Faculty In-Service Training Program Evaluation Proposal

Denise M. Padavano

Nova Southeastern University

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The faculty in-service program has been around for ten years at this institution and has never been evaluated in the past by any internal or external evaluators. The primary goals of the program are to develop and support faculty in the areas of technology, systems applications, pedagogy, and mentoring. The program objective in the area of technology is to assist and develop faculty in their use of technology in the classroom, as well as its use in automating manual processes like grading and taking attendance. Systems application development and support allows faculty to use college-wide computer systems. By providing development and support in pedagogy, the program assists faculty in keeping their teaching skills updated with new methods. The literature shows that many colleges and universities support mentoring programs as part of faculty development (Thurlow, 1999). This institution has incorporated mentoring development into its in-service program.

The faculty in-service program supports approximately thirty full-time faculty members. At the beginning of each semester the faculty development staff, which consists of four full-time employees, with the assistance of key administrators, arranges in-service days for the faculty to attend. This training is created based on administrators’ ideas of what is needed in terms of development for full-time faculty. Generally, the faculty is not consulted about the content of the in-service training. The faculty development staff creates the schedule and distributes it to the faculty before they attend the training. There is currently no way to assess the usefulness of these sessions. Administrators have asked for an evaluation of this program so that they can justify its existence. They also want to streamline the training sessions to make them more cost effective. Placing all faculty in training for five days is very expensive. Assessing the program and customizing it to their needs will make the program better for everyone.
This proposal will describe the framework for evaluating the faculty in-service program. This evaluator will use the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation method to answer this main question: Does the faculty in-service program meet its stated goals and objectives? It will also be used to determine whether the training program is enhancing the performance of faculty in the classroom and on the job. Because faculty training and development costs money, the administration wants to be sure that the program is meeting its goals and objectives. The last thing they want is for faculty to feel that the training is a waste of time. When in-service sessions feature outside speakers or trainers, the costs for these services must be justified. Since there are many people involved in the planning of these sessions, a great deal of money is being spent on the staff and administrators who are setting up the sessions.

The stakeholders that are involved with this evaluation are the full-time faculty, the Dean of Students, the faculty development staff, and the students of the institution. Each stakeholder has a unique set of concerns that will add to the evaluation process. Full-time faculty have an interest in receiving training and development that is not only valuable, but that adds to the effectiveness and efficiency of their daily work routines. Research shows that the faculty wants training and development, but they also want the institution’s staff trained as well (Quick, 1999). Having staff that is trained in the areas that they are being developed in, assures that they have continued support after in-service training is over. The faculty development staff must have the knowledge and understanding of faculty needs so that they can create an in-service program that is consistent with faculty expectations. The Dean of Students needs to portray the big picture when developing in-service training for faculty, and keep topics relevant so that they support the institution’s mission statement. The students are the institution’s customers. Customer
satisfaction is extremely important to this institution. Students demand quality in their academic programs. Faculty development has a direct impact on the quality of the academic programs.

By evaluating the in-service program, data will be collected that will assist decision-makers in determining how to structure future offerings of faculty in-service training. The first part of the CIPP evaluation method is context evaluation (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The evaluator will personally interview the faculty to determine problems and needs that can be addressed within a faculty in-service training session. This information can also serve as data for the input evaluation phase of the CIPP method. During the input evaluation phase, “judgments about the resources and strategies needed to accomplish program goals and objectives” (Gall et al., 1996, p. 702) are made. The data will be analyzed and then organized into general topics by the evaluator. This data will then be presented to the decision-makers at the institution. The institution’s decision-makers will evaluate the topics and use this information to structure the program so that it can accomplish the stated goals and objectives. This type of measurement is known as decision-oriented measurement because the variables being measured allow evaluators and administrators to choose alternative actions within their program based on the data that is collected and analyzed (Popham, 1993).

The faculty development staff and administrators will prepare an agenda for the in-service training. This training was taking place three times throughout the year, each lasting one week. Recently the administration has decided to cut the training down. The new sessions are offered twice throughout the year, each lasting one-week long. The administration has also planned in-service days for faculty, scheduled throughout the semesters during the school year.

In order to evaluate the program while it is in progress, the evaluator must perform process evaluation (Gall et al., 1996). After the agenda is created for the upcoming session, the
evaluator creates a pre-training survey with assistance of the faculty development staff and administration. The survey is administered to participants at the beginning of the scheduled faculty in-service training. This survey will assess faculty expectations of the in-service training based on the preliminary agenda that is distributed for the sessions. When the sessions are completed, a second survey is created by the evaluator and is given to participants to access faculty satisfaction with the content of the in-service training. Data is analyzed with a computerized program like SPSS, to statistically validate any correlations that appear in the pre and post session surveys during the product evaluation phase of the CIPP method (Gall et al., 1996). Interested stakeholders then meet with the evaluator to go over the data and its significance to determine future enhancements to the program. This data can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Decision-makers will have hard data to help them determine if the program is meeting its stated goals and objectives.

Due to the nature of the CIPP method, evaluation is ongoing (Gall et al., 1996). Once the evaluator puts the process into place, the institution can continue to utilize the tools that are developed within the proposal. If they need help assessing the data, the evaluator can always come back again for this purpose. It is important for the faculty in-service program to be evaluated continuously. The evaluator of the program has built continuous evaluation into the proposal. Keeping faculty on the right track with the planned in-service programs will allow all of the stakeholders of this institution to benefit. By continually collecting data and using decision-oriented measurements, the administrators can justify this program’s existence for years to come.
References


