Approachability
- Negotiatory Spirit and Moral Imperative

Ways in which tertiary teaching effectiveness may possibly be impacted by participation in programs such as Teaching In Focus will then be outlined and links will be suggested between several critical elements of teacher development and this specific professional growth initiative.

Content Expertise

One characteristic often identified as being at the essence of effective teaching is academic credibility and content mastery (Dinmore, 1996; Ryans, 1960). This notion appears to be supported to a certain degree by respondents in this study. However, although a majority of those interviewed express the importance of portraying content credibility, none are supportive of a contention that content expertise in and of itself is the major determinant of teacher effectiveness. Rather, respondents consider the informed

utilization of content and curriculum mastery as providing a strong foundation upon which an effective teacher may build, *but not rest*. One professor states that knowledge of material is “somewhat necessary, but not as much as many would like to think,” while another instructor added that content expertise not be “deep and specific, but a moderate balance between breadth and depth.” It appears that content mastery independent of an informed and judicious knowledge of *how* to engage learners with that content is not seen as a particularly valuable indicator of teaching success. Consistent with the notion that “...learning more about your content will not automatically make you a better teacher....” (Svinicki, 1990, p. 5), instructors involved in the Teaching In Focus project reflect the view that it is the mode of delivery of content which contributes to effectiveness, and not simply the cerebral possession of that content.

Several respondents, however, interpret this link between course material and method of delivery as being relatively limited and discipline-specific. As cited in the previous section (refer to Findings, p. 81), the concept that several teaching skills are universal characteristics--regardless of subject matter--may be foreign to some participants. The same may not necessarily be true for participants with a background in educational theory. It is these respondents who appear most likely to create connections between interdisciplinary teaching strategies and delivery methods independent of any one specific body of content knowledge. One states that content mastery contributes to teaching effectiveness only inasmuch as “it keeps me current and up-to-date.”

This skill of “keeping up to date” extends into the area of quantifying teaching effectiveness based on research productivity. No respondents identify research activities as making the single most important contribution to teaching effectiveness. Although

they acknowledge research as an important aspect of academic worklife, several favor the concept of action research whereby the research laboratory is made relevant by the classroom and, by extension, the world beyond the institution. Respondents appear to support the contention that weighting of content mastery and research productivity as qualities of exclusive or paramount importance in determining teacher effectiveness may need to be reconsidered, particularly if it is done at the expense of other teaching virtues.

Pluralistic Teaching

A certain body of literature links effective teaching with delivery methods which are active, multiphasic, varied, and often constructivist in nature (Gardner, 1983; Feuerstein, 1980). Similarly, using numerous and diverse strategies to encourage and enhance student learning appears to be an important indicator of teaching success as viewed by many respondents in this study. Consistent with literature, participants view the incorporation of pluralist strategies as essential to teaching effectiveness. Respondents also cite a causal relationship between their participation in Teaching In Focus and a broadening of their own spectrum of delivery modes to be more reflective of multistrategic rather than monostrategic or lecture-dependent methods. One reports the discovery that using multistrategic techniques “means that teaching is not significantly different at different levels.” Participants appear to recognize a large body of knowledge based on theory in educational psychology that suggests increasing diversity in student contexts creates a necessity for tertiary teachers to incorporate multivariied strategies that helps professors deal with differences of gender, spirituality, economics, and nationality. Malcolm Knowles (1990) suggests that the contemporary university classroom

...assures that in any group of adults there will be a wider range of individual differences than is the case with a group of youths. Any group of adults will be more heterogeneous--in terms of background, learning style, motivation, needs, interests, and goals--than is true of a group of youths. Hence, the great emphasis in adult education in individualization of teaching and learning strategies (p. 59).

