A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

By

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Faculty development occurs at every level, and it occurs most commonly as the pursuit of one goal—improving teaching in order to improve learning. It has been well demonstrated in literature that the manner(s) in which a professor handles his or her instruction have the ability to influence student learning. And yet, university classrooms all over America are populated with professors who may have developed a substantial knowledge of and or expertise in their respective disciplines, but who may have very little training on how to teach what they know. Faculty development experiences come to bear on this issue. Faculty development can be a useful tool in regards to promoting good pedagogy, which ideally leads to effective classroom instruction.

This study is a descriptive case study which proposed to understand how eighteen university professors perceive and practice application for faculty development funds, experience faculty development opportunities, and implement what they have learned from faculty development opportunities into their own body of knowledge and in their teaching. The professors’ thoughts were collected via interviews. The case study contains profiles of the context in which each of the participating professors’ were
working as well as descriptions and their perceptions of the process by which they incorporated what they have learned from faculty development opportunities into their classrooms. The study analyzed this data, discussed relevant themes in the data, related the data to previous research and provided suggestions for further research.
Dedication

To all of those who have taught me, I am better because of you each.
Acknowledgements

Thank you to Dr. David W. Brooks for being the kind of mentor who has made me a better teacher and a better person--and for being patient with me all the while.

Thank you to all the members of my committee for being helpful and supportive of my research. It is a pleasure to learn from each of you.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In the world of higher education, the impact of faculty development programs is significant. This qualitative case study was conducted in order to investigate the important role that faculty development can have in improving instruction. It has been well demonstrated in literature that the manner(s) in which a professor handles his or her instruction have the ability to influence student learning. And yet, university classrooms all over America are populated with professors who may have developed a substantial knowledge of and or expertise in their respective disciplines, but who may have very little training on how to teach what they know. Faculty development bears on this issue, providing opportunities for faculty to increase and maintain currency in their respective disciplines as well as providing opportunities to improve their teaching.

Faculty development opportunities, by means of faculty development and scholarly activity funds, in a small Midwestern university were considered in this case study. The impact of faculty development experiences on a faculty member’s perspectives and attitudes as well as on that faculty member’s teaching was investigated in this case study. The participants were interviewed regarding (a) their background and prior teaching experiences, (b) the reason(s) they requested faculty development funds, (c) the type of faculty development experience(s) they had, and (d) the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching.
Purpose Statement

The purpose for conducting this qualitative study was to discover the impact of faculty development experiences on faculty members and on their teaching at a small university in the Midwest. Through this study, the collective recollections of the participants were examined in an effort to learn (a) the reason(s) they requested faculty development funds, (b) the type of faculty development experience(s) they had, and (c) the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching.

Research Questions

The central research question for this study was: What impact(s) have faculty development experiences had on the teaching of faculty members in a small university in the Midwest?

Subquestions were:

- What themes concerning the reasons for pursuit of faculty development opportunities emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?
- What themes concerning the results of faculty development opportunities on individuals emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?
- What themes concerning the results of faculty development opportunities on professors’ teaching emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?
- In what ways does being a small private university make the University studied unique in regard to faculty development needs and opportunities?

Delimitations

The limits of this study were defined as follows:

1. Eighteen faculty members at one university in the Midwest affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.
2. The interviews were conducted during the Spring 2010 semester.

**Limitations**

Potential limitations to this study include:

1. Eighteen faculty members from one institution were interviewed. Many other faculty members at the same institution have partaken of faculty development opportunities. Faculty development processes at religious, private, or public institutions may vary importantly from those studied.

2. The results of this study may not be appropriate to generalize to other private institutions, even those of similar size and locale.

**Significance of the Study**

Qualitative research studies using the case study tradition are commonly used to study the areas of education and social services, particularly as these areas relate to people and programs (Stake, 1995). Thus, the employment of the case study design is useful for developing a greater understanding of faculty experiences as a result of a faculty development program at a private university in the Midwest. The results of this study are valuable because they illustrate the role that the faculty development process has in the instructional lives of faculty members. The results are useful in understanding the challenges and benefits of the faculty development process at the university being studied in order to maximize the productivity of that process and its results. Faculty development is a significant investment and institutions would do well to ensure that they get their money’s worth for that process. And, of course, it is the hopeful goal of any educational institution to educate its students well.

Additionally, the results of this study are useful for faculty interested in strategic faculty development experiences. It is clear that faculty development opportunities have
the potential to improve the participating faculty on a personal intellectual level and to initiate changes in instructional choices made on the part of faculty members.

The continued pursuit of the institution’s mission and reputation among its stakeholders is in part a function of its commitment to the scholarly activity and good teaching of its faculty. The importance of this is only magnified in an institution which is a small, private teaching-focused institution. Thus, the provision, maintenance and success of a substantial faculty development program is an important endeavor.
Chapter Two

REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

This review of literature includes selected references related to the topics of (a) examples of faculty development programs and opportunities (b) whether or not faculty development programs and opportunities have the potential to create changes in the classroom and (c) if so, if it is possible that the changes made have the potential to lead to improved student performance.

Faculty development in general shall be considered any non-perfunctory intervention that is available to faculty members and has the goal of improving the faculty member’s scholarship, research, teaching or any combination thereof. There are many different sources, types and durations for faculty development.

The purpose of faculty development is clear. Good teachers form the foundation of good schools. And as such, improving teachers’ knowledge and teachers’ skills is an important consideration. In order to accomplish this, it is important to provide and/or encourage avenues for faculty development and to seek to analyze its effects. There is motivation to analyze teaching, including collegiate teaching, in classrooms from the inside as well as from the outside of the campus. During the last decade, an increasing number of institutions of higher education in general, including research universities, have created teaching and learning centers (Flick et.al., 2009). The focuses of these centers is generally to improve the instruction of current faculty members in their classrooms and possibly to help train graduate students to teach—both currently and in the future.
As a result of the desire to improve student outcomes, in the American system of education there is a widely established recognition of the need for faculty development. Faculty development at educational institutions in the United States takes on a variety of faces with a common sight—to improve faculty scholarship and to cause change in the way faculty members teach—with the hopeful result of ultimately improving student learning. However, research that has been done on the topic of faculty development represents a broad range of subject matter and areas of focus—ranging from classroom practices and habits to student learning to teacher enrichment to teacher personality.

Additionally, faculty development may occur in different ways. It may occur on campus through campus-sponsored programs. It may involve the faculty member traveling to a meeting or conference, or participating in some type of scholarly endeavor, or researching and publishing a work.

Faculty development is changing as a result of technology. Twenty-first century faculty both look to technology as a means of delivering faculty development opportunities and as a topic of faculty development opportunities. In fact, “encouraging faculty adoption and innovation in teaching and learning with IT (instructional technology)” was recently identified in the EDUCAUSE Top Teaching and Learning Challenges for 2009.

As noted, many different types of faculty development opportunities exist. Some opportunities are large-scale undertakings, embarked upon by universities in order to improve the teaching offered at their particular institution. Many universities have developed “teaching and learning” centers, or the likes, in order to educate their faculty on teaching-related issues and to provide resources for faculty to improve their training related to pedagogy. Other universities may designate a portion of the budget to be given
to such matters and then dispense those funds to faculty to use on external faculty
development opportunities. Faculty development opportunities may last hours or days or
weeks.

There are numerous examples of faculty development opportunities at many types
of institutions—from large, research-based institutions to small religious colleges. For
example, Pennsylvania State University offers a variety of faculty development
opportunities through the provost’s office (Diaz et.al., 2009). They also house The
Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence to provide faculty development services. In
particular, Penn State targets new faculty members as well as graduate students, making
efforts to encourage or entice, via reward, their participation in faculty development
opportunities in order to improve their teaching skills (Diaz et.al., 2009).

As the need for university faculty to gain skills in teaching is recognized more and
more, some universities, such as Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, are
beginning to train graduate students about teaching formally through programs such as
their Graduate Education Development Institute (GEDI) which offers courses in
“Pedagogical Practices in Contemporary Contexts.” The strategies promoted in this
center are learner-centered in nature (Diaz et.al., 2009).

Many schools additionally target first year faculty members. Indiana State
University has a newly redesigned faculty orientation program that is a three-credit
course that is delivered to young faculty over the course of a semester. This course is
delivered in a face-to-face context, primarily by senior faculty members. Because of the
time commitment necessary to participate in this program, faculty can choose to be
compensated in one of two ways: a one-course release or $3,000 to be placed in a faculty
development account (Diaz et.al., 2009).
George Washington University has a faculty development unit called the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL). This center manages faculty support groups, technology support and course management assistance as well as the “New2U” program. One aspect of this center is a faculty mentoring program where new faculty are matched with seasoned faculty as a means of faculty development for several years (CITL webpage, accessed 12.10.2009).

Many of the universities mentioned thus far are larger and have the capability to house whole centers dedicated to faculty development. They also presumably have substantial faculty development budgets in order to facilitate these things. In comparison, the university in this study is small and has significantly fewer resources.

Smaller institutions have pursued faculty development opportunities as well. American University, a small private university, offers the Greenberg Seminars, which cover topics of classroom techniques, as a means of faculty development. These seminars meet three or four times a year. Also, grants, other support and faculty lunches where best teaching practices are discussed are offered for faculty (Diaz et.al., 2009).

Classroom practices, habits, student learning, teacher enrichment, teacher personality, and various mediums through which faculty development may be delivered—come to bear on faculty development to some degree. Does this faculty development translates into effects in the classroom? Although the existing body of research on faculty development is broad, the focus here is limited to faculty development opportunities that are explicitly aimed at affecting the area of creating change in faculty teaching, and ultimately the type(s) of change that affect student achievement. This specific focus was set in order to correlate with the fact that this study
was conducted at a small, private teaching-focused university, where the intended effects of faculty development are to improve teaching on campus.

Despite the amount of literature related to faculty development, relatively little amount of systematic research has been conducted to examine the effects of professional development on improving teaching or improving student outcomes, particularly at the college level.

In Kennedy’s study, “Defining Optimal Knowledge for Teaching Science and Mathematics,” it was found that faculty development could influence teachers’ classroom practices significantly.

The American Institutes for Research (2000) conducted a major study for the United States Department of Education to attempt to determine the effects of faculty development on classroom change. The study involved a longitudinal sample taken from 1996-1999. During that time, the study found little change in overall teaching practice. The majority of faculty development opportunities seemed to fail to net any actual change in classroom instruction, let alone any corresponding increase in student achievement. In spite of little average change through the study, that there were instances involving individual teachers where moderate to strong change in the classroom resulted from faculty development. Thus, in some instances, faculty development did elicit change in the classroom (Porter, et.al., 2000).

The study sought to understand differences between those cases in which change occurred and the majority of cases in which no change occurred. One major and consistent difference was related to the type of faculty development that the teachers received (Porter, et.al., 2000).
Not all faculty development is created equal. As found by the United States Department of Education study, it is possible, perhaps even probable, that faculty development—as it often exists, could be a waste of resources much of the time. However, the study found faculty development to lead to change in the classroom and positive student outcomes when it: 1) is a reform type activity; 2) when it occurs for particular durations; 3) when it has collective participation, or the participation of teachers in like categories; and 4) when the activity is focused on content and teaching strategies that are useful to accomplish the learning tasks at hand.

In order to lead to classroom change, it is important that faculty development opportunities possess certain characteristics. Kennedy (1997) asserted that faculty development leads to instructional change which leads to improved student achievement when it focused on: (1) how students learn particular subject matter; (2) instructional practices that are specifically related to the subject matter and how students understand it; and (3) strengthening teachers’ knowledge of specific subject-matter content. An early study in faculty development by Good (1979) as well as a study by Resnick (2005) found that types of classroom change that prove to be effective in improving student performance fall into several major categories: emphasizing instructional methods such as giving information, questioning students, providing feedback; conducting frequent reviews; using methods such as “guided practice” when presenting new material.

Generally speaking, in university situations, most teachers possess training in their disciplines, not in areas that deal with learning and teaching. So, in order to improve teaching, the types of faculty development opportunities selected may be even more critical. Even amongst K-12 teachers, who do possess a background in education, it appears to be significant. In one study, Carpenter, et.al. randomly placed first-grade
teachers either in a month-long workshop that dealt with research on how students understand addition and subtraction word problems or in a month-long workshop that dealt with problem-solving strategies for such word problems. According to the study, teachers who were in the workshop dealing with teaching and learning often posed complex problems to students, obtained student feedback—listening to the processes students used to solve the problems, and then providing feedback based on the correctness of the students’ responses. Teachers in the content-driven/strategies workshop emphasized memorization of facts and interacted little with the students (Carpenter, 1989). Student achievement was consistently higher when the teacher’s professional development was focused on how students learn and how to gauge that learning effectively (Resnick, 2005).

Faculty must be motivated to put forth the effort and to expend the time necessary to make changes in their teaching. Akerson, Medina and Wang (2002) described one engineering professor who was surprised to discover the amount of time and resources that were required to support changes in his teaching. Faculty uninformed in general by the body of research driving instructional change typically have been reported to face great difficulties in creating any kind of sustained change (Flick et.al., 2009). Henderson (2005) discussed a case of teaching reform that involved a tenured physics faculty member. The physics faculty member was reported to have entered the reform situation with exaggerated ideas about his personal model of instruction derived from experience and was uninformed about relevant research on instruction. That particular faculty member became quickly frustrated and as a result, his efforts resulted in little net reform and no lasting effects of the faculty development he experienced. Yet, even faculty who have had a background in teaching and learning find that making changes requires effort
and motivation. Parsons (2001) found that personal reflection and study were necessary. She found via observations made from video and audio tapes of herself teaching that there were inconsistencies between her intentions and her practice. Regardless of a faculty member’s background, making changes takes sufficient motivation to drive them to expend the effort necessary to bring about change.

Faculty Development and Student Learning Outcomes

Perhaps the most pertinent question of all to consider, is if it is in fact possible for faculty development to lead to change in the classroom and if a faculty member who has experienced that type of faculty development is willing to expend effort necessary to bring about change, is it possible for this change to lead to improved student outcomes.

Several studies assert that it is possible. Barlett and Rappaport (2009) suggest that a week-long, or even a two-day long faculty development workshop can have robust effects on faculty members work. The study reports that teaching in university classrooms is affected as a result of faculty development—both with new topics and with teaching methods. The study reports that the modifications made by faculty members in their courses as a result of faculty development projects resulted in higher student performances in classrooms following the “intervention” of faculty development.

“The Missouri Mathematics Effectiveness Project” (Good and Grows, 1979) investigated the effectiveness of an experimental mathematics teaching program. The treatment program used in the study was a naturalistic study of 40 relatively effective 4th-grade mathematics teachers. Participating students were tested before and after with a standardized test and a content test. The content test had been designed to approximate the actual instructional content that students had received during the treatment. Some teachers in the study received faculty development and implemented teaching strategies.
learned in the faculty development such as questioning students and providing feedback. The control group of teachers did not receive this faculty development and did not implement the associated techniques. Observational measures revealed that teachers in the treatment group generally implemented the treatment. The students of treatment teachers generally outperformed those of control teachers on both the standardized and content tests (Good and Grows, 1979).

The National Institute for Science Education paper called “Defining Optimal Knowledge for Teaching Science and Mathematics” (1997) showed faculty development can inspire change that leads to increased student performance. The study provided evidence that student achievement can be improved via classroom change subsequent to faculty development. Student achievement was found to be consistently higher and growth in the students’ basic and more advanced problem-solving skills increased as a result of faculty development.

