

decisions on how to allocate limited resources, they must be informed.

In the long term, the intern program will aid agricultural graduates in having firsthand knowledge of the legislative process. A perennial problem with having a noticeable impact is having enough agricultural graduates actively participating in the legislative contact. It seems that a very small percentage actually DO IT. It is expected that agriculture graduates will be more inclined to contact their local legislator if they have had firsthand experience with the legislature. As Cathy said, "DOING IT is so much different than reading about it."

Cathy has just begun her teaching career as a Vocational Agriculture Instructor in Glens Ferry, Idaho. She has already made plans to teach a unit on legislative information. She'll be inviting a legislator to

class. Cathy is even considering a two-week internship with a lobbyist for her high school students. She feels it would be far more valuable than the traditional high school legislative page experience. Understanding and influencing legislation is a life-long skill that can be developed through an internship experience.

Summary

If our success is minimal in getting agriculture alumni involved in the legislative process with conventional methods, let's build in legislative awareness into our educational process.

At the University of Idaho we are encouraging the development of a legislative internship placement program for selected students to gain experiences in the Idaho legislature. This program allows future agricultural leaders to be more aware of the legislative process. I believe the legislative internship is a step in the right direction.

Team Teaching — Untapped Potential

Mary T. Haque and David W. Bradshaw

Team teaching is an often overlooked teaching method with tremendous potential for innovation, stimulation, and intellectual exchange. The term "team teaching" as it is used in this paper is defined as interaction of faculty members on a regular basis. It should not be confused with teaching approaches where one professor teaches his or her own six week block, followed by another professor who teaches another six week block with little or no contact or exchange. In team teaching, lectures are generally taught jointly or alternated on a weekly basis. Syllabi, reading assignments, course objectives and tests are prepared by two or more faculty members working together.

There are numerous advantages to team teaching. These include bridging the gap between experience and inexperience, capitalizing on diverse areas of specialization, stimulating enthusiasm and support, providing a source for teacher evaluation, and motivating students through varied teaching styles.

While there are potential pitfalls to joint teaching, these can be minimized through planning and awareness.

Advantages of Team Teaching

1. Easing the Transition Between Inexperience and Experience.

In his article, "Dealing with teaching anxiety," (2) Douglas Bernstein observes that teachers in all disciplines face anxiety and stress syndrome which affect their performance. He suggests obtaining help and advice from more experienced colleagues as one way of dealing with teaching anxiety.

Teaching jointly with someone who has previously taught a course gives new faculty the opportunity to

observe teaching methods, to review and organize course material, and to access references and audio-visual aids that may have taken several years to gather. Since both faculty members are working toward a shared goal, the competitive attitude that often causes faculty to be secretive about their teaching methods is eliminated. A dynamic exchange of ideas about teaching promotes productive interaction while minimizing anxiety and isolation.

2. Capitalizing on Diverse Areas of Specialization.

With the advent of the information explosion, much of today's emphasis is given to specialization. It is utterly impossible for one person to know all that there is to know even in a specialized field, and professionals often feel frustrated by their inability to keep up with new developments in their specialties. Team teaching enables professors to capitalize on diverse areas of specialization within agriculture. Split appointments among teaching, research, and extension are common in land grant universities. Libbin and Cattlett (8) point out that research, extension, and teaching are mutually supportive and that research and extension provide first-hand instructional material and exposure to real-life current problems faced by industry. Students are stimulated when they feel that their professors are on the cutting edge of research or actively involved with industry. When two or more professionals with different areas of specialization cooperate in a teaching effort, the base of current information is broadened, credibility is enhanced and students benefit.

3. Stimulating Enthusiasm, Support, and Intellectual Exchange.

Team teaching provides a common experience which promotes communication, understanding and intellectual exchange. A two-way dialogue can enhance teacher motivation and enthusiasm which in turn enhances the classroom environment. Many experienced teachers undergo "burn out"; they find it

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difficult to maintain a high level of enthusiasm and interest year after year. Campbell (4) has found that "the level of student enthusiasm generally parallels that displayed by the teacher" and observes that this can affect the quality of the teaching environment. Teachers experiencing burn out can be stimulated by working with another faculty member who is excited and enthusiastic about a new course, and students will benefit from their teacher's renewed interest. The enthusiasm that is generated by "sharing ideas and emotions in a mood of mutuality" (3) can go beyond the classroom to foster a long term professional support and exchange between colleagues which benefits an entire department or profession.