Because this spectrum of experiences characterizing tertiary institution students has perhaps never before been as diverse, and because theories of Gregorc (1982), Butler (1983), Gardner (1983), and Bloom (1984) suggest that learning proceeds in unique and highly individualized ways, this recognition of multistrategic integration is critical. Several respondents recognize this importance, one stating "I learned to show responsiveness to students' developmental levels," another "became more flexible and experimental with differing methods of presentation," while another respondent wrote of a change in what had previously been "limited, undeveloped, and insufficiently nurturing teaching styles."

Creating Relevance

Malcolm Knowles (1990) writes of more chronologically mature learners as being life-centered in their orientation to learning. That is, "they learn new knowledge, understandings, skills, values, and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context application to real-life situations" (p. 61).

Presenting content within a frame of reference relevant to student contexts is identified by respondents as a skill essential to effective teaching, and is frequently identified as being at least as, if not more, important than content mastery. Many believe

that unless teachers demonstrate the ability to modify, relate and adapt course material to a variety of learning styles and social contexts, content material exists virtually as an inaccessible possession of the instructor. Teachers' abilities to unlock a vault of knowledge and make it accessible, understandable and, ideally, interesting to students encapsulates this skill of creating relevance. Although this skill occasionally appears as an independent indicator of teaching success, more frequently it becomes part of a triangle of interconnected skills demonstrated by highly effective teachers. Armed with a firmly established foundation of curriculum mastery, effective teachers explore wide varieties of presentation strategies, ultimately deciding upon those which, after examination of student needs and learnings, will be most likely to create a conducive environment for learning.

Respondents of this study consider the most basic and necessary requirements of effective tertiary teachers to be "putting a perspective on the relevance of content after identifying student interests." Instructors who participated in Teaching In Focus feel they try to make connections among content, style, and student relevance as a way of creating the optimum student learning indicative of effective teaching.

Assessment Techniques

One skill often mentioned by undergraduate students as representative of the less-than-effective teacher is the use of unclear, unfair, or invalid assessment strategies. Students at the tertiary level appear to appreciate an instructor's ability to communicate clear achievement expectations that have been thoroughly outlined in advance, and which are then used as the basis for assessing student competency in select skill or knowledge components based on the material that has been taught in class. In addition, students

appear to value opportunities to receive specific, immediate, and relatively abundant feedback regarding achievement, and are sometimes frustrated when the learning environment is not conducive to a relatively transparent type of negotiatory conversation regarding their progress and achievement (Ron, 1996).

Possible variations in purpose and sophistication of evaluation instruments are numerous (refer to Assessment Techniques, p. 39), and are delivered with the purpose of achieving many of the goals of adult education and andragogy, including satisfying the learner's "need to know" (Knowles, 1990, p. 57) regarding content and progress assessments. Based on the relatively few number of references made by respondents to the importance of evaluation and assessment strategies utilized by effective tertiary teachers, it may be reasonable to conclude that, while some participants of this study may view this as an essential component, most of those interviewed did not. Only two participants specifically mention fair and consistent evaluation strategies as indicative of teaching effectiveness, although several others implied an openness to negotiation through their use of the term "transparent" when referring generically to interactions with students, be they focused on evaluation or any other facet of the student-teacher interaction.

Empathy and Approachability

This set of skills, or "ways of being" (refer to Defining doing and being, p. 15) is referred to unanimously by respondents as contributing significantly to student learning and, thus, to teacher effectiveness. One professor speaks metaphorically of portraying "an iron fist in a velvet glove," while another refers to "congruence between being and doing," and yet another of being "warm yet demanding." All appear to agree with

literature findings that the “greater mysteries” of teaching (Granrose, 1980, p. 28) transcend the technical presentation of categorical skills into an area encompassing style and “attitude” where effective teachers appear to excel. This includes the aura of enthusiasm and joy that motivating instructors bring to the learning episode, and the extension of that enthusiasm into one of genuine concern for the plight and progress of the student. One participant lamented that this “consideration for students as individuals regardless of academic abilities is critical and lacking.”