Another study related to reading, studied two groups of kindergarten and first-grade teachers. One group of teachers received faculty development opportunities, the other did not. Those opportunities related to improving the teachers’ knowledge of word sounds and structure. Students’ reading performance was tracked over the course of a year. Teachers who had received the extra training spent more time explicitly teaching the building blocks of words and language. As a consequence, their students scored higher on tests of reading, spelling and comprehension than did the students of the teachers without the faculty development opportunity (McCutchen, 2002).
Chapter Three

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Case Study Research Design

The explanation of the design for this case study includes descriptions of: (a) the instrument; (b) the sampling strategy; and (c) the participants.

This study employs the use of the qualitative tradition. In his book, “Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design” (2007), Creswell identified eight reasons that the qualitative method of research may be useful to employ. The first reason related to the nature of the information being sought in a particular study. According to Creswell, studies that seek to discover or examine and that seek to answer the question, “What?” are studies that lend themselves to the employment of the qualitative method of research. Additionally, Creswell noted that in qualitative analysis, the researcher takes on the role of an active learner instead of an expert or judge. Thus, this interview study fits well into the qualitative paradigm. Seidman (1991) viewed the basis for interview studies as exhibiting a keen interest in hearing the experiences of others and learning about the meaning they assign to their experiences. In performing case study-based research, it is important to enter a scene with an interest in learning how that scene functions in its ordinary pursuits and with a willingness to put aside any presuppositions when evaluating the case (Stake, 1995).

Instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher and the instrument are often considered synonymous (Creswell, 2007). Although from certain perspectives, it is possible that this be perceived as a conflict of interest and a weakness innate to qualitative research,
proponents of qualitative research assert that this characteristic is, in fact, a strength of qualitative research. Paper and pencil-based data can be rigid and impersonal, while humans possess the abilities to be observant, flexible and cognitive. These characteristics better fit certain types of studies, such as interview studies, than a more rigorous scientific method might.

The type of instrument used to interview subjects is dictated by the type of information is sought. According to Warner’s principles (cited in Huberman & Miles, 1998), the guidelines of a study may necessitate a “minimally predesigned” study or a “fully predesigned” study. A minimally predesigned study is considered useful when it is the desire of the researcher to maintain a low profile, the focus of the interview remaining on the subject’s experiences. A fully designed study is more useful if the researcher seeks generalizability. The questions of this study lie between these two poles. Thus, open-ended interviews were conducted.

In the interview protocol (Appendix A), subjects were initially asked a question that was open-ended in nature. As anticipated by the researcher, many of the participants may have provided responses to future questions as they responded to the initial open-ended one. This was allowed as to not interrupt the subject’s train of thought (Siedman, 1991). Any questions not answered in the original responses were addressed later in the interview.

The role of the researcher in this process was that of an active listener. The researcher made efforts to listen on three levels (Creswell, 2007). The first level to which the researcher listened was to the words that the participant was speaking. Secondly, the researcher attempted to detect whether the participant was speaking freely or in a guarded manner. Clues from the words selected by the participants were used to make this
determination, as well as general tone. The third level of listening engaged in on the part of the researcher was to listen to make determinations in regard to the interview process itself in order to keep the process moving, to keep in mind how quickly the allotted time was passing in relation to the material to be covered, and to observe nonverbal communication from the participant. Additionally, it was the responsibility of the researcher to avoid reinforcement, which could encourage a response from the participant in a particular direction, and to avoid leading the comments of the participants in a particular direction.

**Sampling Strategy**

Stake (1995) asserts that interviews do not lead themselves to random sampling methods. The number of people in the pool that could be interviewed may potentially be very large. However, the participants must consent to participating, so at this point, some degree of self-selection occurs. Case study research is not meant to be sampling research conducted in order to be able to make generalizations about other cases, but rather it is the goal of case study research to gain understanding about the particular case being evaluated (Stake, 1995). Many qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2007; Siedman, 1991; Stake, 1995) suggest that purposeful sampling is the method of choice for most qualitative researchers. The sampling strategy was that of purposeful sampling. The typical case variation was utilized as this research will make an effort to emphasize what is to be considered normal or average. In studies where it is the intent to discover the real meaning of an experience, Morse recommended interviewing at least six different participants and this study interviewed eighteen participants (Morse, 1991).
Participants

According to Stake (1995), the first criterion related to case study research should be to select participants based on what we can learn from them. Stake asserts that we should select cases which are convenient and hospitable to our inquiry. Siedman (1991) recommended anonymity and thus the specific names of the faculty members and the institution were withheld or disguised. The participants in this study were faculty members at a small private university in the Midwest who had applied for and have been awarded faculty development funds within the past five (5) years. Faculty members were awarded and given funds through a university committee. The faculty members were not required to submit any kind of written report following their faculty development experience. The participants’ names were replaced with letters from the Greek alphabet as pseudonyms.

Data Collection Procedures

The procedural steps included: (a) a pilot study; (b) the researcher’s interviews with participants; and (c) data collection.

Pilot Study

Moot interviews were conducted with two consenting participants at the university at which the study took place. The interviews were conducted following the protocol in Appendix A. At the conclusion of each interview, each participant was asked to provide feedback (Siedman, 1991). Feedback suggestions from the pilot study were utilized to improve the interview process for the formal interviews.
Participant Interviews

Names of faculty members who have received faculty development and/or scholarly activity funds at the University during the past five (5) years were provided by the institution’s Provost’s Office. The individuals who were considered to be good informants, and particularly those who had received funds for multiple faculty development experiences were initially contacted by email (Appendix B). Attached to the message were copies of the informed consent form (Appendix C) and the interview protocol (Appendix A). Telephone calls were placed within two or three days of the emails in order to confirm a response from the participants. In the event that a faculty member agreed to participate in an interview, a convenient time and location was determined. The participant was asked to select a location for the interview. According to Seidman’s recommendations (1991), the interview location should meet the conditions of being private, convenient, and familiar to the participants.

Every researcher possesses certain biases and assumptions. However, care can be taken to prevent those biases from influencing aspects of the study. During the interviews, both verbal and nonverbal communication can be monitored as not to influence the participants in any particular direction. This type of care was taken in this study.

Data Collection

One week prior to the set interview, an email was sent to the participants to serve as a reminder of the appointment. Attachments of the interview protocol (Appendix A) and the informed consent form (Appendix C) were sent. Additional copies of these forms were taken to the interviews in order to obtain the signatures of the participants. In addition to interviews, exemplars were collected when available. In this study, exemplars
were solicited in order to learn as much as possible through as many mediums as possible related to the participants’ experiences, and the exemplars were involved in triangulation whenever they were available.

*Data Sources*

The primary data source for this study was the transcripts of the interviews with the eighteen participants. Each participant was informed in advance that the interview would be recorded digitally in order to ensure an accurate record of the interview. Additionally, brief notes were taken during the interviews and the notes were expanded as soon as possible following the interviews in order to facilitate a more rich description of the interview process. The recorded interviews, notes, the interview length and the number of participants involved were intended to account for evidentiary adequacy (Creswell, 2007).

*Data Analysis Procedures*

*Data Management*

The digitally recorded interviews were burnt onto CDs, labeled and kept in a bank safety deposit box. All electronic files for the study have been stored in multiple locations: (a) on the researcher’s personal computer’s hard drive; (b) on the researcher’s personal jump drive; and (c) on burned onto CDs, labeled and stored in the bank safety deposit box. A record of the actual identities and pseudonyms utilized in the study was kept in two locations: (a) on a password protected file on the researcher’s personal laptop; and (b) on a CD in the bank safety deposit box.
Data Reduction

Data reduction includes interviewing process, the process of data transcription and reviewing of field notes (Huberman and Miles, 1998).

For this analysis, an inductive approach was utilized (Creswell, 2007). No preconceived notions or hypotheses were made, and it was not the goal of this study to support or refute a particular theory. The transcripts from the interviews were read and studied until the patterns of categories and themes began to emerge, a data analysis technique called open coding (Creswell, 2007; Stake 1995). After the initial categories were developed, subcategories were made and a codebook was developed.

Following the open coding, axial coding was conducted. Axial coding consists of analyzing the data for similarities and differences (Creswell, 2007). During axial coding, data were reorganized, resulting in the addition, deletion, and combination of themes. Additionally, the “central phenomenon,” a general definition of the central concept, was determined (Creswell, 2007).

Following axial coding, selective coding was utilized. It is in this stage that the researcher works out a story that is built on the axial coding system. The researcher should continue to evaluate the original data to ensure that the original data matches the story being built. In this stage, hypotheses may be made as well (Creswell, 2007).

Profiles of each of the participants were made in this phase and later evaluated by the participants themselves for validity.

Data Display

In the process of data display, the researcher trims the information and organizes it into a graph or a table. The data from the analysis portion of this study were organized into appropriate visual tools.
Verification Strategies

Qualitative researchers seek to establish and increase the trustworthiness of their data by including steps that demonstrate credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (if applicable). Verification includes drawing conclusions from the data.

Eight different possible verification procedures were identified in Creswell (2007) for use in qualitative analysis. He recommended that at least two of these procedures were utilized for any given study. The verification procedures that were utilized in this case study included: a description of researcher bias, member checks, triangulation and thick description.

Researcher Bias

During my seven years of teaching at my current institution, I have noticed a prominent reality in the college teaching world: many professors, while highly educated in their respective disciplines, have little background in teaching and learning. Early on during my graduate school days (as a graduate student in cell and molecular biology), I found that I was very interested in teaching and learning. I completed the necessary graduate degree in order to teach college in my discipline, then I determined to pursue an increased background in education.

Although it may be unreasonable to expect many university faculty members to pursue degrees or even coursework in education, I am very interested in improving teaching in college classrooms. One primary way that this could be achieved is through faculty development opportunities. Thus, I have developed an interest in faculty development.

Since the participants in this study were colleagues as well, and as the topic was one in which they presumably were interested because they had applied for the faculty
development funding and agreed to the interview, no significant inhibiting factors relative to the interview process were expected.

Potential inhibitors such as gender and age were expected to be outweighed by commonalities such as being faculty members at the same institution, in a common profession, with common socioeconomic status and faith. A profession of the Christian faith, as well as a willingness to sign the University’s “Principles and Expectations” document is required for hire at the University. Thus, there is a large degree of homogeneity among faculty in terms of faith.

*Member Checks*

In this study, the digital recordings of the interviews were transcribed. From the transcriptions, a profile of the participant was developed. The participants received hard copies of both the transcripts and their respective profiles so that they could read them and evaluate them for accuracy. The participants were asked to reply and to verify that the transcripts and profiles were correct and accurate descriptions. One participant noted a couple of mistakes regarding the details of the transcript of her interview. These changes were consistent with the interview tapes and related to specific information regarding a conference and not to the overall content analyzed. However, these changes were made within the transcript by the researcher.

*Triangulation*

Triangulation is a common approach for building credibility in a study. The term is similar to the term from the fields of navigation and surveying, conjuring up an image of verifying data from multiple perspectives. In this study, the interview questions were asked of eighteen different individuals. Additionally, the transcripts were compared to
relevant literature. Exemplars were also collected from participants when available and included in the triangulation. These things lend credibility to the study.

*Thick Description*

Many of those considered to be qualitative research experts have asserted the importance of rich, detailed description in qualitative analysis (Stake, 1995). Thick description contributes substantially to this work. In order to provide thick description, close attention was paid to the participant, his or her body language, descriptions, surroundings, etc.

*Interpretation*

The methodology of this study also includes interpretation. Interpretation is not a process that begins exclusively after the data collection and analysis have been completed. Instead, interpretation occurs throughout the entire study (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). As the researcher interviews participants and makes observations, derives categories and assigns labels from participant interview transcripts, both analysis and interpretation are happening. The appropriate emphasis in case study research is on interpretation, which occurs while the researcher is in the field as he simultaneously observes what is happening and examines its meaning(s) (Stake, 1995).

The main role of interpretation is to make sense of the data. There is not a strict process by which interpretation is accomplished; the method(s) employed in order to interpret data vary with individual researchers. The researcher’s role is to relate their interpretations to the audience, including explanations as to what occurred and possibly why it occurred. A researcher’s interpretation can also be influenced by the researcher’s perspective. As a researcher grows in knowledge and experience, his or her perspectives
may change. Additionally, it may be beneficial for a researcher to take a step back from the data as to gain new perspective (Wolcott, 1994). Research depends on interpretation, but it is the standard in qualitative research design to limit the amount of the researcher’s personal interpretation between the times of when the research is set and when the data are collected and interpreted. This is referred to as a “value free” period (Stake, 1995).

Many qualitative researchers use these realities about interpretation to assert the importance of good description, explaining that an event cannot be interpreted accurately unless it is described well (Stake 1995). It is important that the researcher does not delve too deeply into the realm of interpretation without adequate description (i.e., exceeding what the data supports).

Concerns

According to Stake (1995), “Qualitative study has everything wrong with it that its detractors claim.” Perhaps one of the most common criticisms of qualitative research is that it is subjective. In the context of qualitative research, subjectivity is not seen as a fault but as an element that is important, even essential, in order to understand a given case. Qualitative researchers assert that this kind of subjectivity that occurs as a result of the researcher being the instrument, observing other people with his own bias in tow, and then being the evaluator as well is said to facilitate understanding of the case. Qualitative researchers remind that this type of research is meant to be noninterventive and empathetic (Stake, 1995). Although objectivity is a goal, personal understanding could be misunderstanding (Phillips as cited in Stake, 1995).
Chapter Four

RESULTS

The purpose for conducting this qualitative study was to discover the impact of faculty development experiences on faculty members and on their teaching at a small university in the Midwest. Through this study, the collective recollections of the participants were examined in an effort to learn (a) the reason(s) they requested faculty development funds, (b) the type of faculty development experience(s) they had, and (c) the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching.

This chapter begins with a description of the campus site on which this research was conducted and some general information regarding the profiles of the participants. Next, a description of each participant is presented. Then, the three major themes and their respective subthemes are presented. Finally, the chapter concludes with the results relative to the questions asked in this investigation.

*Introduction to the Site*

As previously noted, the site for this study was a small, private university in the Midwest. The site is a four-year liberal arts university founded in 1878. In addition to undergraduate programs in more than forty-five areas of study, several masters programs in education and business and one doctoral program in physical therapy are offered. The university’s enrollment averages 3,600 students and over 70% of the faculty hold terminal degrees in their fields. The student to faculty ratio is 14:1. The university prides itself on being a teaching-focused institution. Its student body is mostly traditional in nature and the university draws students from all around the world and United States. The majority of its students are from the Midwest, however.
The institution is a member of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU). Sandin (cited in Hunt, 1998), identified four categories of “church-related colleges:” pervasively religious, religiously supportive, nominally church-related, and independent college with historical ties to religion. Institutions that are members of the CCCU are identified with Sandin’s first category. One of the CCCU’s membership requirements is a “personal Christian commitment” on the part of each full-time faculty member (Peterson’s, 2002, p.6).

There were 18 faculty members who agreed to participate in this study. Twelve of them were female and 6 were male. Their credentials included the following degrees: MA, MBA, MS, MLS, DA, DMA, EdD and PhD. Twelve of the participants held terminal degrees in their fields, 4 of the participants were currently working on terminal degrees in their fields, and two of the participants held masters degrees. The seniority of the participating faculty members ranged from 2 to 32 years. All 18 participants have been recipients of university faculty development funds more than once. Some have been recipients multiple times. Combined, these faculty members represent more than 250 years of service to the University.

