

## Conclusion

If colleague evaluation is used, peer appraisals of course materials and exams should be at least a part of the process. Peer evaluation of course materials is less threatening than classroom visitation; course organization and reading lists are also easier to change than are personality traits of an instructor. Evaluation of course materials also requires less time. In addition course materials may be reviewed by faculty in other universities. It is a common practice to have outside reviews of faculty for promotion. Course syllabus and exams could easily be a part of the materials reviewed.

Colleague visitation of classrooms should be used judiciously; they seem most appropriate for faculty development purposes. Faculty members can play an important part in the evaluation of the instruction of their peers. However, the evaluation must be carefully and judiciously planned and implemented. Otherwise, it may result in a working environment that would decrease

rather than promote the pursuit of excellence, faculty autonomy, and faculty diversity, a goal that has been the landmark of American higher education.

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# Professional Faculty Development Program At An Agricultural Technical Institute

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"Faculty Development" activities have traditionally concentrated on remaining current in ones subject matter area. This "development" was, and continues to be, delivered through such programs as conferences, workshops, seminars, advanced degrees, and sabbatical leaves. These programs were, and in many cases are, uncoordinated and not available to all faculty.

However, because scholarly competence in a technical area does not necessarily translate into teaching effectiveness, the emphasis of faculty development changed at the Agricultural Technical Institute, The Ohio State University, to include the improvement of instruction. The basic assumption is that the teaching process is made up of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and motivations which can be learned. Under this concept, it is important to take a holistic approach to the teaching-learning process.

It becomes essential to emphasize the individual and the interrelationships of faculty, administration, staff, and students — the institutional environment — if we are to improve the effectiveness of teaching.

The current concept of faculty development — more appropriately labeled professional development — places an emphasis on the areas of technical competence, im-

provement of instruction, and development of skills and sensitivities needed to work with students and colleagues in an ever-changing society.

## Our Program

The Teaching Committee in 1977 surveyed faculty regarding a "faculty resource and support program." The results of this survey (Table 1) identified the following items as high priority goals/outcomes:

1. To develop greater competency in the area of instructional skills and techniques in the classroom
2. To increase ability to use appropriate, varying teaching strategies
3. To increase knowledge about ATI's operational procedures, personnel policies, facilities, etc.
4. To enhance the personal confidence and self-worth of each staff member
5. To develop greater competency in subject areas
6. To increase understanding of the characteristics and needs of our students
7. To increase ability to use human relations skills in order to communicate more effectively in your area

These goals/outcomes reflect the professional development concept: technical competence, teaching methodology, the institutional environment, and interpersonal/human relations skills.

The key outcome of this survey was the hiring of a "Faculty Development Coordinator" who works with individuals and groups of faculty members on their

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**Table 1. ATI Faculty Resource and Support Program Needs Assessment Questionnaire (n = 31)**

	DESIRABILITY									
	Not Needed		Somewhat		Long Range		Second Year		This Year	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
<b>A. GOALS OF FACULTY RESOURCE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS</b>										
To enhance the personal confidence and self-worth of each staff member.	3	10	3	10	2	6	3	10	19	63
To develop greater competency in the subject area.	2	6	7	23	1	3	1	3	20	65
To develop greater competency in the area of instructional skills and techniques in the classroom.	1	3	2	6	2	6	7	23	19	61
To develop greater competency in your responsibilities outside of the classroom.	3	10	6	19	9	24	6	14	7	23
To increase understanding of the characteristics and needs of our students.	3	10	4	13	3	10	4	13	17	55
<b>B. OUTCOMES OF FACULTY RESOURCE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS</b>										
Increased knowledge about ATI's operational procedures, personnel policies, facilities, etc.	3	10	3	10	0	0	5	16	20	65
Increased confidence in yourself as a staff member.	5	16	2	6	2	6	5	16	17	55
Increased understanding of the characteristics, attitudes and goals of your students in relation to the national characteristics.	3	10	5	16	7	23	10	32	6	19
Increased ability to understand the concerns and interests of varying groups of students (ethnic groups, women, etc.).	4	13	6	19	8	26	6	19	7	23
Increased ability to communicate with students of varying cultural backgrounds.	2	6	9	29	11	35	3	10	6	19
Increased ability to assess students learning styles in order to more effectively plan educational tasks, assessments, and goals for individual students.	2	6	7	23	2	6	7	23	13	42
Increased ability to develop behavioral objectives and learning packages.	2	6	7	23	3	10	5	16	14	45
Increased ability to use human relation skills in order to communicate more effectively in your role.	1	3	5	16	3	10	9	29	13	42
Increased ability to understand and communicate more effectively at all levels.	2	6	4	13	5	16	7	23	13	42
Increased ability to develop and evaluate student-centered academic, occupational, and personal development programs (student developments).	1	3	4	13	9	29	9	29	8	26
Increased ability to help students with deficient educational backgrounds.	3	10	3	10	5	16	7	23	13	42
Increased ability to use appropriate, varying teaching strategies.	2	6	2	6	2	6	7	23	18	58
Increased ability to understand and work with task-centered groups (committees).	3	10	6	19	13	42	7	23	2	6
Increased ability to conduct classroom research.	4	13	7	23	9	29	7	23	3	10
Increased ability to construct more effective tests.	3	10	4	13	2	6	7	23	14	45
Increased ability to develop interdisciplinary learning experiences.	1	3	7	23	7	23	7	23	8	26
Increased ability to develop continuing education programs.	3	10	5	16	14	45	4	13	4	13