Increasing the number and nature of student-teacher contacts is one way of achieving this consideration, as is listening and respecting students and generally exemplifying an attitude of humanness. One respondent speaks of working with students in the spirit of the “co-workers paradigm” as a way of achieving this respectful rapport. Through a wide variety of purposeful strategies that heighten approachability, it appears that the ability to contribute in a positive and energetic way to facilitating the learning process, both in and out of the formal learning environment, is seen by many Teaching In Focus participants as essential to teaching with effectiveness.

Negotiatory Spirit and Moral Imperative

One respondent speaks of a “gossamer barrier of trust and ethical expectations” in representing views of several participants regarding the notion of moral imperative. More frequently it is referred to among participants as an academic and personal respect for students and for the implicit power hierarchy that usually exists in teacher-learner scenarios. Participants, although not referred to in an overt sense, allude to the recognition of this influence, with phrases such as “caring about students.” The morality of this caring, however, extends far beyond the recognition of the learner as a passive

entity deserving the respect of an authority figure. It encompasses the morality of empowering the student by creating awareness of the learning process itself, and examination of the stance of oppression that the students often must tolerate to progress toward true learning. In fact, it involves such a negotiation about the learning reality as to be difficult and demanding to achieve on a frequent and consistent basis. Still, respondents often cite this skill as one deserving consideration in assessing teacher effectiveness.

General

In what ways, then, does participation in professional growth projects, such as Teaching In Focus, appear to affect teacher effectiveness? On a very broad level, it may be said that respondents perceive their teaching effectiveness as having improved as a result of involvement in this initiative. More specifically, it appears to affect teacher behaviors in three major ways. Firstly, through the process of sanctioning, involvement appears to increase occurrences in what participants previously viewed as “risk-taking” behaviors. For example, experimentation with multistrategic teaching methods is reported to have increased in occurrence and duration. Incidents of lecture and stand-and-deliver types of presentation are perceived as having decreased in number, while more expansive styles of presentation are seen to increase in number and duration because of the establishment of a professional collegial safety net that support them through both success and failure.

A second link appears between professional development and teaching effectiveness when opportunities occur for trusting and informed conversations or sharing of ideas that contribute to heightened pedagogical awareness. The group functioned

initially at a relatively superficial level of pedagogical critique. Respondents report that awareness of interdisciplinary connections began to occur when conversations demonstrated evidence of revolving around the interconnected nature of teaching rather than its isolationist and discipline-specific character. Such an examination of general pedagogical theory also is recognized as increasing teacher effectiveness through increasing participants' cognition of student needs and concerns. This feeling of increased empathy appears to give these teachers permission and confidence to respond to student issues in a manner more facilitative of further learning, rather than responding with feelings of defensiveness that negates student needs as juvenile, selfish, or immature. This increase in interactional awareness may be combined with an increased sense of approachability experienced by respondents, and is, perhaps indicative of an increase in overall physical and emotional attentiveness to learners.

As a unit of behavior, these changes may be interpreted as representative of a larger cyclical process of teacher growth and development that evolved out of this project. Respondents brought to this cycle their perception of the "ideal" teacher, perhaps including some preconceived notions about their own professional strengths and weaknesses relative to that ideal. Their personal perceptions of effective teaching were clearly molded by initial discussions within the group about "what works and what doesn't." Help in identifying their own strengths and areas in need of attention, may have provided an affirmation for participation in this project, but, more importantly, established a focus for goals, end products, or changes and continuing engagement. Early discussions seem to have assisted participants in recognizing and articulating their own teaching styles, and in formulating strategies for dealing with roadblocks presently

preventing them from progressing towards their “ideal.” Regular collegial interaction appears to have provided participants with some confidence in the awareness that these roadblocks were shared, or at least, acknowledged by others, and that ways of coping with such challenges were available.