The teaching backgrounds of the participants were varied, but all of them had some teaching experience prior to their current positions at the University. Nine of the participants had backgrounds that included certifications in elementary or secondary education. Thus, those 9 had some background in coursework related to teaching and learning topics on the K-12 level. The other 9 participants had not had any coursework in their educations, graduate or undergraduate, on teaching or learning topics. All 9 of those individuals were teaching assistants during their graduate student years. Of those 9, four were assistants in programs that provided some type of training for their graduate
assistants. However, many said the training was very minimal and dealt more with management and organizational related issues. Aside from the previously mentioned demographics, the only teaching or learning-relate background the participants had came from faculty development opportunities.

To preserve the anonymity of the participants, Greek alphabet letters were assigned as pseudonyms to each faculty member.

Introduction to the Participants

Alpha

Professor Alpha, a young and energetic professor, wore a neat and trendy outfit and a big smile as she greeted me for our appointment. Her office was nicely organized and full of bright colors, books, and pictures of her family. Alpha’s background was in education and included several years of public school teaching prior to moving to college teaching and earning her doctorate. She was very comfortable with the qualitative interviewing environment and was generous and candid with her comments. She is, clearly, someone who has thought about teaching and learning a lot. Alpha primarily utilized faculty development funds for the purpose of pursuing her doctorate degree, while teaching at the University with a master’s degree.

Beta

Professor Beta warmly greeted me in his neatly organized and tidy office for our interview. He offered me some tea and turned on the fan, as the air-conditioning in his building had not been working optimally for some time. He was dressed professionally, and came across as someone who is thoughtful in his words and actions. Beta’s background is as a librarian. At the time we met, he was ABD on his own doctorate.
Thus, he was quite comfortable with the interview format. He provided informative and detailed comments and was generous to share of his ideas and experiences. Beta utilized faculty development funds to present at as well as attend conferences related to academic libraries and associated issues.

**Gamma**

Professor Gamma greeted me warmly as we met in his office. His office gave evidence to the fact that Professor Gamma is a fellow with many interests such as music and various aspects of the English language and its learning. Professor Gamma was casual and funny, and he possessed a certain degree of witty sarcasm. He was very comfortable with the interview process and spoke articulately about his experiences with faculty development. Professor Gamma’s background was in education and English. Prior to joining the University, he had public school teaching experience. As a university faculty member, Professor Gamma utilized faculty development funds to attend poetry meetings and retreats.

**Delta**

Professor Delta wore a friendly smile and business casual dress as she greeted me at her office door. Her office was well-organized and neat. She was prepared for and very comfortable with the interview format and spoke in a professional and articulate manner about her experiences. She was very thorough in the details she gave. Professor Delta’s background is in physical therapy and intercultural studies in education. She had both clinical and university teaching experience prior to coming to our institution to teach. Professor Delta has utilized resources ear-marked for faculty development in a variety of ways, including: attending professional meetings on both a regional and a national level, and towards an international mission trip with physical therapy students.
Epsilon

Professor Epsilon greeted me warmly as I entered his office, which was neat and tidy and largely without embellishment—with the exception of a decal on the wall that served as a pretend outside window—peering into a beautiful scene, a small escape from the otherwise pale-blue walled building. Professor Epsilon was both friendly and thorough as we visited, and having completed a qualitative study for his own doctorate in the past, was very comfortable with the format and line of questioning pursued. As he spoke, his interest in education was obvious. Professor Epsilon’s background was in math and math education. Prior to his position at the University, he had public school teaching experience. Professor Epsilon primarily utilized faculty development funds to attend and present at both regional and national conferences.

Zeta

Professor Zeta gave me a friendly and welcoming greeting as I arrived at the door of her neatly arranged and nicely decorated office, as she sat behind her desk. She was very professional and thorough in conversation and was very comfortable in the interview format. Professor Zeta herself was ABD in her PhD program at the time of our interview. Her positive and energetic spirit came through in the interview as she spoke of her interest in and experiences with faculty development. Professor Zeta’s educational background is in mathematics and education. She has utilized faculty development funds to attend conferences, as well as to assist in her doctoral work.

Eta

Professor Eta greeted me in a polite manner and business dress as she arrived at her office for our meeting. I stepped in behind her to her office that was decorated in a modern fashion. Professor Eta is just beginning her teaching career after finishing a
MBA at our University. She is young and energetic and is in the process of taking some
distance courses herself towards her doctorate. She was comfortable with the interview
process, and it was easy to talk to her about her experiences. She has utilized faculty
development funds towards the coursework she is taking and desires to complete her
doctorate to improve in faculty rank and salary.

Theta

Professor Theta gave me a friendly greeting as I arrived at her office for our
interview. She was dressed in a business-like manner and was warm and welcoming.
Her office was well-decorated and contained items that were the work of students’ from
previous semesters and years, serving as examples and as memories of the students she
has taught. Professor Theta was an engaging conversationalist, and it was clear from our
discussion that she generates and implements many ideas related to teaching and learning
in her classroom. Her background is in business and in curriculum/instruction. Prior to
her long tenure at the University, she taught high school. Professor Theta utilized the
faculty development funds that she obtained for attending conferences.

Iota

Professor Iota greeted me as I entered her office at our scheduled time. She was
comfortably dressed and professional in her demeanor. Her office was neat and was full
of books, journals and posters from projects, a clearly productive place. She was
comfortable with the qualitative interview process, and we began quickly. Throughout
the course of the interview, it became obvious that Professor Iota gives a lot of thought to
her teaching. Her background is in social psychology, which she asserts is a reasonably
rare area of concentration. Professor Iota utilized faculty development funds to attend
conferences in her area of discipline.
**Kappa**

Professor Kappa arrived at her office just in time for our interview. She greeted me, offered me coffee, and then we both entered her office and sat down to visit. Her office was neat and orderly and decorated simply—and actually was one of her two offices; our interview took place in her newly acquired office as department chair and her faculty office is utilized for giving music lessons. She was friendly, and our conversation was interesting as she shared about her faculty development experiences. Professor Kappa’s background is in music education and church music. She has applied for faculty development funds in order to attend conferences on those topics.

**Lambda**

Professor Lambda arrived for our appointment a bit late, after a busy morning. She was dressed in a business-casual manner and greeted me with friendliness. We walked into her office together, which was full of interesting books and artifacts and colors, as well as photos of her family. Professor Lambda was very familiar with qualitative research interviews and quickly jumped into the topics at hand. Her background is in education—music, curriculum and instruction. Prior to her university teaching tenure, she taught in a high school setting. Additionally, she has taught in a Christian School (K-12) setting and, at points, has homeschooled her now grown children. Her background is diverse and she is well traveled internationally. Professor Lambda applied for faculty development funds in order to present at and attend conferences.

**Mu**

Professor Mu arrived at my office for our interview in a prompt manner. He was friendly, outgoing, dressed casually and brought snacks. Professor Mu revealed himself
Throughout the interview to be someone who thinks deeply about his teaching. He spoke easily and freely about the topics of faculty development, teaching and learning. He came across in that context as enthusiastic and passionate. His background is in kinesiology and athletic training and he teaches students in classroom settings as well as in clinical settings. He has utilized faculty development funds to attend meetings in his area of discipline.

**Nu**

Professor Nu greeted me in a relaxed and friendly manner as I arrived at her office for our appointment. She was neatly dressed and her office was organized and contained many student papers, signaling the end-of-the-semester grading approaching. As we sat down to chat, I found her to be comfortable with the idea of a qualitative interview and the topics we were discussing. She related to the topics well and spoke in an articulate and detailed manner regarding them. Professor Nu’s background includes teaching certifications in English and biology and graduate degrees in English. She pursued and utilized faculty development funds for the purpose of attending and presenting at meetings in her discipline.

**Xi**

Professor Xi greeted me as I entered his office for our appointment. As I entered, I found his office to be both tidy and intellectual in its appearance. Professor Xi offered me coffee, and we sat down to visit. He answered the interview questions comfortably and in an articulate manner. It was apparent that Professor Xi was thoughtful and reflective about his teaching. His background is in English and communication, and he possesses a certification to teach as well. Prior to his current position at the University, he taught secondary school, and following the completion of his doctorate, he secured a
tenure-track position. Professor Xi utilized faculty development funds for the purpose of travel to conferences related to his discipline.

\textit{Omicron}

Professor Omicron was finishing up her lunch when I arrived at her office for our appointment. She had had a busy day. She greeted me warmly and invited me in, and soon we began our interview. Her office was nicely decorated and had a round table in it at which we had the interview. Professor Omicron’s background is in business and she is a graduate of our University’s MBA program. At the time of our interview, she was working on her doctorate in order to be a candidate for a tenure-track position. Prior to teaching at the University, her teaching background included a year of teaching history at a local public school. Professor Omicron was very friendly and willing to answer the interview questions openly. She utilized faculty development funds for her doctoral work.

\textit{Pi}

Professor Pi warmly welcomed me to his office for our interview. He was wearing a business casual type of attire and his office was nice and neat, with some stacks of grading here or there. He sipped on a cup of tea as we talked. Professor Pi’s long tenure at the University was preceded by his own graduate training in English. He is now teaching at his alma mater. Professor Pi was very animated, engaged and engaging in his interview. He spoke, in somewhat of a formal tone, about his experiences with faculty development. Professor Pi requested and received faculty development funds in order to afford the opportunity to attend and present his work at conferences.
Professor Rho greeted me with a friendly smile as I walked into the English office. She was neat and tidy in her appearance and articulate in her speech. Her office area was nicely decorated and had several plants sitting in the windowsill. Professor Rho is an alumna of the University. She departed to do her graduate work, and then returned to teach. A portion of her tenure at the University was part-time while she raised children; she has been full-time for about the last decade. Her background is in reading and English, and she has some background in education as well. She was comfortable with the interview process and taping, but seemed to measure her words to a degree. Professor Rho sought and obtained faculty development funds from the University so that she could attend and present her work at conferences.

Professor Sigma greeted me with a smile as I walked across the hall to her office for our appointment. I stepped over a pile of books to have a seat in the chair across from her desk. Professor Sigma is a senior professor at the University, and through her long tenure at the University had many opportunities for faculty development. She spoke in an articulate manner and appeared to be comfortable with the interview scenario. She seemed eager to share her experiences and the effects of those experiences on herself and her classroom. Dressed in a causal manner, she visited easily about the matters at hand. Professor Sigma is also an alumna of the University and her background is in biology. She has utilized faculty development funding to travel to meetings in her area of discipline.
Major Themes and Subthemes

Three major themes emerged from the eighteen interviews in which a series of questions were asked about the participants’ motivation for, experience with and outcomes regarding their faculty development experiences. The three major themes identified were: *Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us, and Passing It On.*

**Theme 1: Why We Do This**

The title for this theme emerged from an interview with one of the participants regarding why that individual had requested faculty development funds. This theme most directly addresses the research goal of determining the reason(s) the participants requested faculty development funds, but it also relates to the discovery of the research goal of understanding the type of faculty development experience(s) the participants had. Each of the faculty members included in the study are tenure-track faculty members at the institution. This theme possesses three subthemes: *Academic Compulsions, Because We Want To, and Funding Makes it Possible.* In this context, the subtheme *Academic Compulsions* relates to motivations for taking advantage of faculty development funds that are largely influenced by external factors such as the academic structure in which the participant works, motivation for external rewards or contractual agreements. *Because We Want To* relates more to motivations that participants’ voiced of a more intrinsic nature such as curiosity, challenge or personal drive for improvement within oneself. The subtheme *Funding Makes It Possible* was chosen to reflect the emphasis the participants put on the reality that without the funds the University provided for these experiences, they would not be able to pursue them.
Subtheme 1a: Academic Compulsions

One subtheme that arose under the heading theme of Why We Do This was, Academic Compulsions, a subtheme essentially asserting that for one reason or another, outside sources put pressures on the faculty member that created a situation in which the faculty member essentially must seek the faculty development experience or would likely face negative consequences. This general trend was reoccurring and prevalent. However, the specific sources of the pressure and the anticipated consequences of a lack of faculty development experiences were varied.

Several of the participants indicated that they were currently pursuing their doctorate. For many of them the completion of that pursuit was part of the contractual agreement they undertook with the University upon their employment. However, there is no release time generally given to those pursuing their doctorates at the University, nor is University funding directly earmarked for such purposes for individual faculty members. Thus, the burden of time and support for the completion of that required task falls on the faculty member himself or herself. Faculty members in such a position are permitted to apply to the University’s general fund for faculty development monies. If awarded those monies, the said faculty member may utilize them toward doctoral expenses.

Such was the experience of one professor. She described her motivation for applying for funding as follows,

When I applied almost every time that I applied for faculty development money it was to help with my schooling, to help pay for the travel there and the books and the courses themselves. Because, you know, it’s your money, all out of pocket otherwise…Doing it for them, they should help me. Yeah, that’s why. It’s a good thing; we’re helping each other that way.

Additionally, several faculty members expressed the motivation to participate in faculty development opportunities as the resulting ability to add those experiences,
presentations, papers, etc. to the list of accomplishments evaluated in their promotion and tenure files. Another participant summarized this motivation,

They are not required by my position. I pursued them independently. However, I pursued them for the benefit for tenure and promotion and that sort of thing. In order to meet those requirements, even though SBU has lenient requirements. I still want to be able to say I am doing scholarly work.

As well, some participants expressed that their motivation to attend meetings for these reasons were so strong that after the said goals were achieved, their motivation waned. For example, a participant noted,

Early on I was very conscious of presenting papers because I was working for tenure and promotion. So, at the regional meetings was pretty successful in the beginning. I applied [to present] and was accepted. But, after I got tenure and was told I couldn’t be promoted anymore [my desire decreased]…That sounds kind of bad.

Still others testified that they felt compelled to take on faculty development opportunities based on the encouragement of members of their department, or their department chairs, and a corresponding desire to please those individuals. One participant articulated this position,

I…used the faculty development funds for a poetry retreat. I have gone for seven or eight years. I lose track of time. It has been a while. In essence I go whether I get funding or not. But [my department chair] said, “Hey, why don’t you apply…?” So, I did.

A handful of participants noted that they had been hired for jobs for which they lacked adequate specific expertise. For example, one participant had a mathematics background and took a position working with academically talented incoming freshmen. In this case, she felt she lacked knowledge in that area and utilized faculty development funds to seek opportunities to compensate for that deficiency,

The first time I applied was to go to um, a conference—that was the XXXX conference. It was my first year [in my job]. I just felt like a fish out of water. I knew there was a lot I needed training and insight on. I wanted to talk to other
professors but didn’t even know the organization existed [ahead of time]. So I applied for funds…So, that was a big help.

Finally, entities outside the University played a role in the motivation for participants to seek faculty development funds as well. In every case during which this came up, it was due to the fact that that faculty member taught for a program that had a specific outside accrediting body imposing requirements on the faculty as well. Such was the case for one professor,

So, as a profession we are expected to do continuing education units as part of our licensure. I do above and beyond the minimum requirements—30 hours every 2 years, or 3 CEUs.

Subtheme 1b: Because We Want To

A second subtheme that arose under the heading theme of Why We Do This was Because We Want To, a subtheme expressing the participants’ desires to pursue faculty development opportunities out of their own free will. Every participant interviewed expressed this source of motivation as either their entire source or as a large part of their overall motivation. There were several reasons that participants expressed that they wanted to participate in faculty development opportunities.

