

Creating a Certificate Course in Health Professions Teaching and Education



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Jackie McCaffrey - Centre for Faculty Development, Karen Leslie - Centre for Faculty Development, Debbie Kwan - Centre for Faculty Development, Denyse Richardson - Div. of Psychiatry, Dept. of Medicine, Ivan Silver - Office of CEPD, Susan Wagner - Dept. of Speech and Language Pathology, Amy Dionne - Centre for Faculty Development, Scott Reeves - Centre for Faculty Development

BACKGROUND:

Faculty development programs are often challenged by sustaining the motivation of faculty to attend faculty development programs longitudinally. One solution is to create a program where faculty can earn a credential that they can document in their teaching dossier and join a cohort of similarly minded teachers.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Stepping Stones Teacher Development Program, a 40 hour certificate course, was established in 2002 by the Centre for Faculty Development. It is designed to assist faculty with their teaching and educational roles. It consists of a series of half-day workshops/academic year. Each workshop is approximately 3-4 hours in duration. It also consists of a journal club which meets in the evening once per month for 2 hours during the academic year. The program is primarily targeted to clinical faculty although basic scientist and clinical investigator teachers will find many of the topics relevant. Participants are evaluated through the submission of two assignments: an annotated bibliography with a critical appraisal of articles relating to a specific education topic and a paper examining how the journal club impacted their education and teaching practice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After participating in the Certificate Program, participants should be able to:

- describe several evidence-based strategies for teaching in a variety of clinical contexts
- describe some of the theoretical basis for clinical teaching strategies
- demonstrate new acquired teaching skills
- demonstrate enhanced critical appraisal skills of the medical education literature
- acquire a positive attitude towards implementing & initiating change in clinical teaching
- identify the ways in which scholarship can be introduced into teaching and education activities.
- describe a strategy for implementation of their own career development plan

PROGRAM FEE:

\$600 for faculty members, \$800 for non faculty members

UPON COMPLETION:

A graduation evening is held where participants who complete the requirements receive a certificate from the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development, University of Toronto.

PROGRAM MARKETING:

The program is marketed via:

- CFD distribution list of 4000+
- CFD website (www.cfd.med.utoronto.ca)
- CFDNews - Electronic newsletter
- CFD onsite notice board, brochure box
- Med.e.mail - Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto listserv
- Partner institutions mailing lists/newsletters
- Targeted emails to Department chiefs



Eligibility:

This program is open to all faculty within the Faculty of Medicine at University of Toronto. The Centre for Faculty Development also offers 1 spot each year to each of the other health science faculties and 3 spots to staff with teaching responsibilities at St. Michael's Hospital and at The Michener Institute.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates are expected to complete 26 hours of CFD workshops over a two year period. They will also be expected to accumulate an additional 14 hours (within 1 academic year) of training, by participating in the journal club that will review teaching/learning theory. Candidates will be expected to review specific articles for each journal club meeting. During the course of the year, candidates will complete two graded assignments: an annotated bibliography and a reflection paper.

JOURNAL CLUB

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the year, participants will be able to:

- discuss the terms "teaching, learning and adult education principles".
- critically appraise an article from the health professional education literature
- acquire an appreciation for the breadth and depth of health professional literature.
- apply what they have read to their own professional educational setting
- dialogue with other health professionals and begin an education network with others in the group
- use an annotated bibliography to learn about one specific educational topic

JOURNAL CLUB FORMAT:

There are 3 journal club locations which run simultaneously. Each week, participants will review 3-4 papers related to a specific topic. The papers / articles have been chosen from journals that are highly respected, of high quality, relevant to the academic health professional and readily accessible. Members of the Journal Club are free to suggest additional papers worthy of review. Each paper will have a primary reviewer to present a critique of the paper. On the first session a format for review of the papers is discussed.

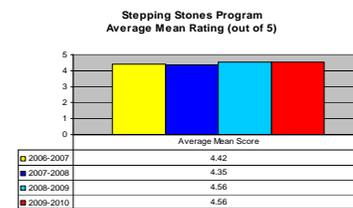
JOURNAL CLUB THEMES:

- The Social Context of Learning: How Teachers and Learners Relate to Each Other
- The Academic Health Professional
- Adult Learning Theory
- Interprofessional Education
- Mentoring in Health Professional Education
- Assessment of Teaching and Learning
- Are Faculty Development Activities Effective?
- Professionalism in Health Professional Education
- Technology, e-Learning and Simulation

RESEARCH/OUTCOMES

SHORT TERM EVALUATION:

At the end of each academic year, participants who have completed the full program are sent a program evaluation form. The evaluation is an online form which asks questions related to workshops, journal club, journal club facilitators and the overall program.