Shed of the excuses and defensiveness that often haunts the early stages of teacher development, participants were able to move on to a phase of action, during which time they “tried on” new behaviors as effective teachers. Because these new behaviors were most often self-selected, and because they were increasingly seen as being achievable, efforts described as “risk-taking” became more frequent and were supported by the collegial group. Subsequent to these experimental episodes, conversations were elevated to a higher level of group maturity, further skills were identified as essential to teaching effectiveness, group members grappled with ways of adapting new perceptions into their pedagogical practices, and a new--or perhaps, evolving—level of participation was created, thereby extending the cycle.

As a example, many participants viewed the use of multistrategic styles as one of the cornerstones of effective teaching. They indicate that their express purpose for attending Teaching In Focus sessions was that of expanding their repertoire of presentation strategies. However, prior to being receptive to experimenting with various methods, several respondents report that segments of sessions were spent discussing a multitude of reasons why multistrategic teaching *wouldn't* work in light of institutional factors working against it. After gaining confidence about what barriers they might reasonably overcome to in maintaining integrity in pluralistic teaching, respondents often chose a teaching strategy unfamiliar, but attractive, to them and, in due course, received

supportive and collegial feedback regarding their performance in experimenting with that strategy. This feedback experience had the effect of causing participants to reflect on ways of incorporating more process-oriented, non-authoritarian, student-centered activities and to “try on” behaviors representative of multistrategic teaching in a forum of relative safety and support. The process of risk-taking facilitated an educative dialogue that enriched, or at least changed, the focus and nature of ensuing conversations which, in turn, supplemented and altered the participants’ perceptions about the qualities of teacher effectiveness, perhaps to one revolving around the role of interactivity that the teacher plays in classes where a multistrategic style is evident. In such ways, each “new” aspect of teaching effectiveness that arose out of Teaching In Focus discussions had the potential to influence and alter the purpose of ensuing conversations and actions. Thus continued the cycle of re-examination of purpose for participation, identification of roadblocks, development of strategies in overcoming challenges to achieve effectiveness, experimentation, feedback, alteration of perspective, and so on.

Another example supports participants’ perceptions of the frequency with which this type of cycle appeared to occur. Several participants consider interdisciplinary relevance to be one of the essential qualities of effective teaching. They viewed their participation in Teaching In Focus as an important function of intercollegiality, and the focus of their experiences were those which promoted positive collaboration. Their discussions of roadblocks revolved around those issues that impede collegial conversation and teamwork, while their typical “trying on” behaviors included team teaching and peer observation. After the debriefing, or “making sense,” of these

experimental behaviors, participants then found that other issues such as interdisciplinary relevance became of concern and shifted the upcoming cycle of growth episodes.

CONCLUSIONS

In what ways do several University of Lethbridge instructors characterize professionally effective tertiary level professional development? In what ways are their assessments of effectiveness of the Teaching In Focus program consistent with qualities noted as valuable in other similar initiatives?

It appears the most positive experiences of professional growth as cited by participants of this study surround three features characteristic of effective projects of this nature: (a) the value of collegiality and collaboration facilitated through initiatives that are free of administrative control, (b) the assistance of a cyclical collegial feedback loop in a context that is free of judgement, and (c) the opportunity for experimentation under supervision of a knowledgeable and respected facilitator (refer to Appendix D).

The most frequently referenced quality of effective professional development projects is the creation of interdependence and trust among participants, which promotes elevation of the cognitive and emotional maturity of the group. In cohorts where dynamics of interactivity are relatively immature, participants function in a superficial and egocentric manner. The characteristic "I"-dominated conversation is transcended when participants begin to view the group more expansively, in a spirit of intellectual and emotional openness. However, this progression can occur only when a number of factors are present, primarily that of an atmosphere of trust and interdependence. These types of conditions are promoted within growth projects such as Teaching In Focus, where activities include discussion and videotape analyses engaging the feedback rules of a "critical friend," and where useful, tangible, and specific information is provided about

concerns expressed by the participant. Validation becomes a springboard from which participants expand their limited comfort zones of action and conversation, and one in which a resultant investigation of teaching issues is nurtured. This development of maturity regarding self and the group facilitates an honest and transparent investigation of growth objectives, and allows for a process of safe and informed experimentation to assist participants in achieving their teaching goals.