A common reason that participants wanted to participate in such opportunities was an intrinsic desire to be good at what they do—a direct result of their own genuine enjoyment of their fields. One aspect of self-improvement is to always be learning and growing more. This emphasis was clear throughout the interviews. One way participants fleshed out this desire was to remain current in their respective fields. A particular twist on this angle came up on numerous occasions when participants expressed the challenge of maintaining a sense of remaining current in their disciplines while carrying a busy load at the University based solely on teaching, with no allotted credit for research of their
own. For many people in this position, faculty development seemed to serve as a sort of efficient means of updating oneself. This facet of the subtheme was expressed well by one participant,

Going to the national conferences is pretty expensive, so that is why I applied for faculty development funds. It’s really difficult with our teaching load to keep up with the field—look at my piles of journals, many still in the plastic. I just, how do you work with students and do that [keep up]? And so conferences are a good way to get caught up in what’s current in the field quickly. It’s kind of a short intense way of attending a lot of sessions. I can bring that stuff back to the class and keep them [the students] current…if you don’t [attend conferences], you become a dinosaur really quick.

Many, many interviewees expressed their desire to pursue faculty development opportunities was an outgrowth of their own personal commitment to scholarship.

Throughout the interviews, there was an overwhelming sense of genuine desire to learn, improve and grow in their own academic disciplines that was voiced by the faculty members. One faculty member asserted this very thing,

I think probably the most important thing for me is just self-satisfaction and meaning; it’s sort of why I went to graduate school in the first place. There was not a certain careerism that was pushing me. It’s just that I wanted to advance my knowledge and my expertise more. And, um, I always had a poor opinion of people who got security in their academic positions and then rested on their laurels. It’s just important for me that I continue to grow.

The desire for self-growth and improvement lead some participants to voice that they have set goals for themselves to ensure that these things happen. For example, one professor explained,

I have set goals for myself every year, I sort of did this before I earned my doctorate. I set a goal for myself that I wanted to attend at least one national conference every year. And, I really wanted to at least every second year have presented at one of those. And then I also wanted to go to a regional thing. I want to know what is going on in my field. I can read research and I can read journals, but you don’t really get a feel about what is going on unless you are around the people who do that research and you get to hear them speak.
It was clear that many of the participants took this kind of self-improvement straight to the classroom. Many faculty members said they wanted to use this new-found knowledge to better their students, and many faculty members said these meetings caused them to improve their pedagogy and teaching techniques. Those specific elements will be examined in the third theme.

*Subtheme 1c: Funding Makes It Possible*

A third and final subtheme that arose under the heading theme of *Why We Do This* was *Funding Makes It Possible*, a subtheme expressing the reality the participants voiced that they would not likely take these opportunities if faculty development funds were not present. Many participants voiced the facts that their departmental support was insufficient for their participation in such things and the opportunity to apply for the support of the larger University was critical to their ability to pursue faculty development opportunities. Others voiced the desire for more funds to be present for more faculty members to be able to do more things. At the time of the interview, one participant’s return trip to China to teach, hung in the balance of available faculty development funding,

> That [previously mentioned opportunity] was for teaching in China. I had some workshops and I taught some teachers in China. I don’t apply to do this every year, but I would if they would let me. And actually, I applied this year because I was going to present a paper in Hong Kong. I was accepted to present, but they [faculty development committee] said that because I applied in the fall, I have to wait ‘til spring. I talked to them in the spring and they said since my meeting is in the summer I have to wait until next fall to apply. So, I don’t get to go to that conference in Hong Kong unless I get some funding.

As noted earlier, many individuals voiced that their departmental budgets do not adequately support faculty members to pursue faculty development opportunities. Thus, without the University’s added funds, even attending regional meetings would be a
challenge. The necessity of the University’s money on top of any departmental funds was voiced by one professor,

I didn’t have support of personal abilities to go unless I had the University’s help. And so, that was my reason for applying [for funds]. Yes, for many years, we [in my department] had about $50 a piece to go to meetings. In the last couple of years we’ve climbed that a bit, but for most of my tenure it was really nothing and so we really had to get money from the institution at large in order to leave Bolivar or go to St. Louis.

Many participants expressed appreciation for the availability of the University’s funds for such causes. One professor acknowledged that the support from the University to complete these development tasks was encouraging,

I have received funds pretty regularly, and that is a huge help, obviously financially, to defer the cost from my own budget. It feels like a huge stamp of approval from the University as well, to feel like they are supporting my endeavors.

**Theme 2: Faculty Development Benefits Us**

The title for this theme emerged from the fact that *every* participant I interviewed testified that he or she had benefited from his or her faculty development experiences. Many of the participants asserted that they experienced similar benefits, and several brought out unique benefits. This theme most directly addresses the research goals of understanding the type of faculty development experience(s) the participants had as well as the goal of understanding the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching. This theme includes three subthemes, *Faculty Development Updates Us, Pursuing Our Own Scholarship and Putting New Things Into Practice*. The subtheme *Faculty Development Updates Us* relates to the common thread among many interviews that participants felt that faculty development opportunities provided a vehicle by which they could stay more current in their fields. The subtheme *Pursuing Our Own Scholarship* serves to describe the reality that many participants utilized faculty
development opportunities as a means to pursue opportunities to deepen and widen their own personal scholarship or to serve as a forum by which the participant could share his or her scholarship and/or research with others in a larger academic community. Finally, the subtheme, *Putting New Things Into Practice* strives to communicate the experiences shared by many participants who came back from the meetings with new ways of thinking and/or new ideas to employ that had effects on their classrooms.

*Subtheme 2a: Faculty Development Updates Us*

The first subtheme, *Faculty Development Updates Us*, that arose from under the theme *Faculty Development Benefits Us*, embodies the helpfulness that many participants felt faculty development opportunities to be from the perspective of helping them gain updated content information in their disciplines. The University studied is not a research-based institution and many faculty members at the University have heavy teaching loads and other academic responsibilities such as departmental, College and University committees. In addition to these things, student advisement responsibilities are high and many faculty sponsors are involved with other student-related services such as tutoring services, clubs, or extra-curricular activities. The participants voiced that this type of job profile can create such a workload that it is difficult to maintain currency in their academic disciplines. It was from this vantage point that many of the participants asserted the benefits of faculty development as a way to increase their own content knowledge and as a means of inspiration to accomplish that. This sentiment is noted by one participant,

Most often I used my faculty development funds to stay abreast of my [discipline] because that is the main area I teach here…It’s hard to stay abreast of everything that is going on in [my discipline] without being a full-time person in it.
This updating of new content-related information also provided the opportunity for many of the participants to gain exposure to new ideas, methodologies, technologies and products that they would not have otherwise encountered. Many participants expressed appreciation for these opportunities and explained that these opportunities to expose themselves to new things led to effects in their classroom. One example of this was one participant’s meeting related to literature and religion,

It is a festival of faith and writing. You hear different works of literature…You’re exposed to new writer’s new works. You also get trained on, um, about writing, if you have an interest in writing. That is how I come up with ideas for my classes…I always come back from there. I have new ideas about different works, and I’ll take those [ideas] into my classroom.

Virtually every interviewed participant noted that the opportunity for updating that faculty development opportunities provided for them was of upmost value in their estimation. Many viewed the role of faculty development opportunities as critical in a teaching-focused environment so that they could continue to engage, not only in the communication and instruction of undergraduate or graduate content, but in the leading research questions being pursued and new information being unearthed in their own respective disciplines. Without faculty development, and with heavy teaching loads, some expressed their level of awareness of their own fields may have diminished with an increasing long non-research based tenure. One faculty member expressed this concern and his commitment to overcome the challenge,

I think it is really easy in a small, teaching institution, to become very provincial. Um, and very limited in scope and not remember that what we’re doing is connected to a broader network of thought. And so, I seek to hold myself accountable to the research that is going on in my field, but also to contribute to it to be part of a bigger community. That’s the biggest thing. I think, uh, stimulation from the conferences and participation in them provoke me to work harder because I have a propensity toward inertia.
Finally, beyond these valued traits of providing current discipline-related information and updates for classroom content, many expressed the opportunity to engage in these ways in their own disciplines kept them inspired. An additionally participant articulated this response well,

Well, I think it [a conference he attended] opened up some people that I wouldn’t have encountered otherwise. And therefore, their literatures found their way into my life and then my classroom. And then the second way is that I saw these people producing literature and I thought well, I could do that, too. I think there was an encouragement when you see someone also creating, that you become, uh, more interested in trying to create, too.

Subtheme 2b: Pursuing Our Own Scholarship

The second subtheme, Pursuing Our Own Scholarship, that arose from under the theme Faculty Development Benefits Us, relates to the inspiration participants noted that felt as a result of the meetings that they attended. This subtheme emerged from the perspectives noted by many that meetings and conferences afforded them opportunity for engagement in a larger academic body—a place to be inspired by the works of others and to share their own works—all in the name of personal scholarship. The perspectives expressed by the participants that led to this subtheme related to their desires for learning for the value of learning and pursuing academic experience for its own innate value. The value of both of these pursuits related to empirical research were voiced by many participants.

One participant has enjoyed reading her papers at many literature and English meetings and receiving the input and comments of others. She has found this experience to be valuable to her as a writer and a scholar,

It’s just inspiring to my own creative processes. I might hear something that I think I might like to develop as an angle on a particular topic.
At the time of our interview, one participant had just completed some research in cooperation with a former colleague that will be presented this year in San Francisco. His passion for his work and genuine interest in sharing it with others were evident in his interview. He credited faculty development funds for helping to make this type of personal scholarly pursuit possible, and he spoke of the effects of this reality on himself and his classroom,

I think [this comes to bear on] instructor credibility. I think that when they [students] hear us relating our scholarly work—that we have all been able to do because we were funded—they then take us more seriously in the classroom. We’re not just teachers. We are professors. We’re scholars; we’re not just people translating a text book for them.

One faculty member spoke on the value of faculty development opportunities and networking in his personal scholarship. In his interview, he shared how important the connections he made with other scholars at various meetings were to his own personal scholarship and publications,

People know me from the conference and what I have done there. It has led to every publication I have…[every publication] has come out of something like that. It has really helped me grow as a researcher and even as a scholar.

Another faculty member often attends and presents her research at meetings and voiced an appreciation for that forum as well. She noted the importance of these meetings relative to establishing connections with other scholars. She voiced the importance of sharing ideas at these meetings in order to reach scholarly conclusions,

I do it for the networking aspect because I can learn from their experiences as well as I can share mine. We all have the same problems and struggles.

Additionally, she expressed the value of sharing her scholarly ideas with others, obtaining feedback, and hearing theirs and found these things to be valuable to her own intellectual life and interest as well as her motivation towards her discipline.
Subtheme 2c: Putting New Things Into Practice

The third subtheme, Putting New Things Into Practice, that arose from under the theme Faculty Development Benefits Us, speaks to the overwhelming number of interviewees (100%) that made the assertion that their faculty development experiences had inspired change in some way. This subtheme emerged from the perspectives shared by the participants explaining that something in them or in their teaching—or most often both, had changed because of the input from these meetings, and specifically, of course those other individuals who attended and/or presented at the meetings who shared information and ideas. It was clear that in the case of each participant, he or she attended meetings with the desire to learn new things and to modify their practices because of that new information. Even in cases where individuals said their motivation to attend meetings may relate more to external forces such as accreditation, tenure, etc., each individual expressed a correlating personal interest in personal growth and change.

A portion of the interview information that led to the formation of this subtheme really focused on changes that participants made to their thinking as a result of faculty development experiences. Participants voiced a sort of restructuring of their thinking that occurred because of these experiences, and they voiced it was likely that this restructured thinking had many outgoing effects. In one specific case, a participant described one of her first faculty development experiences as a young education faculty member. She relates that that experience caused her to modify the ways she deals with her students and the expectations she has for them, essentially causing her to “raise her standards” of expectation for the quality of their work,

My mentality changed mostly from that [faculty development] course. My level of expectation changed. I understood we have only a few short years to get them from one side of the desk to the other…I applied everything from it. It did make a
difference in my teaching. For sure! That’s why you do it [faculty development], to glean stuff to make you a better teacher and to make better teachers.

Another participant shared that she attends meetings looking for ways in which her thinking ought to change. She shared she looks at the data presented at meetings and in journals and other sources and applies the new information that she believes is valid to each of her classes specifically. She asks herself how that data ought to cause her to think or act differently in her approach to specific classes. She described her note-taking strategy at meetings which correlates with her goals,

I like to grow personally, and as long as I am growing personally, I can keep my enthusiasm for what I do here, helping students. I want them to grow personally, and so I [want to] walk away going, “Okay, for this class I’m going to apply this idea, and this class this idea.” That’s what I do. When I go to a conference, I have different sections of my notebook and I’ll flip to that section. I’ll flip to that section if they say something that will apply to my X class or my Y class or my Z class and write it down.

A portion of the interview information that led to the formation of this subtheme really focused on changes that participants voiced that they made to their teaching practices as a result of faculty development experiences. Many specific examples were given throughout the course of the interviews where participants shared things that they did differently in their classrooms because of the faculty development experiences. In fact, every person interviewed with direct teaching responsibilities claimed that they had made changes as a result of faculty development. Only one individual did not have direct classroom lecturing responsibilities at the time of the interview. Yet, that individual asserted several changes made in his area that were an attempt to better support learning—changes made as a direct result of faculty development experiences.

One professor discovered much about the world of poetry in his faculty development experiences—an area he formerly would have described as a weakness. He voiced that these faculty development opportunities caused him to expand his knowledge
about poetry and to develop and become confident in his own personal poetry writing skills. This growth as a scholar translated into various developments in his classes, where he felt more empowered to teach poetry and encourage students to learn to write from that platform,

Oh yeah, I mean these meetings have revolutionized the way I approached [teaching]. Let me see if I can shrink it...By attending I have entered into a pool of a discipline…and now I feel like I am a part of that discipline. Because of that meeting, I have been able to teach [in new ways and at new places]. What I do, pedagogically, I use it in XXXX. The first day I have these frightened students, I say I need a writing sample from you. Rather than [what I used to do, having a writing sample in the form of a paragraph], I ask a question like, “What is the most painful thing you have experienced?” We follow this through the year, and at the end of the year they take that and turn it into a poem. We publish it on my website. I go through a whole entire poetry experience with them.

A participant explained that she had attended a teaching-based faculty development meeting in the region that had emphasized the utilization of discussion boards. She described the meeting as having a significant impact on her understanding of and beliefs about discussion boards as a classroom utility, and that she came home to thoughtfully employ them in several of her classes. She studied and thought carefully about what the most profitable ways might be to utilize online discussion boards through the Blackboard system for a class that is otherwise face-to-face. She set out about incorporating their use and then considering its effects,

I went to the best practices conference at Drury. It talked about using discussion boards. So then I incorporated discussion boards in two of my classes. They’d have something to read and discuss during the week. Then I’d grade the discussion boards. So we did that. I collected a little bit of data evaluating [this process] and I presented at two different conferences about how to use discussion boards effectively.

Another participant even made significant curriculum changes to her graduate program as a result of information learned at a faculty development meeting.

One of the things I came back to see about was to shift our clinical to the end, so that they would have all the information before going out to their clinical…We’ve
shifted now and we’ll just have to see. There are going to be advantages and disadvantages.

**Theme 3: Passing It On**

The title for this theme resulted because many of the participants expressed some type of a greater furthering of the information they learned from faculty development opportunities—a further beyond the benefits they personally received and beyond making a change in their thinking and/or pedagogy—a furthering that either shared their newfound information with colleagues or evaluated the effectiveness of changes they had made in terms of the students. Many of the participants asserted that they had “followed up” on their faculty experience in some way by seeking to propagate its effect to others.