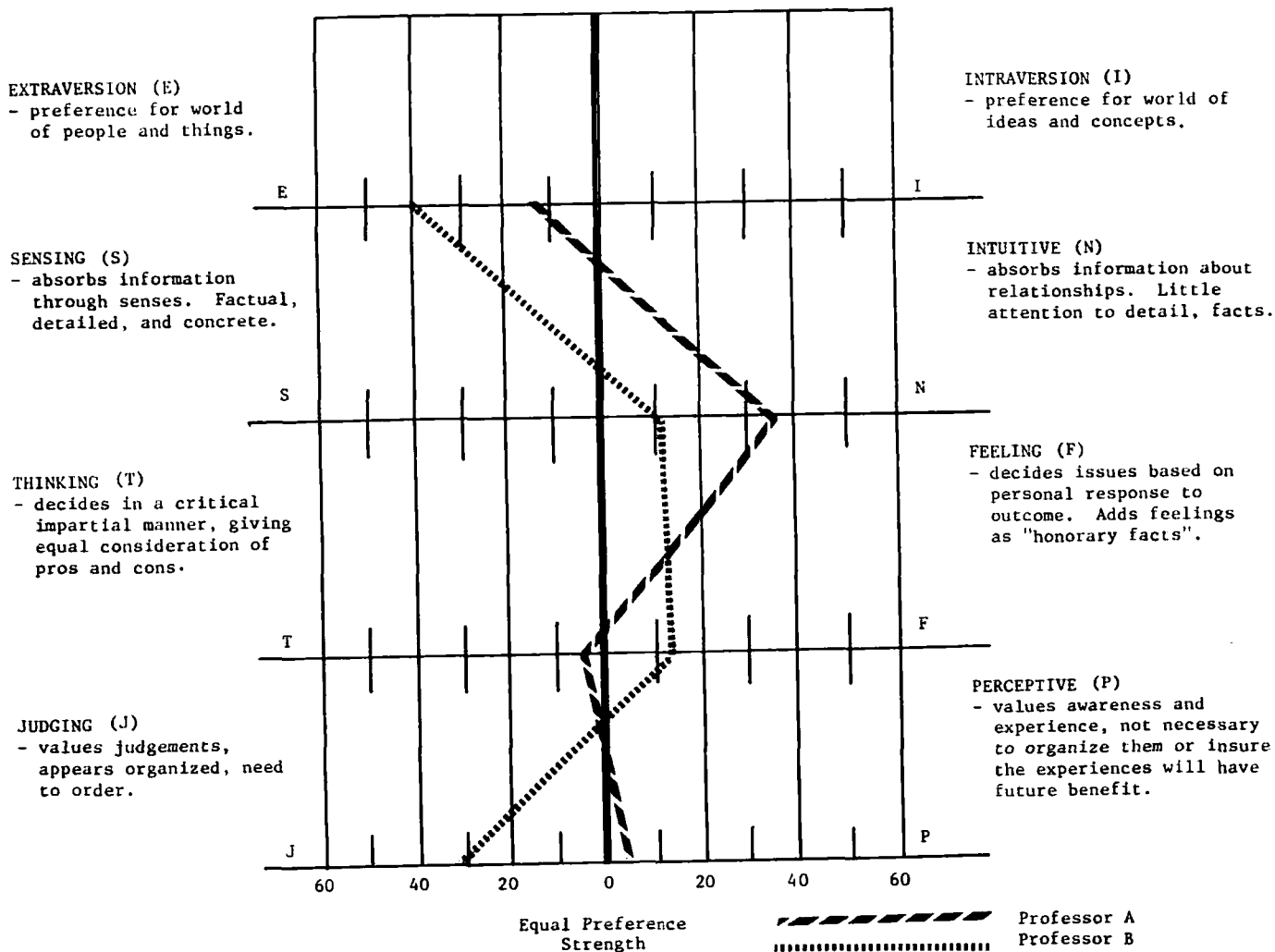
4. Providing an Objective but Nonthreatening Source for Teacher Evaluation.