In direct opposition to these goals of intercollegiality and interdependence is the high degree of opposition by respondents of this study to behaviors perceived as abusive of group participation for purposes of self-promotion, pontification, enhancement of resume`, or other strictly career-promoting purposes. Participants made frequent and strong reference to the unacceptability of these practices, and to the necessity of involving a purposeful, credible moderator to monitor comments exhibiting this motive. This moderator appears to become the sanctioning facilitator through which participants may develop teaching effectiveness within an individual timeframe and a set of personal objectives free of administrative judgement or threats to salary, tenure, and promotion considerations.

Mature interdependence as a condition necessary to professional growth is highlighted in professional development initiatives, such as those suggested by Weimer (1990), in which teaching effectiveness is increased through facilitation of the collaborative educational group. Palmer (1999) refers to this essential quality of collegial support as a type of triangulation of conversation involving reflection and action, while Duffy (1996) promotes similar group triangulation methods in attempts to improve tertiary teacher effectiveness. It appears critical to the success of projects intending to

promote teaching development that the establishment and nurturing of a trusting, sharing professional atmosphere free of power and authority issues may be considered a cornerstone to future success.

Richard Sagor (1992) supports the collaborative nature of professional development initiatives to increase teacher effectiveness. His collaborative action research model includes a five-step process of professional investigation and problem-solving intended to “renew our commitment to thoughtful teaching and also begin developing an active community of professionals” (p. 10). Several Teaching In Focus participants reported progressing through phases similar to Sagor’s model by identifying a goal, collecting data through a strategy supportive of the goal, presenting and analyzing data through group video discussions, reporting of results through written or verbal evaluation, and planning further action for new or revised goals and strategies.

The nature of feedback offered within this collegial atmosphere is also an important contributor to success. While reflection and self analysis may be important first stages of remediation or growth (Shon, 1983), a majority of respondents in this study perceive the opportunity to receive feedback in small-group interfaculty discussion as equally necessary in developing initial awareness and understanding of technique and pedagogy. This extrinsic feedback loop appears valuable to participants for at least two reasons. First, it encourages formation of long-term alliances and support systems from which ongoing and more elaborate conversations are facilitated. Several respondents spoke of the professional partnerships that exist several years later, and of how these partnerships have evolved into peer evaluation and team teaching structures. Second, the small-group, open-discourse format revolving around specific rules of structure and

participation encourages a relatively transparent and nonthreatening type of peer assessment. Participants express confidence in the intent and accuracy of feedback, and felt that in future discussions when roles of evaluator and presenter were reversed, they were more effectively able to provide relevant and empathetic feedback. Smith and Smith (1993) support this contention that the social nature of the group feedback loop is an essential component of effective tertiary teaching professional development programs. It appears more significant and useful to several Teaching In Focus participants that this feedback be based upon collaborative action research of an *experiential* nature, more so than research of a purely *scientific* nature. That is, it appears that the shared experiences of colleagues may be equally--if not more-- useful in achieving professional goals than collegial feedback and evaluation based only on scientific research, and void of an informed, practical application of that research.

A final characteristic referenced by many participants is the need for a strong and present leader to guide group dynamics, establish and enforce rules of conduct, and make credible contributions to supporting changing behaviors of participating teachers. Although this quality is not cited frequently in literature, respondents often made mention of the need for such a non-administrative personality to either initiate the project, or to informally assume the role early in the formation of the initiative. While the method of appointment and qualities of this member are not clear, respondents often mentioned the need for this member to contribute as a full and equal participant, yet with a willingness to be disempowered as group maturity and independence increases. Willingness to assume the role of a truly facilitative leader, able to sustain the project on a long-term basis or to develop a successive leader is expressed by several respondents as necessary

to the ongoing, rather than terminal, success of a professional development initiative. This issue of sustainability may be a fear for several participants. As one respondent expressed, “The person became the project.” This implies that when facilitative leadership wanes or is not present, such projects have a tendency to subside and eventually dissolve for lack of a credible successor.