The first subtheme in this theme, *Campus Culture*, has the ambition of capturing the culture of sharing information that many participants described was present in their departments and on campus. The faculty members interviewed seemed to agree that the dynamics and relationships between the other members of their department or college allowed for a frequent sharing of ideas and experiences and many of the participants reported that they arrived back to campus and shared what they had learned with their colleagues. Sometimes this sharing was formal—such as within the context of a department or College meeting. Sometimes this sharing was informal—such as within the context of a conversation over coffee. The second subtheme in this theme, *Impacts on Learning*, reflects the attempts of some of the participants to discover the effects the implementation of new ideas or methods or pedagogy had on students and their learning. The case with almost all of the participants was that the effects were evaluated in a purely informal, anecdotal manner. In the case of a few participants, data was gathered to attempt to observe any effects in a more formal and detailed fashion.
Subtheme 3a: Campus Culture

Many participants talked about the culture that exists on campus for sharing of information casually amongst colleagues. The participants voiced the high levels of collegiality amongst their departments on campus, the social interactions of department members off campus, and the natural relationship-based conversations to which those realities lead. There was a significant culture of sharing experiences reported by the participants.

One participant noted that many of his department members may travel to a meeting together and they generally use the travel time in the car as an opportunity to dialogue about the meeting and things they have learned,

In some sense it is a report…there’s a 2 or 3 hour conversation on the way down and a 2 or 3 hour conversation on the way back. We tend to process the information during those times.

Another participant shared that in his department, a faculty member’s participation in a faculty development opportunity is something that they submit to be included in the University’s Trustee’s report. This was a common thread with all interviewees—these types of activities are officially recorded and reported. However, the reporting is merely related to one’s attendance at a meeting, not any kind of report summarizing the meeting’s happenings or the participant’s response to them. Instead, she asserted that that type of sharing happens informally in his department as well,

Now we do share unofficially, everybody usually shares a little bit about what they have done and what they have learned at conferences. There is no formal setting, we had meetings in the hallways between our offices. We share what is going on a lot.
Subtheme 3b: Impacts on Learning

This subtheme reflects the attempts of some of the participants to discover the effects the implementation of new ideas or methods or pedagogy had on students and their learning. The case with almost all of the participants was that the effects were evaluated in a purely informal, anecdotal manner. In the case of a few participants, data was gathered to attempt to observe any effects in a more formal and detailed fashion.

One participant collected and analyzed data regarding the changes she made to her classroom following faculty development experiences. She looked at student participation and comprehension and gave the students evaluations during the process. Professor Iota presented the data at meetings, once in an oral presentation format and once in a poster format. In addition, she commented on how her department shares information and requires its members to report on faculty development experiences,

All of us, when we go to conferences, if we see something that is in someone else’s area will grab a handout and share it with them when we get back. We’ll circulate things in the offices. We’ve put an inner office memo that everyone has seen. We do that kind of thing, which is more informal…We also have to write up something [after the faculty development experience], not every department does this, it is our thing.

Another participant conducted a study on e-books after attending several academic library conferences that related to that topic. He sought to better understand the utility of e-books within the context of our campus, and he utilized the results from that research to make administrative decisions for the university library. He explained,

The research I conducted was on e-books. It helped me to understand how e-books are being used by students, and where we should pursue acquiring e-books to us, and what is a good use [of them] in the academic setting…There were a couple of outcomes [from this study]. One was to realize that e-books do have a purpose in an academic library that is completely separate from a leisure reader. So, using the fusion of innovation model, which is a theoretical framework on how innovations defuse through a population, I was able to come to this realization.
Additionally, he presented some of the findings from this research on the roll of e-books in academic libraries at conferences. He also reported that the academic librarians share reports from their faculty development experiences in a more formal way than many at the University. The library faculty members are required to fill out a report on each faculty development opportunity and in the report they describe the event, the sessions they attended, the content of those sessions and the usefulness of the event and its sessions to them. These reports are shared. Professor Beta pointed out the value of data analysis and dating sharing when he said,

How do you measure? If you make a change and you don’t measure, you don’t know if it is beneficial or not.

Summary

The eighteen participants in this study were chosen because they had requested and received faculty development funds from the University within the past five years. In fact, all eighteen of them had received those funds more than once, and over their years of tenure, some had many times. From the transcripts of the interviews, which inquired about their faculty development experiences, three major themes emerged. The first theme, Why We Do This, encompassed explanations of the participants’ means and motivations for pursuing such experiences. The second theme, Faculty Development Benefits Us, contained descriptions that asserted the participants felt that these faculty development experiences were helpful and descriptions of why the participants felt that way. The final theme, Passing It On, related the participants ideas about the implications of their faculty development experiences—either on their students or on other colleagues. While all these participants share more similarities than they do differences overall, each is still unique and contributed distinctive information to this study.
The final portion of this chapter summarizes the responses of the eight participants to the central research question. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to the participants’ replies to the four subquestions.

The Central Research Question

The central research question for this study was: What impact(s) have faculty development experiences had on the teaching of faculty members in a small university in the Midwest?

All eighteen of the participants asserted that faculty development experiences had positive effects on their teaching and academic positions. None of them asserted any negative effects or lack of effects. Specifically, the positive effects that were most noted by the participants fell into one of three types: improving their teaching through improving their content knowledge, improving their teaching by helping to provide updates in their field, and improving their teaching by providing them with new methods or information about pedagogy which they can return from the meeting to employ in their classrooms.

Participants noted that the opportunity to attend faculty development events often resulted in an increased and deepened knowledge of content-related information for them. Many of the events or courses they attended were focused on information related to a discipline, and the participants voiced overall that the best way to improve their teaching was to improve their knowledge. Most commonly, these faculty development opportunities provided means of expanding and deepening existing areas on knowledge for the participant. On at least two occasions, the opportunity provided knowledge in an
area that was new to the participant or addressed an area in which the faculty member’s knowledge and experience had previously been weak.

Additionally, the participants noted that the opportunity to attend faculty development events often resulted in them being able to be more “current” in their fields. Many expressed the struggle to remain informed on the latest information in one’s discipline after taking a position at a University that is very focused on teaching and student contact opportunities. They expressed that the time is just not available to read all the latest journals and information, and as such, they appreciate the opportunity to attend faculty development opportunities in order to efficiently gain an overview of latest happenings. In fact, one faculty member described this reality as something like reading a textbook. That individual encapsulated well the thoughts of many when he explained that a conference becomes a filter in the way textbooks are a filter. You are, in that position, relying on someone else who has the time, energy and expertise to make decisions about what is good and what is not and to package it in a useful way. This sentiment was echoed by many participants.

Finally, participants noted that the opportunity to attend faculty development events provided them with new information about methods or pedagogy which they could return to employ in their classrooms. Many participants cited new ideas, information or techniques which they encountered as a result of faculty development opportunities. Many of those participants said that they integrated these new found things into their own thinking and into their classrooms. Examples of this type of occurrence ranged from incorporating a new novel and approach into a literature class, changing one’s perception of appropriate expectations for students, employing new pedagogies, and changing the structure of an entire curriculum.
Subquestions

1. What themes concerning the reasons for pursuit of faculty development opportunities emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?

Three themes emerged from these eighteen interviews in which a series of questions were asked about the participants’ faculty development experiences. These themes were: Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us and Passing it On. The first theme, Why We Do This, relates to the first subquestion. The theme possessed three subthemes, which detail the reasons voiced by the participants as to why they chose to pursue faculty development opportunities. The subthemes Academic Compulsions covered primarily extrinsic reasons that participants pursued faculty development opportunities such as for the pursuit of tenure, promotion, accreditation, or some external requirement placed on them. The second subtheme, Because We Want To, covered largely intrinsic motivators that the participants voiced for participating in faculty development opportunities such as personal interest, desire for improvement or challenge. Finally, the third subtheme, Funding Makes it Possible, covers the reality that participants voiced that they pursue these opportunities because they can, and that without that funding, they could not do so.

2. What themes concerning the results of faculty development opportunities on individuals emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?

Three themes emerged from these eighteen interviews in which a series of questions were asked about the participants’ faculty development experiences. These themes were: Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us and Passing it On. The second and third themes both come to bear on the second subquestion. The second theme, Faculty Development Benefits Us, possesses two subthemes which address the
effect of faculty development experiences on individuals. The first subtheme that addresses the issue at hand is *Faculty Development Updates Us*. *Faculty Development Updates Us* covers the perspectives of the participants that staying current in their fields is a difficult task and that faculty development opportunities are helpful for them as individuals in staying abreast of that task. The second subtheme, *Pursuing Our Own Scholarship*, embodies the participants’ perspectives that faculty development opportunities benefit them as individuals by providing avenues by which they can pursue and present their own personal scholarship. The third theme, *Passing It On*, relates to the effects of faculty development opportunities on two additional populations of individuals—other than the attending faculty themselves. The participants explained their experiences reached beyond them to others as well—including the populations of their other colleagues and their students.

3. **What themes concerning the results of faculty development opportunities on professors’ teaching emerged from the eighteen interviewed professors?**

Three themes emerged from these eighteen interviews in which a series of questions were asked about the participants’ faculty development experiences. These themes were: *Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us and Passing it On.* The second theme, *Faculty Development Benefits Us*, possesses a third subtheme, *Putting New Things Into Practice*, which describes the direct effects that the participants said faculty development experiences had on their classroom teaching, attitude towards students or on the structure of the academic programs with which they are involved or oversee.

4. **In what ways does being a small private university make the University studied unique in regard to faculty development needs and opportunities?**
One particular small, private university was focused upon in this study. Throughout the interviews with eighteen participants, several traits of the institution came to light, that when compared via the literature with other institutions seemed to make small, private schools, and in particular the one being examined, unique. One characteristic that may be unique is that because of the fact that the faculty loads are almost exclusively related to teaching (and thus no load is given for any research responsibilities, nor is empirical research a requirement of tenure), many of the faculty members come to the University already having a strong interest in teaching and learning topics. Another unique characteristic of this small private University is related to finances. Departmental finances tend to be tight in general, and only a small amount is generally reserved for faculty development. In fact, in this study, one department chair mentioned having fifty dollars per faculty member per year. The willingness of the University at large to dedicate funds in this direction significantly affects the faculty development culture. Because of the private nature of the school, the sources to which the University and its individual faculty can apply for funding and grants are limited to private sources. This requirement causes the faculty to have a reduced ability to gain extra monies for such sources as well. Additionally, in this small, private University, there is no formal means of follow-up required for faculty who partake of the University’s faculty development funds.

Examination of Materials
Sixteen of the eighteen participants in this study measured the effects of the changes they made on their teaching as a result of faculty development experiences using only observation and purely anecdotal evidence. Thus, the results asserted by the participants can essentially only be made in an observational manner.

In two cases, however, formal data was collected and analyzed. In the first case, the participant had attended many different conferences utilizing faculty development funding. One in particular was regarding best teaching practices in her field. The focus of the meeting was the incorporation of discussion boards into face to face classes, like similar to the courses that the participant taught. In addition to the usual assignments and course meetings, the seminar advocated assigning the students reading assignments and then having them participate in online, graded discussion boards on the assigned topics. The professor implemented this idea, tweaking it to better fit her classes, and she developed a grading rubric that she utilized to grade the students’ discussion board posts. In addition, the professor gathered some data on student participation and survey data on students’ experiences with the discussion boards. In this case, I was able to examine the data on student participation in the discussion boards. In comparison to this participant’s typical classroom situation, the discussion boards seem to compel a much greater number of students to participate in the discussion. Additionally, the comments on the discussion board typically received high ratings based on the instructor’s grading rubric. The rubric assigned a value (grade) to responses based on their thoroughness and content.

The second case in which a participant described a sort of more detailed look at the effects of a change that was made resulting from faculty development experiences involved the library. In this case, the professor undertook some research regarding the use of electronic books on campus. Electronic books have been a popular topic recently
at faculty development experiences he has attended for academic librarians. The research goals of this study related to understanding how e-books were being used by the students, areas in which the University should pursue acquiring e-books, and what academic settings were useful for e-books. In this case, I was able to view the raw data concerning electronic book usage at the University and discuss with the participant the conclusions that he drew from that data. The participant used the data to make decisions about what electronic books the University should own, etc.
Chapter Five

DISCUSSION

The purpose for conducting this qualitative study was to discover the impact of faculty development experiences on faculty members and on their teaching at a small university in the Midwest. Through this study, the collective recollections of the participants were examined in an effort to learn (a) the reason(s) they requested faculty development funds, (b) the type of faculty development experience(s) they had, and (c) the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching.

This chapter begins with a brief summary of the research findings. The next segment contains the discussion of the three major themes and subthemes.

Findings

The eighteen participants in this study provided unique perspectives on their faculty development experiences. They provided perspectives relating to their motivations for pursuing such opportunities, the outcomes they associate with such opportunities and the lasting impacts (or lack thereof) of these opportunities. The themes were developed from repeated reviews of the digitally taped interviews and the resultant transcripts. The three main themes identified were: Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us, and Passing It On.

The theme Why We Do This encompassed the motivations as to why the participants chose to pursue the opportunity for faculty development. The theme covered common reasons for such pursuits voiced by the participants, such as motivation for position advancement, tenure, or other external components of academics. Additionally, this theme covered the intrinsic reasons the participants commonly voiced for their
participation in faculty development opportunities, such as personal satisfaction, a desire for personal growth and scholarship, and the ability to interact with colleagues. Finally, the theme provided for the reality expressed by many participants that they participate in these activities because funding affords them the opportunity to do so.

The second theme, Faculty Development Benefits Us, emerged from conversations with the participants about what they felt that they had gained from faculty development experiences. Every participant interviewed felt that valuable things had been gained from their faculty development experiences; no one reported an invaluable or negative experience. Thus, this theme encompassed the kinds of benefits frequently voiced by the participants, including: that faculty development provided a means of interaction with the latest developments in their disciplines, that through faculty development experiences, they were able to increase their own scholarship and share their own research, and that from faculty development opportunities they acquired new information and ideas which they put into practice in their classrooms.

The third theme, Passing It On, reflected the reality expressed by the participants that their faculty development experiences affect more people than just themselves. Many participants described a campus culture of sharing between members of the same department, or even beyond that context, they described a variety of ways in which the information gained is passed along to other faculty members. Additionally, many participants expressed that they felt their faculty development experiences had a significant effect on their students. All of the participants interviewed asserted the effects they noted on others had been positive. This theme encompassed both of those realities.
In essence, the participants found their faculty development experiences to be positive, compelling and influencing of change. In turn, they felt that the enacted change(s) precipitated beneficial effects upon their colleagues and students.

**Discussion of Major Themes and Subthemes**

The following section of the chapter is devoted to the discussion of the three major themes and the respective subthemes. The three major themes are: *Why We Do This, Faculty Development Benefits Us*, and *Passing It On*.

**Why We Do This**

This major theme was comprised of the motivations participants expressed regarding why they have pursued and taken faculty development opportunities. The theme had three subthemes: Academic Compulsions, Because We Want To and Funding Makes it Possible. The Academic Compulsions subtheme contained information about the types of requirements and/or rewards given externally that motivated the participants to participate in faculty development experiences. The Because We Want To subtheme contained information concerning matters of intrinsic motivation of the participants. The Funding Makes It Possible subtheme highlighted the fact expressed by many participants that without the University’s funding for the faculty development opportunities, the participants would not have available funds to participate in such things.