problems. Under the Coordinator's direction the Faculty Development program at ATI has several components:

1. **Individual Consultations** - These may be formal conferences or informal discussions on a single question. The topics range from typical classroom concerns to personal questions on how to deal with students, colleagues, and administrators.
2. **Seminars and Workshops** - The focus of these sessions is on the improvement of teaching; innovative teaching techniques, using media, how students learn, and how to prepare tests.
3. **Credit Courses** - For some of our instructors and our technicians who are interested in professional growth through academic degrees, we

are offering credit for individual projects and/or formal courses.

4. **Small Group Assistance** - The emphasis is on assisting a few faculty members who have a common concern.
5. **Newsletter** - This is a one page, short, concise informational piece in which faculty can share ideas from their professional readings and discussions with colleagues.
6. **Professional Library** - A small area in the library is set aside as a "Professional Library". In this section, reference materials on teaching — books, magazines, mimeos — are available for use by faculty and staff.

7. **Retreats** - Occasionally it is effective to get away from campus for a day or two to discuss concerns and plan future directions.
8. **Industry Internships** - Faculty members may have up to two weeks fully paid leave for improving competence in their subject areas.

Our Teaching Committee has continued, primarily in an advisory role, to identify general topics needing special attention. Although the Committee and the Faculty Development Coordinator work closely with the Director of Academic Affairs, the committee continues to conduct faculty surveys to identify specific workshop topics, desirable times for workshops and the like. Faculty members generally have a greater sense of commitment to activities for which they have been involved in planning.

Faculty involvement has been identified as a key factor in the program's early success. Forty-four out of fifty faculty members were involved in one or more professional development activities during the 1978-79 school year. Table 2 shows how people were involved in the various program activities.

### Generalizations

Much has been written recently regarding procedures for establishing professional development programs. Following are some of the basic principles we have used at AIT:

1. Faculty members are the most important resource of the Institute. Their attitudes and behaviors are instrumental in establishing the learning environment and, therefore, the Institute's reputation.<sup>1,4,5</sup>
2. Some, but not all, faculty members are interested in improving their instruction. Therefore, programs should give those faculty members a chance to do something they feel will be of value to them — not an activity they are required to do.<sup>2,4</sup>
3. There should be a minimum of administrative pressure on individuals to participate in professional development activities. If administrators feel a particular individual needs assistance, he/she should be **encouraged** to

seek individualized assistance rather than attend the more formal workshops or seminars.<sup>2,4</sup>

4. An advisory committee composed of faculty members especially interested in the teaching/learning process is essential to identify areas of concern. Generally, faculty know better than administrators what they and their colleagues want and/or need.<sup>3,4,5</sup>
5. Faculty tend to spend a relatively small amount of time on increasing their knowledge about the teaching-learning process and developing new teaching skills.<sup>2,5</sup>
6. Faculty development programs will not drastically alter the way most faculty teach. Therefore, progress will be slow and not always readily apparent.<sup>1,2,5,6</sup>

### Summary

Professional development programs must recognize that institutions are systems comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, and students who interact to establish a learning environment. Without an environment conducive to improving the teaching-learning process, no change will occur. At ATI, we've found that a key factor in gaining participation in our Professional Development program is a "let's solve it together" attitude and the use of peer opinion leaders rather than administrative dictates.

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**Table 2. ATI Faculty Involvement in Developmental Activities, 1978, 1979**

Program Components	Full-Time				Part Time			Total
	PhD. n=17	M.S. n=17	B.S. n=5	Other* n=18	PhD. n=1	M.S. n=4	B.S. n=5	
Individual Consultation	7	9	1	0	0	2	2	21
Seminars/Workshops	13	14		4	0	1	2	36
Credit Courses	2	2	2	4	0	0	0	10
Small Group Assistance	5	7	2	0	0	1	3	18
Retreats	3	4	0	2	0	1	0	10
Industry Internships	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

\*Other — This category includes "academic technicians" (paraprofessionals) and Administrative-Professional staff members.