These conclusions give rise to several further questions regarding this, and other professional development initiatives. For instance, are participants in teaching-focused professional growth episodes demonstrating a high degree of effectiveness prior to their participation and, by virtue of the process of professional examination, merely honing already existing skills? Do these types of programs appear effective in cases in which teaching skills must be radically remediated rather than enhanced? What other factors appear to contribute to the relatively short formal life expectancy of cohort-structured professional development programs? What other modes of partnership delivery might facilitate similar growth among tertiary teachers? The answer to these and other issues surrounding tertiary professional development will contribute to a greater understanding of the similarities and differences that tertiary teachers experience in comparison with their counterparts at other levels of education as attempts are made through professional development initiatives to elevate the quality of teaching effectiveness for all learners. Kenneth Lawson (1982) writes that “It might be tempting to regard ‘teaching’ as a specific activity on a par with ‘instructing’ but it seems more fruitful to regard teaching as a many faceted idea....Good teaching on such a view would be that which has the intention of bringing about true learning” (p. 81). It is within this venture of improving teaching effectiveness that lies a hope for the future: that educators-as-learners will seek

to achieve teaching and learning remedies representative of Robert Greenleaf's (1991) goal "to raise the spirit of young people, help them build their confidence...work with them to find the direction they need to go and the competencies they need to acquire, and send them on their way" (p. 172).

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APPENDIX A

REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES OF TEACHING IN FOCUS COHORT

Teaching In Focus members experimented with, developed, and then refined a set of practices and procedures that defined the spirit with which participants would contribute to ongoing collaborative teaching activities. An initial decision relative to the educative dialogical process was to confine discussion about teaching and learning to the immediate, rather than a generalized, context about instructional issues. This commitment was frequently tested as participants began sharing videotapes of classroom incidents. Many participants recognized that various levels of academic critique, when applied as summative evaluation of a specific teaching episode, left some teachers feeling marginalized, defensive, embarrassed, and certainly reluctant to place themselves in future positions of vulnerability. Early in the proceedings, the group empowered the project facilitator to guide the discussions more directly while pointing out and disallowing discussions that became judgmental, critical, assumptive, or self-serving in nature.

A Teaching in Focus session typical began after lunch on Friday afternoons, during which the first several minutes were devoted to introduction of visitors and other organizational matters. Immediately following, videotape presentations of teaching incidences began. The instructor of presentation provided a contextual explanation of the chosen teaching incident prior and subsequent to viewing, thus helping to establish a framework for the ensuing dialogue.

The purpose of the dialogue segment was to engage the presenting teacher in a process of verbal reflection about the teaching and learning that was viewed. Most often, questions sought to formalize indications of purpose, reasons for action, assessments of objectives, and identification of strategies. Successful sessions frequently concluded with instructors making commitments to “owning” their teaching by setting goals for improvement. Not infrequently, other participants related to an aspect of teaching that they sought to understand more fully and incorporate into their own teaching, usually to be presented to the group in a future presentation.

In addition to videotape presentations, seminars led by undergraduate students were also organized as integral to understanding the teaching and learning cycle. In such sessions, instructors gave thoughtful consideration to issues such as evaluation equity and assessment validity, multistrategic instructional methods, and student/professor partnerships. The following provides an overview of Teaching in Focus activities typical of one academic year.