**Academic Compulsions**

Many participants noted sources of motivation for their participation in faculty development opportunities to be external in nature. Among the external motivators mentioned, the most common ones were promotion and tenure. Of the participants interviewed, 4 were currently working on their doctorates at the time of the interview. Certainly, the completion of a doctorate plays a significant role in promotion at the
University and is necessary in order to be considered for tenure. Each of those participants mentioned these realities as influential motivators—and several of those participants utilized faculty development funds in order to assist in covering some of their graduate program expenses. In the case of other participants, external agencies required the faculty member to participate in faculty development expenses. For example, in one participant’s area of discipline demands specific accreditation from agencies in addition to the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, which accredits the University as a whole as well as its specific programs. In this case, the additional specific agencies place a requirement on teaching faculty to meet certain requirements, including completion of a specific amount of continuing education units each year.

In each type of case previously mentioned, University funding plays a vital role. A very common assertion among participants was that their individual departmental budgets for faculty development were entirely insufficient. As a result of that insufficiency, department members were forced to look outside of the department to the University as a whole for means of funding. In cases where the department’s accreditation hinged on faculty development opportunities, the University seemed to provide more funding for the department to utilize in that direction. Most departments for which required such external accreditation was required were departments that offered “programs” or “certifications” or the likes. Departments representing areas of academia typically don’t have those external demands, and therefore the University allocates fewer funds towards faculty development in those areas.
Participants in this study frequently asserted that their strongest personal motivators for faculty development were personal (even if external compulsions were included). Each participant interviewed claimed to and appeared to genuinely enjoy their job as teachers of students and as such, they each expressed a desire to become a better teacher for the sake of their students. They recognized that professional development should be an ongoing endeavor for all faculty members because their growth has a profound impact on their students. As the participants spoke, it was clear that they desired to be good teachers.

Many participants expressed that the faculty development activities that they had experienced functioned to help them to grow in their roles at the University. It was not uncommon among the participants that their graduate school training had been focused on their discipline alone and did not focus on teaching or learning related topics. In fact, this was true about every participant—except those whose educational backgrounds were in the field of education itself. Thus, the participants felt these experiences helped them become exposed to new ideas and ways of thinking about teaching, as well as to specific techniques to which they had not been previously exposed—and without the faculty development opportunity may never have been. For example, one participant voiced that she often found faculty development experiences on best practices helpful and often left with helpful suggestions. In particular, she employed many techniques related to discussion boards that she learned at a conference into her class. These assertions matched well with the sense of value faculty place on development opportunities that is represented in current literature. Soldner (2002) asserts that opportunities she has had to develop as a faculty member have given her the ability to better help students in specific
ways. For example, “[the] ability to scaffold development, to provide students with the initial assistance they need and to withdraw that help gradually as they are able to pursue the skills and strategies independently.”

Essentially all of the participants spoke of their desire to participate in faculty development opportunities out of a purist sense of personal discovery, learning and growth. They also spoke of a desire to participate in order to become a better teacher for their students. The participants’ desires to participate in faculty development opportunities because of the students and their desires to participate in faculty development opportunities because of themselves are connected in many ways. They voiced that the nature of teaching and learning is simultaneous, that they may be at one moment both a teacher and a learner. They emphasized that a career in teaching provides many opportunities to learn. As the participants spoke, it became clear to me that for them, a career in teaching was about the students—and, they genuinely cared about the students.

*Funding Makes It Possible*

The third subtheme in this theme encompassed the reality that many participants expressed that if funding was not provided for them by the University, from the faculty development fund of the University at large, that they would have been unable to take advantage of faculty development opportunities. Thus, in this sense, the participants voiced that they pursue faculty development opportunities because they *can*. Faculty members at private schools, such as the one studied, are not able to apply for public funding for their programs, research or personal faculty development opportunities. Thus, the willingness of the University to be behind and in support of their efforts towards faculty development is critical. As previously noted, many departments do not
have sufficient funding in their departmental budgets. Thus, it is from this larger pool of University faculty development funds, that much of the support for faculty is derived. Although these monies are crucial, they are still not enough to meet the demands of faculty request, and faculty still may be asked to cover a portion of their expenses out-of-pocket. Many faculty members expressed that this was a burden and felt concerned that the University’s pay scale did not make this kind of contribution on their part realistic. However, they noted without faculty development support, they would likely be able to take advantage of no faculty development experiences at all—that the cost out of their own pocketbooks was prohibitive. As well, over the last 5 years, many of the same people have applied for these funds—these people may be indicative of a smaller subset of faculty members interested in these opportunities, and this may reflect that there are many faculty at the University that do not choose to participate in such development experiences. Overall, 0.63% of the University’s total budget is dedicated to faculty development.

**Faculty Development Benefits Us**

This major theme was comprised of the ways in which the participants expressed that faculty development opportunities created positive outcomes for them, as well as for their classrooms. None of the participants voiced what they perceived to be any negative or neutral effects of faculty development experiences. Of the positive comments noted, the coding revealed three major areas of consistent results described by the participants. Thus, this theme had three subthemes: Faculty Development Updates Us, Pursuing Our Own Scholarship and Putting New Things Into Practice. The subtheme entitled Faculty Development Updates Us contained information about the ways in which participants described the utility of faculty development experiences to keep them updated on current
information in their disciplines. The Pursuing Our Own Scholarship subtheme contained information concerning the fact that participants felt like faculty development opportunities helped them pursue their own personal scholarship, communicate with others in their fields and share their own research. The Putting New Things Into Practice subtheme highlighted the fact that every participant said that they have done things differently in their classrooms because of their faculty development experiences.

*Faculty Development Updates Us*

The first subtheme under this theme represented the usefulness of faculty development as a means of content updating, as noted by the participants. Every participant interviewed noted the benefit of content updating as a result of his or her faculty development experience. Regardless of discipline and the background of the professor, maintaining awareness and understanding of current happenings in their field is a desired and necessary task. This function of faculty development skills was highlighted in Akerlind’s 2005 work entitled “Academic Growth and Development – How Do University Academics Experience It?” The paper reports the outcomes of the study, done from a phenomenographic perspective, investigating faculty members’ perspectives on their growth and development experiences. In this report, one of the key meanings Akerlind asserted arose from development opportunities was the ongoing accumulation of personal knowledge and skills.

There are many empirically-based research studies which give evidence to the fact that in order for good instruction to occur, it is critical that the teacher has a deep understanding of the content itself (Clark, et.al, 2006; Shell, et.al, 2010; Morrison, et.al, 2004). Knowledge matters. If the purpose of learning is to increase knowledge, than most of all, a teacher must be knowledgeable. According to Shell, et.al. (2010), “In the
scientific literature, however, knowledge means everything that we know. It not only means facts and concepts, but also problem solving skills, motor behaviors, and thinking processes.” Many of the participants in this study participated in faculty development opportunities that dealt directly with a building of knowledge in relation to in-discipline content. Those faculty development opportunities took place in the form of seminars, update talks, talks from individuals who were currently the leading researchers in their fields, journal clubs, etc. Clearly, as correlating with the literature, solidifying and increasing content knowledge is a valuable pursuit, and many participants voiced that their faculty development experiences had assisted them in this endeavor.

Additionally, participants voiced the added importance of this type of updating via faculty development opportunities in the face of their high teaching loads and other academic responsibilities. Many noted that the challenge to keep up with content developments was tough for them on the basis of time constraints and many things vying for their hours. This struggle may be particularly highlighted in a place such as the studied institution where there is no load time given for, nor provision for faculty to remain current in their own fields. The participants voiced that any responsibility they took on in this realm, particularly after they had already been awarded tenure, was because they desired to as individuals and were willing to sacrifice time beyond the already long hours of teaching and University responsibility. Thus, the ability of faculty development funds to address that challenge is important, necessary and beneficial.
Pursing Our Own Scholarship

The second subtheme under the theme Faculty Development Benefits Us, related to the expression of the participants that faculty development opportunities provided them forums for pursuing their own scholarly work, presenting their own scholarly work, and gaining feedback from a community of peers regarding their own scholarly work.

Participants spoke of a broad spectrum of attributes of faculty development experiences that affected them as personal scholars. They said that the opportunities themselves inspired and challenged them. They said that the opportunities helped them have the opportunity to meet other scholars in their fields and to interact in scholarly and intellectual ways with these individuals, sharpening their own knowledge causing them to see new perspectives and inspiring them to pursue new works. They said that these opportunities gave them places to reveal their own work and to have others thoughtfully respond to it. And finally, they said that faculty development opportunities gave them opportunities to share their own ideas among colleagues and to have those ideas refuted or validated and to make changes in their thinking and teaching as a result of those discussions.

Certainly, the development of competent and interested faculty members is in the best interest of the University at large and most importantly in the best interest of effective student learning—as noted earlier. The participants valued this aspect of their faculty development experiences very much and clearly, their own content knowledge, understanding and growth is an important part of their abilities to teach well. The ability to pursue personal scholarship bears on this reality as well, and it brings to the table another significant benefit of faculty development opportunities.
Putting New Things Into Practice

The third and final subtheme under the theme Faculty Development Benefits Us, is representing the fact that each participant said that they took something away from the faculty development experiences they had and that they felt was significant and decided to implement a change in their classrooms as a result. Each participant said that he or she had made changes as a result of these experiences and they each shared ways in which that change or those changes had been made. The data show that the faculty development opportunities led to many different kinds of teaching changes. New readings were common. Also, participants reported developing more engaging learning modules in their classrooms or labs, new homework assignments, new class projects, new research projects for students, new utilization of technology in their classrooms, and new formats for teaching. Some participants even made complex changes in course organization or paradigm. Additionally, some of the participants cited the incorporation of new teaching strategies which had a broad impact on their teaching style and approach in general.

This desire and willingness and commitment on the part of faculty members to create change in their teaching as a result of faculty development opportunities has been extensively studied, and profoundly so in a study on the long-term impacts of faculty development programs at Tufts and Emory (Bartlet, et.al, 2009). As in this study, in the study at Tufts and Emory, faculty members had a role in their willingness to participate in the faculty development program. Based on survey data from the participants of that program, more than 80% of the responding faculty felt their teaching had changed more than “very little” as a result of the program (Bartlet, et.al, 2009). As a result of the changes the participating faculty members made, a total of 96 courses at Emory and 44 courses at Tufts were developed or modified in some way. The combined enrollments in
these courses was significant—over 3,000 students at Emory and over 1,500 students at Tufts (Bartlet, et.al., 2009). Although the relative sizes and thus relative impact of these changes is scaled up significantly from the studied institution, the data can serve as a good example of the potential influence faculty development opportunities have.

Change, however, in and of itself is not necessarily good. Thus, a better goal than just to create change is to create the kind of change that leads to desirable outcomes—such as increased student learning. It is clearly beyond the scope of this qualitative study to define that kind of change and to measure it within the studied system. However, it is valuable to consider what other data may have suggested regarding this matter. For example, it is important that faculty development opportunities possess certain characteristics in order to lead to important classroom change. Kennedy (1997) asserted that faculty development leads to instructional change which leads to improved student achievement when it focused on: (1) how students learn particular subject matter; (2) instructional practices that are specifically related to the subject matter and how students understand it; and (3) strengthening teachers’ knowledge of specific subject-matter content.

*Passing It On*

This major theme resulted from the common expressions of participants that the information that they gained from faculty development was shared and, in their estimations, that sharing benefited others. As participants spoke about what happened after they made changes in their classrooms due to faculty development experiences two reoccurring topics emerged: that participants shared the information and experiences they had with their colleagues in real and meaningful ways and that they felt these
changes brought benefits to their students. These topics are encapsulated in two subthemes under this theme: Campus Culture and Impacts on Learning.

**Campus Culture**

The subtheme Campus Culture emerged from the many references participants made to the culture present within their respective departments and between departments of the University as a whole of sharing information learned and speaking to each other about teaching-related ideas. Shared experiences in similar circumstances certainly leads people to have things in common and to develop relationships and these things seem to happen all the more routinely and perhaps easily on a small, rural campus.

Faculty may choose to teach in rural areas for a variety of reasons. VanderStaay (2005) notes some advantages of rural universities including beautiful natural settings, shorter commutes, and that the institutions tend to value teaching. Surely all these things are true of the University examined in this study. The University examined has about 326 employees, approximately 134 of which are faculty members, making the University a relatively small community of scholars. Additionally, as noted earlier, faculty members at this CCCU member University must express a Christian commitment. These factors, as well as the fact that many faculty tend to stay at the University throughout the duration of their careers, and the fact that many of them are likely to interact in the community outside of the University facilitate a situation where faculty members often engage in meaningful relationships with each other.

Additionally, teaching in a small, rural, private environment brings certain challenges to the table. Many of the challenges that faculty may face at rural universities are similar to those across the education continuum—things like balancing multiple demands, shifts in institutional and student needs, pushes to implement student-centered
learning, to increase technology in teaching, to increase community involvement, etc.

However, rural faculty may have fewer resources to take on these challenges, as compared to faculty members at urban or suburban institutions (Murray, 2005). Faculty members at small colleges, too, may have the need to wear multiple hats; for example, faculty members may have to manage science labs without the support of a paid lab director, faculty members may be called upon to provide regional expertise to businesses and communities, etc. (Wolfe and Strange, 2003).

Thus, these shared benefits and shared challenges seem to create a cohesive group—and each participant interviewed reflected and asserted that fact as they described the frequent, detailed and casual sharing of information that occurs between them and other faculty members. Participants described visiting informally in either social or academic settings with other faculty about their faculty development experiences, making formal announcements regarding them in their departmental meetings, or sharing about their experiences in larger groups—perhaps even consisting of the University’s faculty body as a whole at events like faculty workshop. The participants spoke of a continual dialogue that goes on in their respective academic milieus, that includes the discussion of faculty development experiences, where they gain ideas from each other, each other’s experiences, and where they provide feedback and critique.

*Impacts on Learning*

The second subtheme under the theme Passing It On encompasses the assertions made by many participants that their faculty development experiences did, in fact, have an effect that reached their students. Every participant interviewed said that they felt the changes they had made as a result of faculty development opportunities impacted
students. In fact, each participant asserted that they thought the effects were positive; no one said the changes had negative effects on students and/or student learning.

Participants described the changes they made as a result of faculty development experiences had positive effects on their students. Among the positive effects noted were: increased student engagement, increased student interest in and understanding of difficult topics, more efficiently run classrooms, increased student involvement and/or attendance, increased exposure for students to new ideas, and even increased student performance.

Certainly, such positive outcomes resulting from the change(s) induced by faculty development opportunities is supported in the literature. By means of example, Barlett and Rappaport (2009) asserted that a weeklong, or even a two-day long faculty development workshop can have robust effects on faculty members work. The study reported that teaching in university classrooms is affected as a result of faculty development—both with new topics and with teaching methods. The study reports that the modifications made by faculty members in their courses as a result of faculty development projects resulted in higher student performances in classrooms following the “intervention” of faculty development.

For additional example, the National Institute for Science Education paper called “Defining Optimal Knowledge for Teaching Science and Mathematics” (1997) showed faculty development can inspire change that leads to increased student performance. The study provided evidence that student achievement can be improved via classroom change secondary to faculty development. In this case, student achievement was found to be consistently higher and growth in the students’ basic and more advanced problem-solving skills increased as a result of faculty development.
However, within the group of participants interviewed for this study, only two participants measured these things in any way besides general observation and purely anecdotal evidence. Thus, these claims boasted by the participants can essentially only be made in an observational manner. In all but two cases, no formal data was collected and analyzed.