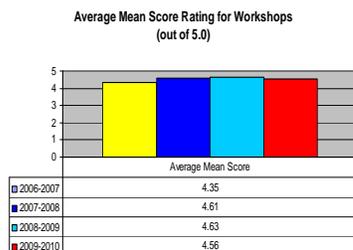


WORKSHOPS:

The workshops are devoted to the enhancement of teaching skills with a look at career development, scholarship and research in education and leadership and are offered throughout the academic year.

There are 5 streams to which each workshop fits (a sample of workshops listed below):

- Instructional Development
 - Teaching 101 Part 1 & 2
 - Large Group Teaching/Presentation Skills
 - Small Group Teaching
 - Feedback
 - Introduction to Assessment & Advanced Assessment
 - Learning Styles
 - Dealing with Conflict
 - Ambulatory Care Teaching
 - Managing Challenging Teaching Situations and "Problem" Learners
- Career Development
 - Teaching Dossiers
 - Moving your Career Ahead
 - Developing Skills as a Mentor
 - Developing Effective Mentoring Initiatives
 - Promotion by Creative Professional Activity
- Leadership
 - Interpersonal Effectiveness
 - Authentic Leadership
 - Leadership Agility
- Technology in Health Professions Teaching
 - Videoconferencing 101
 - Technology Enhanced Health Professions Teaching
- Scholarship in Education
 - Recognizing Excellence: Scholarship in Education
 - Writing for Publication
 - Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection
 - Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis



Current number of program graduates: 161

LONGITUDINAL EVALUATION:

STEPPING STONES STUDY - PART 1

In 2004 a study titled 'Evaluation of New Implementation Strategies, Program Effectiveness & Dissemination of New Pedagogical Knowledge: Centre for Faculty Development's (CFD's) Stepping Stones Teaching Certificate Program' was established.

STUDY OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of the study, in keeping with a Design Research context was to evaluate the Stepping Stones Teaching Certificate Program to inform further program development, and make a scholarly contribution to the Faculty Development literature.

EVALUATION:

In this project, a novel approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods was used to explore program impact. Participants completed 2 questionnaires (pre - and post - program) to identify skill set knowledge gaps in teaching effectiveness. The qualitative component consists of focus groups. In pre-program groups, voluntary participants were asked:

- Their motives for enrollment
- Expectations of the program
- The type of teaching preparation they have had to date.

Post-program groups will attempt to elicit the impact of the program on:

- Perceived gaps
- Teaching behaviour change
- Influence on their career.

OUTCOMES:

Qualitative and quantitatively, program effectiveness was demonstrated immediately following completion of the program. Assessing the sustainability of the effects is ongoing.

The Qualitative results were remarkably similar in 2 cohorts (2004-2005 and 2005-2006) and identified the:

- Importance of Educator Community and Network
- Desire to remain connected with Interprofessional Education/Teaching colleagues
- Increased confidence, enthusiasm in teaching

A variety of benefits for faculty and their teaching practice were found including: acquisition and affirmation of knowledge and skills, increased teaching skill confidence and enthusiasm for teaching, and a perceived value of a network with teaching colleagues, which exceeded expectations. A desire to continue to remain connected was voiced.

The consideration of Gap Analysis as a learning enabler was an unexpected result.

STEPPING STONES STUDY - PART 2

In 2006, a second study was done titled 'Exploring the longitudinal impacts of faculty development on professional identities and communities of practice: successes and challenges'.

STUDY OBJECTIVE:

To examine the longer term effects of the SS program through developing an understanding of:

- some of the processes by which faculty development programs may promote networking and career development of participating faculty
- the effect of a recognized "educator" identity and value of collaborating with other faculty in similar roles on teaching and education practices, and
- the factors (enablers or barriers) affecting the sustainability of such teaching and learning communities.

EVALUATION:

An evaluation was undertaken to begin to understand the longitudinal impacts of this program on participants' professional identities and their linkages within a wider health professions education community. Qualitative individual interviews with participants from two recent cohorts approximately one year after their involvement with the program were gathered. Transcripts were coded using both open and axial coding to describe recurrent themes and relationships among themes in the data.

OUTCOMES:

Findings indicated that while participants felt that the program had helped strengthen their respective professional identities, they reported a number of problems making connections to a larger community of educators.

What focus group participants said:

Teaching Practice:

"There's no question that the SS had a definite effect...that I approach my teaching differently"

"My perspective has changed, my outlook has changed, my interaction with students has changed"

Teacher Identity:

"I think SS really offers a lot to people who are just entering into the milieu...Not that they're new at teaching, it's just new at acknowledging that they are teachers or educators"

"(clinicians) that teach. They do come to me and ask me questions. For instance our head of curriculum will say, well Jodie's done the SSP..."

Centre for Faculty Development