Teacher evaluation is a hotly debated issue which has many aspects and many purposes. Peer evaluation is only one of many approaches that has been discussed in a series of articles in the *NACTA Journal*. One article (3) noted that "although faculty members may consider a formal system more fair than an informal one, they still may be reluctant to engage in an

elaborate formal system of evaluation." Junior faculty may be subject to a high level of anxiety if they perceive that their lack of teaching experience is a disadvantage. Team teaching provides an informal, day to day setting conducive to a relaxed, nonthreatening exchange about teaching effectiveness. Since both parties are involved, one does not feel threatened by a one way evaluation. If open and honest exchange about strengths and weaknesses is to take place, faculty involved must trust and respect each other. Continual exchange and evaluation can provide the reinforcement necessary for a teacher to gain confidence and self assurance.

Evaluations by team teachers also solve problems associated with an observer affecting the teaching-learning process in the classroom. While the instructor and students may act differently when an observer is present, a team teacher would not be considered an "observer" and could evaluate his colleague in a less conspicuous and disruptive fashion. The chances of visiting on a particularly good or bad day, thereby coming away with a warped view of one's lecture abilities, is prevented since the observer is present at a

Figure 1. Feedback Sheet Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.



majority of the classes. One is able to make a more realistic assessment of a colleague's teaching ability and can offer suggestions for improvement throughout the semester. These improvements can be incorporated into the course before the semester is over rather than the following year.

5. Reaching and Motivating Students Through Varied Teaching Styles.

A common goal of most teachers is to reach and motivate as many students in a class as possible. James A. D'Albro (5) recently conducted a "Student Preference to Learning Styles" survey. His results lead him to suggest that variation in teaching-learning styles might improve the attitude of students toward learning, and he therefore encourages "a wider range of teaching styles in the classroom in order to obtain better results from students." (5)

Even within the lecture system, teaching styles vary widely. While teaching styles may be influenced by subject matter, experience and workload, they are also influenced by the way an individual instructor learns from and relates to those around them.

Having participated in a team teaching effort and wishing to improve our methods, the authors investigated the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Test (9). This test is designed to help people recognize how they look at things and how they make decisions. Their preferences to situations proposed in the test indicate types with characteristic needs and reactions to situations. Different personality types synthesize facts and communicate information very differently. Taken under the supervision of the Counseling and Career Planning Center, the test took less than one hour to complete. The results were then evaluated, interpreted and explained by a psychologist from the Center. Eight factors (preferences are arranged on either side of a central axis (Fig. 1) The stronger one's preference is in a given category, the more distant it will range from the central axis. Preferences which fall close to the central axis do not indicate a strong preference for either of the opposing categories and may fluctuate slightly depending on the situation. Two individuals who differ strongly in two or more categories are unlikely to be successful in a joint teaching effort. As can be seen in Figure 1, our preferences are similar in some areas (ie. E and N) but slightly different in others (ie. T, F and J, P). While similarities contribute to compatibility of team members, slight differences may serve as complimentary features and provide opportunity to stimulate more members of a class. A team provides a broader base for reaching and stimulating students than either individual working alone.

Potential Problems

Those who decide to try team teaching should be aware of a few problems that can be avoided through planning and awareness. Division of responsibility should be agreed upon by team members and outlined in the class syllabus to prevent one team member from

assuming that the other will cover certain information. The attendance of both teachers at all lectures will minimize this problem, and avert misunderstandings. Also, well defined course requirements prevent students from playing one team member against another regarding class project requirements. This is important in light of the diversity of personality type factors among college faculty and students reported by Barrett, Sorenson and Hartung (1). When team teachers are truly compatible these problems are easily solved.

Conclusion

For a team teaching approach to succeed, it is essential that team members have similar standards and convey a strong sense of unity and mutual respect to their students. The stimulation that team members bring to each other in turn to their students provides benefits which extend beyond the classroom. The joint effort toward a common goal can develop a sense of "oneness" which strengthens individuals and the department.

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