The first case in which a participant described somewhat of a more detailed look at the effects of a change related to specific classroom modifications. In this case, the professor had attended many different conferences utilizing faculty development funding. One in particular was regarding best teaching practices in her field. The focus of the meeting was the incorporation of discussion boards into face to face classes, like the ones the professor taught. In addition to the usual assignments and course meetings, the seminar advocated assigning the students reading assignments and then having them participate in online, graded discussion boards on the assigned topics. The participant described that she implemented this idea, tweaking it to better fit her classes, and she developed a grading rubric that she utilized to grade the students’ discussion board posts. She found that the utilization of discussion boards afforded the opportunity for some students to “speak” who might not normally choose to speak up in class. She also found out that she could “add a lot more to the discussion” and information covered in it online and provided for her an opportunity to cover material she might not have time to cover in the normal lecture portion of the class. In addition, the participant gathered some data on student participation and survey data on students’ experiences with the discussion boards. She has used her experiences and the data to present at two different conferences about how to utilize discussion boards effectively.
The second case in which a participant described a sort of more detailed look at the effects of a change that was made resulting from faculty development experiences involved the library. In this case, the participant undertook some research regarding the use of electronic books on campus. Electronic books have been a popular topic recently at faculty development experiences he has attended for academic librarians. The research goals were to understand how e-books were being used by the students, areas in which the University should pursue acquiring e-books, and what academic settings were useful for e-books. The outcomes of this study, realized with the assistance of fusion of innovation model, which is a theoretical framework describing how innovations defuse through populations, were the realization that e-books do have a purpose for academic libraries that is completely separate from their purposes for leisure readers—that of conducting research. The participant utilized the information gained from this study to make budgetary determinations and determinations of specific selections which he chose to purchase for the student body. He also has presented the findings of his research at several meetings, also utilizing faculty development funds.

Thus, although all of the participants interviewed reported that they made changes as a result of their faculty development experiences, and they reported that these changes had positive effects on their colleagues and on their students, in only two cases specific data was collected. Additionally, the two described cases in which some type of data was collected were the two major ones in which exemplars were available to be considered. In the case of the psychology class discussion boards, the basic development of the discussion boards and the rubrics utilized by the professor to grade the posts were provided to the researcher. In the case of the library, the faculty development experience
evaluation forms were provided to the researcher as well as a look at the data which led to the choices made regarding e-books, library hours, etc.

In summary, it was found that the monies in the faculty development fund are most often utilized for traveling to meetings or continuing education experiences. Many participants voiced that they found these experiences to be beneficial to them personally and they voiced that they believed that these experiences had positive effects on their students. However, within the University structure, there is no accounting for these funds in terms of reporting results from the meetings, incorporating changes into the classroom as a result of the funds utilized, or analyzing incorporated change. This study found that only two participants had made attempts to do these things independently. Thus, without a structure or culture of academic evaluation in place, these monies often seem to be used for travel and the results of that travel on teaching or on learning seem to be difficult to define, in any other means besides anecdotal.
Chapter Six

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter briefly summarizes the findings of the study and asserts conclusions, implications and possible future studies as a result of those findings.

Summary

The purpose for conducting this qualitative study was to discover the impact of faculty development experiences on faculty members and on their teaching at a small university in the Midwest. Through this study, the collective recollections of the participants were examined in an effort to learn (a) the reason(s) they requested faculty development funds, (b) the type of faculty development experience(s) they had, and (c) the results of those experiences on them as individuals and on their teaching.

The eighteen participants in this study were chosen based on the fact that they had requested and received faculty development funds from the University within the past five years. In fact, all eighteen of them had received those funds more than once, and over their years of tenure, some had many times. From the transcripts of the interviews, which inquired about their faculty development experiences, three major themes emerged. The first theme, Why We Do This, encompassed explanations of the participants’ means and motivations for pursuing such experiences. The second theme, Faculty Development Benefits Us, contained descriptions that asserted the participants felt that these faculty development experiences were helpful and descriptions of why the participants felt that way. The final theme, Passing It On, related the participants’ ideas about the implications of their faculty development experiences—either on their students or on other colleagues.
Conclusions

The data led to the following 5 conclusions:

1. Faculty members are supported and enriched by having the opportunity to pursue faculty development experiences. Therefore, this type of faculty development support is important to the overall academic health of the university.

The participants in this study voiced unanimously that they were pleased to have the opportunity to participate in faculty development experiences in general and that they had encountered positive faculty development experiences, specifically. As enumerated earlier in this paper, the components of the experiences that the participants judged to be valuable were many. The fact that faculty development experiences provide that level of benefits to the faculty makes their existence and continuance of value to the University.

The literature gives evidence to the fact that the participants in this study are not alone in the value they see in faculty development opportunities. For example, the American Society for Engineering Education provides a faculty development experience for its members called The National Effective Teaching Institute. This institute has been in operation since 1991. Recently, in order to evaluate the impact of NETI on its participants, the ASEE administered a web-based survey to the alumni of NETI from 1993-2006. This study yielded many interesting results. In summary, the level of participant satisfaction with NETI was extremely high with 79.6% of the participants rating it as “Excellent” and 19.7% rating it as “Good.” Among the benefits the participants felt they gained through NETI were: an awareness and use of effective teaching practices, instructional development opportunities and an increased understanding of scholarly teaching (Felder, 2010). Many of these asserted benefits were
similar to the ones asserted by the participants in this study regarding their own faculty development experiences.

2. Faculty members walk away from faculty development experiences with beneficial gains that they can apply to their own scholarship and to their teaching. Participants in this study noted that their participation in faculty development experiences caused them to think more deeply about their teaching—which they asserted ultimately resulted in gains in their own scholarship and practice of teaching. These experiences helped improve their scholarly teaching. Huchings and Shulman (1999) introduced the distinction between the ideas of “scholarly teaching” and the “scholarship of teaching and learning.” According to Huchings and Shulman, instructors that do scholarly teaching inform themselves in regard to the latest ideas in pedagogy and assessment and take those ideas into account as they introduce changes into their teaching. Participants voiced that faculty development opportunities clearly informed them in scholarly teaching.

3. The beneficial gains faculty members obtain through faculty development experiences lead to change in their classrooms. The participants in this study all asserted that they had made changes in their teaching as a result of their faculty development experiences. As they increased in their knowledge of scholarly teaching, they each made efforts to implement that knowledge in meaningful ways.

4. The changes that occur in faculty members’ classrooms as a result of faculty development experiences may be beneficial to student learning. However, at the University studied, these changes are not often observed or measured in a formal way.
In order to ultimately judge the meaningfulness of the ways in which the participants made changes in their teaching, it would have been necessary for the participants to have assessed the effects of the changes they made. As noted and expanded upon in this paper, only 2 of the 18 participants did this in any formal way. The remaining 16 participants provided anecdotal comments related to the outcomes of their changes. It is important to note that the participants were in no way required by the University or any other source to make or assess these changes. The two participants that did collect data resulting from their instituted changes did so under no compulsion.

Hutchings and Shulman (1999) differentiated between “scholarly teaching” and the “scholarship of teaching and learning”, they defined the “scholarship of teaching and learning” as including “scholarly teaching” but adding to it the assessment of changes made and the presentation and publishing of the results of teaching innovations and assessments in a form that others can evaluate, replicate and on which others can build. This phase of the “scholarship of teaching and learning” was not implemented often among the participants in this study.

5. Faculty development funding is necessary in order for faculty to pursue these types of experiences. Therefore, the University funds allocated towards this end are crucial.

As discussed earlier in this paper, it would not be possible for faculty members at the University studied to take advantage of faculty development opportunities without financial support from the University. Clearly, in order to receive any benefits of faculty development experiences, the University must invest in these opportunities for its faculty members.
6. The faculty development fund at the University seems to largely function as a travel fund, as opposed to a true faculty development fund.

Early on in this study, it was noted that, “[u]niversity classrooms all over America are populated with professors who may have developed a substantial knowledge of and or expertise in their respective disciplines, but who may have very little training on how to teach what they know.” Through the information learned from the eighteen interviews, it became apparent that the monies marked for faculty development at the University function more as a travel fund for faculty members to go and continue to develop a substantial knowledge of and or expertise in their disciplines. Some of those meetings seemed to include tidbits on popular teaching techniques in those disciplines. However, none of the experiences described could be classified as training on how to teach the content that the faculty members know.

Concluding Remarks

Of the information learned from this study, the most surprising conclusion was that the faculty development funds at the University were typically used as travel funds. Prior to conducting the research, the title for the proposal for this project was, “Teaching Teachers: A Case Study of University Professors’ Perceptions of their Faculty Development Experiences.” Initially, I expected to find that the faculty development experiences that University faculty had related to “teaching teachers” about teaching and learning topics. Early on in the paper I commented on the fact that many university professors are trained in a specific discipline, but they have not likely received training regarding how to effectively teach this content that they know—and that teaching is part of nearly every university professor’s job description. It was clear from searching the literature that this is a wide-spread challenge among universities. As the literature search
was completed, it became apparent that many universities have made efforts to help their faculty members become more informed on teaching and learning topics so that they can design more effective instruction and in turn facilitate increased learning in their classrooms. Many of these efforts made by universities to address this gap have been in terms of faculty development opportunities. As noted in the review of literature, some of these faculty development opportunities are perfunctory, some are voluntary. Some are geared toward new PhDs just entering the teaching field. However, all of the faculty development opportunities researched were aimed at improving teaching and improving learning on campus.

As an individual with a graduate background in science and a strong interest in teaching, I have always been interested in how faculty development creates a bridge between content knowledge and teaching knowledge. In fact, my recognition of my own lack of teaching-related knowledge drew me to the PhD program that I selected. In my graduate program in the past, I was a teaching assistant, and I quickly realized that I enjoyed teaching much more than laboratory research. So, I sought a position at a teaching-focused liberal arts university. I felt like a PhD program in teaching, curriculum and learning could really improve my teaching, and I believe that it has—dramatically. However, as I have grown in my own knowledge of these topics, I have noticed that even at a teaching-based institution where I am located, that the issue described earlier of many people having a very strong content knowledge and a very limited knowledge of teaching and learning holds true. I expected that when I proposed this project that I would see how faculty development comes to bear on this issue on our campus.

However, as noted, the most surprising thing discovered as the data from this study was analyzed was that the funds utilized by those interviewed were primarily
utilized for travel in order to attend a content-related meeting. Another popular use of the funds was to pay tuition for a content-related course. No cases were found where the participant described that they went to a meeting focused on improving their understanding of teaching and learning topics, although a few noted that the meetings they attended may have contained an element of notice regarding popular teaching trends, such as the use of discussion boards or clickers.

I also learned that the University does not designate separate travel funds for faculty members to use to attend meetings—which probably contributes to the circumstance that faculty development funds get used in that manner. In some departments, a small amount of “faculty development” funds are given. Often, the amounts of these funds are quite low—even under a hundred dollars/year for each faculty. If a faculty member wants to travel to a meeting, he or she likely could use a portion of the money that his or her department has to contribute to funding the trip. However, to gain any kind of substantial funding, he or she must apply for monies to the general University’s “faculty development” fund. The faculty member may receive money from that fund, which could also cover part of the cost of his or her trip. Often, faculty members make personal contributions to these trips as well. Since there is no direct source for “faculty travel,” the faculty development funds get utilized this way.

Those things said, the traveling that the faculty members are doing with the faculty development funds is important and worthwhile. Faculty members need to travel. They do need to be updated in their content, they do need to experience opportunities to interact with a more broad body of colleagues and they do need forums in which to present their own work to their peers. This study easily uncovered evidence of the value of these things on campus on several levels. These monies are being used for important
and worthwhile endeavors which ought to continue. These things may not be true “faculty development” in a teaching and learning sense, however, they are labeled as such.

In summary, I did not expect to find that the University’s faculty development fund largely functioned as a travel fund. I expected to find the faculty development funds being utilized in a manner which focused on improving instruction on campus. As I searched the literature to determine if what I had discovered was a common or a unique situation, I found that there really is not a literature body related to the topic of faculty development funds and travel, as it applies to this study. Thus, I am uncertain whether or not the reality that the faculty development fund at the University really functions as a travel fund is a common phenomenon across university campuses. However, within the context of the University studied, faculty development funds do not seem to be utilized for purposes that improve faculty members’ knowledge and skill related to teaching the content that they know. Additionally, there is currently no mechanism in place to evaluate the gains made to the University in general, to teaching, or to learning as a result of the University’s investment in faculty development funds. It is as a result of these things that I make the following recommendations.

Recommendations for Faculty Development Practices at the University Studied

In every institution, faculty development serves an important role. In a small, private teaching-based institution this role is of particular importance. At the University, teaching is the focus of the work of the faculty, research, although clearly valued, has a clear back-seat as compared to larger, R-1 institutions. Thus, in a teaching-focused environment, it is paramount to provide experiences that further equip faculty members
as scholars and develop them as teachers. Bearing these concerns in mind, the following is a list of implications for the University examined in this study.

1. Continue allocating funds, and even increase funds, for the purposes of faculty travel to meetings and continuing education experiences. Consider changing the label of currently existing “faculty development” funds to something indicating these funds truly function as travel funds, and then begin to allocate separate funds for true faculty development purposes.

   Faculty members need to travel to meetings, attend conferences and continue their own educations in order to be productive and effective scholars. These things are vital for the health of any university. As a result, I would recommend leaving the current funds in place for these purposes, and even increasing them.

2. Allocate monies for actual faculty development opportunities.

   Additionally, based on the clear value of faculty development opportunities, as seen in the literature, I would recommend that the University consider putting funds in place specifically for faculty development. I would particularly recommend this increase in departments that do not have significant faculty development budgets of their own.

3. All faculty, but particularly rookie faculty, would likely benefit from increased faculty development experiences.

   Because of the value of faculty development experiences, I would recommend a hearty encouragement to participate in them from the University’s administration. In looking over the names of the faculty development funding recipients over the past 5 years, many of the same names came up again and again. This is good, in that it gives evidence of the determined interest in some faculty towards these things. This may be bad, in that only a segment of the faculty population is engaging in such opportunities. I
would recommend at the very least, some mechanisms be considered that might encourage all faculty to participate in these experiences more often—especially encouraging them to continue in such pursuits after the acquisition of tenure.

Additionally, all faculty should be given financial opportunity to pursue faculty development opportunities. It seems from interviewing the participants that if a given department does not have an outside accrediting body placing external requirements on its faculty to pursue faculty development opportunities, then likely only a small amount of University funding is dedicated towards that department. On the other hand, if a department or program does have an outside accrediting body placing external requirements on its faculty to pursue faculty development opportunities, the funding provided by the University seems to be sufficient. I would recommend leveling the playing field between departments and placing value on faculty development opportunities for all faculty—and evidencing that value by providing monetary support.

4. A more formal process for reporting on the receipt of faculty development funds and on faculty development experiences (not on travel funds) would be useful for the University.

Following the receipt of faculty development funds, faculty members are free to pursue the requested opportunity. Upon the opportunity’s completion, faculty members are required to turn in receipts for the monies utilized. This type of financial accountability is clearly useful and wise. However, I would also recommend that the University consider implementing some form(s) of academic accountability as well. This type of accountability might include a summary report, a forum in which the faculty member was obligated to formally share information with colleagues, or the requirement that some type of follow-up be made.
5. It would be very beneficial to begin to study the effects of teaching on student learning on campus.