DATE	PRESENTER(S)	FACULTY	TOPIC(S)
Sept. 3	Ten members		Orientation/planning meeting
Sept. 10	Facilitator	Education	Term agenda, research proposal
Sept. 17	Don	Education	Student evaluation (videotape)
Sept. 24	Jan	Psychology	Role of the facilitator in discussion (videotape)
Oct. 1	Janet, John	Educ./ Geog.	Grading practices (interactive discussion)
Oct. 15	All members		Choosing a research assistant
Oct. 22	Kathrine, June, Dorothy	Nursing	Furthering the dialogue about learning (workshop)
Oct. 29	Larry	Management	Evaluation of student presentations (videotape)
Nov. 5	All members		Social
Nov. 19	Margaret	Management	SCANTRON technology
Nov. 26	Allan and 4 senior students	English	Applications in Literature (demonstration)
Dec. 3	All members		End of semester social
Jan. 14	5 senior students	Education, English, Management, Biology	Students Perceptions of Evaluation Practices (panel discussion)
Jan. 21	Nora and 9 senior students	Education	Application in class presentations (panel/videotape)
Jan. 28	Katherine, June	Nursing	Research on multi-cultural classrooms (seminar)
Feb. 11	Roslyn	Education	The role of questioning in literacy (videotape)
Feb. 18	Lance	Administration	Discussion in Advance Methods (videotape)
Mar. 4	Margaret and 5 students	Management	Student reactions to SCANTRON technology (panel discussion)
Mar. 4	Douglas	Sociology	Email in Introductory Sociology (multi-media)
Mar. 25	Sherrie	Research	Preliminary findings in the study of TIF (multimedia)
April 8	Rona and 4 students	Sociology	Alternate organization of group discussion (panel and demonstration)
April 15	Louis	Biology	Teaching a complex concept (demonstration)
April 29	7 members		Planning for summer conference

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

ENHANCING UNIVERSITY TEACHING:A STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

RESPONDENT _____ FACULTY _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: _____

TEACHING EXPERIENCES: _____

REASON(S) FOR PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

LENGTH/DURATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INVOLVEMENT:

PROFILE OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

What does an effective university teacher “look” like?

KNOWLEDGE**SKILLS****ATTITUDES**

COMMENTS:

SELF ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVENESS

How would you describe your teaching style prior to TIF Professional Development?

STRENGTHS**WEAKNESS**

What challenges have you encountered when making efforts to increase you teaching effectiveness?

INSTITUTIONAL**PROFESSIONAL****PERSONAL**

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH ANALYSIS

Describe experiences/impressions of your professional growth experiences during the collaborative educative dialogue.

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

Describe insights you gained during this professional development.

INSTITUTIONAL

PROFESSIONAL

PERSONAL

STUDENT

LEARNING

In what ways did you alter your teaching during or after the professional development project? _____

Comments:

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OF ANALYTIC MEMOS DURING OPEN CODING

March 22- Initially prepared to begin thematic conceptualization, as per Miles and Huberman, prior to collection of data and the coding process. This was based on clear and identifiable themes arising from the literature review. At the start of the study, I was against this process because of possible tainting that may occur, i.e. preconceived themes that may alter the objectivity of the conversational portion. Clarity of themes independent of the literature research was desirable, however, because these overall concepts were so well documented in the literature. Therefore, I have decided to proceed with the thematic conceptualization first.

April 3- Process has become quite linear in terms of data analysis. That is, the categorization of themes from interviews and artifacts is proceeding rather concretely rather than abstractly. Keys words are being cited with impressive frequency, making the coding process quite straight forward. Is this ease of coding a function of superficial examination or of specificity of purpose?

April 14- Open coding of the artifacts has been far more abstract in terms of trying to assess the intent of the document. Although artifacts provide far more concrete quotable exemplars, attempts to code them according to themes are far more circumspect because

of lack of non-verbal cues. During a face to face interview, intent is more clearly evident based on body language.

APPENDIX D

QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

<u>Quality</u>	<u>Number of references</u>
• Collegial affirmation and interdependence	14
• Avoidance of self promotion	12
• Existence of feedback loop	11
• Opportunity for experimentation	7
• Supportive, not overly critical	6