Currently, not many individuals on campus collect data in order to study various aspects of teaching, changes related to teaching or other classroom factors, etc. on student learning. Considering the large amount of interest on these topics among campus faculty—evidenced by the fact that of the participants interviewed in this study every single one said they had made changes in their classroom habits due to faculty development opportunities—it seems logical that that level of interest be translated into productive activity. In order to make that move to a more productive ends, faculty members would need to set up action research projects and collect empirical evidence from which they could draw scholarly conclusions about teaching and learning. The encouragement of these endeavors by the University, either through release time or extra pay would likely be necessary. Because of the expressed heavy teaching loads and busy workloads placed upon faculty, it does not seem that this type of activity will likely be taken up in addition to all normal responsibilities by very many faculty members. Thus, I would recommend in order to facilitate this important step towards scholarly research that the aforementioned compensatory measures be taken. In addition, I would recommend the University consider a “Center for Teaching and Learning” or some such center on campus, possibly some brown bag lunch discussions for faculty where teaching and learning discussions were held, or other measures to increase the awareness and the focus on teaching and learning as scholarly disciplines amongst its faculty.
Recommendations for Further Study

1. Study multiple people who had the same faculty development experience.

Comparing the memory and description about a faculty development experience with two faculty members who had experienced it might yield some interesting observations. For instance, more information might be learned about the types of faculty development experiences that lead to certain types of change.

2. Study other similar small, private institutions.

According to its website, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU), of which the institution studied is a member, there are 109 member institutions in North America and 75 affiliate institutions in 24 different countries. This study of only one member institution may not be representative of the collective recollections of faculty members at other similar institutions.

3. Study public institutions.

Faculty development and teaching are important topics on any campus, regardless of its status as public or private. It would be interesting to investigate similarities and differences between public and private universities.

4. Do a quantitative study.

Ultimately, the information gained in this study could become maximally useful if used to design and perform a quantitative study in which a particular faculty member or faculty members and their students were tracked prior to and following a change made in their teaching that was a result of faculty development experiences. Studying more cases where data was collected prior to and following a change of some type would be very interesting and beneficial. Then, the data collected could be analyzed to gain information that could reveal interesting things about student learning as a result of classroom change.
brought on by faculty development experiences. The types of changes made and their results could be linked to the types of faculty development the faculty members experienced. This type of further study would have interesting applications for the creation of valuable faculty development opportunities.

5. **Conduct a survey regarding faculty development and travel.**

It would be interesting to gain more information regarding the issue of faculty development and travel uncovered in this study. A more broad scope of general information could be derived through a country-wide survey regarding the faculty development and travel habits of university faculty members.


Appendix A
Professorial Interview

College in which professor teaches:

History

1. Describe your background in teaching.

2. Describe your graduate school experience.
   a. Was there any teaching involved in your graduate school experience? If so, what types? If so, what types of training were involved?
   
   b. Did you have any training related to teaching and learning during graduate school?

3. What types of training related to teaching/learning have you had, if any?

4. Prior to teaching at the University, did you teach K-12?

5. How long have you taught at this institution? Have you taught at other institutions prior to your experience here?

Faculty development experience

6. Why did you apply for faculty development funds?

7. What did you hope to accomplish through faculty development opportunities?

8. Describe the type(s) of faculty development opportunities you pursued via the funds you received from the University.
9. Did the type(s) of faculty development you received relate to the content areas that you teach, or did it (they) relate to teaching and learning in general? Explain and elaborate.

10. Did your faculty experience(s) affect you? How so?
   a. Effects on you as an individual scholar?
   b. Effects on you as an educator?
   c. Effects on your knowledge of subject-specific content?

**Effects of Faculty Development Experience(s)**

11. Did any changes come about as a result of your faculty development experience(s)? Please describe.

12. Did you make any changes in your thinking as a result of your faculty development experience(s)? If so, what?

13. Did you make any changes in your curriculum or instruction as a result of your faculty development experience(s)? If so, what?

14. If you did not make any changes, why not? Do you plan to?

15. If you did make change(s), what do you perceive their effects to be? Do you think the change(s) you made were successful? If so, how so? If not, why not?
16. If you did make change(s), what do you perceive the effects of the change(s) you made to be on learning? On what basis do you make these assertions? Did you make assessments formally or informally?

17. Did you write a report following your faculty development experience(s)? If so, would you mind sharing that report with me?

18. If you did make change(s), do you have any classroom materials from before and after the change(s) that illustrate your incorporation of new ideas/methods, etc. into your instruction? If so, would you mind sharing them with me?
Appendix B
Dear [Name of Professor]:

As a fellow faculty member at Southwest Baptist University, I present to you a request to interview you in a study related to faculty development opportunities. The study focuses on faculty members at Southwest Baptist University that have taken advantage of faculty development funding within the last 5 years. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and am pursuing a qualitative study for my dissertation, investigating the effects of faculty development experiences on faculty and their teaching as well as on student learning.

This interview, which will last approximately an hour, may be scheduled anytime prior to April 30. I will come to your office at your convenience for the interview.

Although if you permit me to interview you, you will sign a formal informed consent form, as part of the informed consent required by both SBU and UNL, it is important to note the following: there are no known risks related to this study, your identity will be kept strictly confidential, you may ask any questions prior to your agreement to participate in this study, if the data is presented or published, it will be in the form of aggregated data only, and as a participant, you may view a copy of the study when completed.

I will call you next week to see if you will permit me to interview you sometime in the coming weeks. Your participation in this study would make a valuable contribution to my research. I greatly appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to talking to you soon.

Hillary Glauser-Patton

Department of Biology

Southwest Baptist University

Bolivar MO 65613

hglaurer@sbuniv.edu

417-328-1668 (Office)
Appendix C
Informed Consent Forms

Identification of Project:  Teaching Teachers:  A Case Study of University Professors’ Perceptions of their Experiences with Faculty Development

Purpose of the Research:  The purpose of this qualitative research study is to investigate faculty development experiences had by faculty.  The topic of this study was selected based on the importance of faculty development in improving teaching and student learning.  You are invited to participate in the study because you have applied for and received faculty development funds at Southwest Baptist University within the last five years.

Procedures:  The interview will be completed in about an hour.

Risks:  There are no known risks associated with this study.

Benefits:  If you are interested in the results of this research related to the role of faculty development in the lives of Southwest Baptist University faculty, a copy of the report will be sent to you on completion.

Confidentiality:  Any personally identifying information obtained during this study will be kept confidential.  The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s office and will only be seen by the researcher.  All audio-taped data will be promptly erased following transcription.  The information obtained in this study may be published in professional journals or presented at meetings, but the data will be reported as aggregated data.
**Opportunity to Ask Questions:** You may ask any questions concerning this research before agreeing to participate in or during the study. You may call the researcher anytime between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (CST) at 471-328-1668.

**Freedom to Withdraw:** You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the researcher, the University of Nebraska, or Southwest Baptist University. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:** You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate, having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

____________ Check if you agree to be audio taped during the interview.

**Signature of Participant:** ________________________________

**Date:** ______________________

**Name and Phone number of the researchers:**

- Hillary Glauser-Patton, MS, Principal Researcher
  417-328-1668
- David Brooks, Ph.D., Secondary Researcher (Major Professor, UNL)
  402-472-2018
Appendix D
Telephone Conversation Protocol

Hello, my name is Hillary Glauser-Patton. I recently sent to you an e-mail message requesting an interview with you for my dissertation study. Did you receive that message?

As noted in the email message, I will be visiting with faculty members at Southwest Baptist University that have had faculty development experiences in the past five years. I would like to hear their stories related to these experiences themselves and the impact that the experiences had on the faculty members themselves and on the teaching and learning that occurs in their classrooms. Would you be willing to be one of the faculty members whose stories I am able to hear?

Thank you, I appreciate it so much. In terms of reporting the data, pseudonyms will be used for all individuals mentioned in the dissertation in order to provide confidentiality. Do you have any questions regarding the Interview Protocol or the Informed Consent form?

What day of the week would be the most convenient for me to visit with you in your office for about 60-75 minutes? Would you be available on [suggest dates]? What times work well for you?

I will send a reminder to you about one week prior to the appointment. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please call me at 417-328-1668 or send a message to me at hglauer@sbuniv.edu
Appendix E
Reminder Message One Week Prior to Interview

Dear [Name of faculty member]:

This email is to serve as a reminder that we are scheduled to meet next week, [date], at [time] in your office. If you are unable to keep this appointment or if you have any questions about the study or our upcoming visit, please let me know by phone or e-mail.

I appreciate your assistance in this research very much. Thank you.

Hillary Glauser-Patton

Department of Biology

Southwest Baptist University

Bolivar MO 65613

hglasure@sbuniv.edu

417 328-1668 (Office)
Appendix F
February 3, 2010

Hillary Glauser-Patton:

Your recently submitted proposal to the Research Review Board titled “A Case Study of University Professors’ Perceptions of Their Experiences with Faculty Development” (RRB 2009-030) has been approved. Your approval is good for 365 days. Please notify us of any changes that are made to the study and upon completion of the study.

We wish you the best of luck with your research and don’t hesitate to contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Dr. John Murphy
Chair, Research Review Board
Southwest Baptist University
1600 University Ave
Bolivar, MO 65613
(417)-328-1494
jmurphy@sbuniv.edu
February 25, 2010

Hillary Glauser-Patton
Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education

David Brooks
Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education
123A HENZ UNL 68588-0355

IRB Number: 20100210673 EX
Project ID: 10673
Project Title: Teaching Teachers: A Case Study of University Professors’ Perceptions of Their Experiences with Faculty Development

Dear Hillary:

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board’s opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution’s Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as exempt category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 02/25/2010. This approval is Valid Until: 08/31/2010.

1. The approved informed consent form has been uploaded to NUgrant (Glauser-Patton ICF-Approved.pdf file). Please use this form to distribute to participants. If you need to make changes to the informed consent form, please submit the revised form to the IRB for review and approval prior to using it.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

• Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
• Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
• Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
• Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
• Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman
CIP for the IRB

Becky R. Freeman, CIP
Appendix G
## Major Themes and Subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why We Do This</th>
<th>Faculty Development Benefits Us</th>
<th>Passing It On</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Compulsions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Faculty Development Updates Us</strong></td>
<td><strong>Campus Culture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Because We Want To</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pursuing Our Own Scholarship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Impacts on Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding Makes It Possible</strong></td>
<td><strong>Putting New Things Into Practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Major Themes, *Subthemes* and Codes

**Why We Do This**

*Academic Compulsions*

- Accreditation
- Annual evaluations
- Camaraderie
- Compensate
- Conferences
- Continued Education
- Deficiencies
- Development
- Doctorate
- Improvement
- Interact with peers
- Promotion
- Requirements
- Scholarly work
- Strive to be better
- Tenure
- Updates

*Because We Want To*

- Challenge
- Engagement in discipline
- Mission
- Networking
- Personal motivation
- Self-satisfaction
- To better self
- To better students
- To do job better
- Travel
Funding Makes it Possible

- Encouragement
- Equipping
- Experience
- Job development
- Lack of departmental funding
- Need money
- Presenting work
- Scholarship
- Support
- Conferences
- Meetings
- Seminars
- Doctoral work

Faculty Development Benefits Us

Faculty Development Updates Us

- Adequate
- Cognitive development
- Current
- Enthusiasm
- Equipment
- Generational trends
- Ideas
- Instructor credibility
- Perspectives

Pursuing Our Own Scholarship

- Academic community
- Application
- Challenge
- Encouragement
- Inspiration
- Personal scholarship
- Present
• Readings
• Research
• Seminar
• Teaching conferences
• Writing

**Putting Things into Practice**

• Campus visits
• Classroom changes
• Content changes
• Critiques
• Discussions
• Examples
• Ideas
• Knowledge
• Pedagogy
• Techniques
• Trends
• Vision

**Passing It On**

**Campus Culture**

• Conference report
• Discussions
• Formal
• Informal
• Learning
• Meetings
• Power Point
• Reports
• Sharing
• Slideshow
• Strategic audits
• Surveys
• Time
Impacts on Learning

- “Love it”
- Anecdotal
- Content
- Desire
- Engagement
- Enhanced
- Motivation
- Surveys
- Time
- Understanding
Codebook

A “codebook” was developed, which lists all of the codes utilized and provides an example of actual texts to which a given code had been assigned (Creswell, 2007).

1. Why We Do This
   a. Academic Compulsions
      i. “Early on I was very conscious of presenting papers because I was working for tenure and promotion. So, at the regional meetings was pretty successful in the beginning. I applied [to present] and was accepted.”
   b. Because We Want To
      i. “I think probably the most important thing for me is just self-satisfaction and meaning; it’s sort of why I went to graduate school in the first place. There was not a certain careerism that was pushing me. It’s just that I wanted to advance my knowledge and my expertise more. And, um, I always had a poor opinion of people who got security in their academic positions and then rested on their laurels. It’s just important for me that I continue to grow.”
   c. Funding Makes It Possible
      i. “I didn’t have support of personal abilities to go unless I had the University’s help. And so, that was my reason for applying [for funds]. Yes, for many years, we [in my department] had about $50 a piece to go to meetings. In the last couple of years we’ve climbed that a bit, but for most of my tenure it was really nothing and so we really had to get money from the institution at large in order to leave Bolivar or go to St. Louis.”

2. Faculty Development Benefits Us
   a. Faculty Development Updates Us
      i. “It’s really difficult with our teaching load to keep up with the field—look at my piles of journals, many still in the plastic. I just, how do you work with students and do that [keep up]? And so conferences are a good way to get caught up in what’s current in the field quickly. It’s kind of a short intense way of attending a lot of sessions. I can bring that stuff back
to the class and keep them [the students] current...if you don’t [attend conferences], you become a dinosaur really quick.”

b. Pursuing Our Own Scholarship

i. “People know me from the conference and what I have done there. It has led to every publication I have...[every publication] has come out of something like that. It has really helped me grow as a researcher and even as a scholar.”

c. Putting Things Into Practice

i. “I like to grow personally, and as long as I am growing personally, I can keep my enthusiasm for what I do here, helping students. I want them to grow personally, and so I [want to] walk away going, “Okay, for this class I’m going to apply this idea, and this class this idea.” That’s what I do. When I got to a conference, I have different sections of my notebook and I’ll flip to that section. I’ll flip to that section if they say something that will apply to my X class or my Y class or my Z class and write it down.”

3. Passing It On

a. Campus Culture

i. “All of us, when we go to conferences, if we see something that is in someone else’s area will grab a handout and share it with them when we get back. We’ll circulate things in the offices. We’ve put an inner office memo that everyone has seen. We do that kind of thing, which is more informal...We also have to write up something [after the faculty development experience], not every department does this, it is our thing.”

b. Impacts on Learning

i. “The research I conducted was on e-books. It helped me to understand how e-books are being used by students, and where we should pursue acquiring e-books to us, and what is a good use [of them] in the academic setting...There were a couple of outcomes [from this study]. One was to realize that e-books do have a purpose in an academic library that is completely separate from a leisure reader. So, using the fusion of innovation model, which is a theoretical framework on how innovations defuse through a population, I was able to come to this realization.”
September 23, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I have completed an audit of the dissertation written by Hillary Glauser-Patton, *A Case Study of University Professors’ Perceptions of Their Experiences with Faculty Development*. As a part of this audit, I listened to several taped interviews and examined the transcripts of these interviews. I found the transcriptions to be thorough and accurate and to include all details of the discussions.

I also examined the themes that were identified as having emerged from the interview data and found them to be logical and authentic representations of the responses of the faculty interviewed and audited. I found the discussion within the dissertation to be derived from the interview data and to be supported by the literature study. Conclusions appear to be logical, supported by the research data, and absent of inappropriate bias.

It has been my pleasure to audit this scholarly document.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Juhlin,
Professor of Education,
Director of Institutional Effectiveness