2009 NATIONAL CASTL CONFERENCE

Institute Survey Report

Office for Academic Excellence and Assessment
Creighton University
Omaha, NE

Institute Survey Report
Introduction

The 2009 CASTL Institute was held in Creighton University’s Mike and Josie Harper Center for Student Life and Learning on June 3-6, 2009. In our seventh year of Developing (Newer) Scholars of Teaching and Learning, Creighton University was pleased to serve as host. With the theme of “Ethics of Inquiry,” the Institute attracted 78 participants, scholars, mentors, and administrators.

Following the institute and in lieu of a paper and pencil end-of-institute evaluation, attendees were invited to complete an on-line survey. Open from June 22 - July 20, 2009, 60 respondents (86%) answered 23 questions ranging from general satisfaction with the institute to open-ended comments regarding a variety of dimensions of the institute. Thematic analysis of the comments has been conducted but will not be provided here; instead, we offer a brief summary of four criteria to aid us in our 2010 planning.

The Four Criteria

1. The CASTL Institute Overall

2. Materials and Registration

3. Mentoring Sessions, Workshops, and Speakers

4. Overall Atmosphere, Locations, and Food
The CASTL Institute Overall

Participants were asked to rate this year’s institute overall. 52 individuals responded; 83% rated the institute as excellent. None rated it as fair or poor.

![Pie chart showing 83% Excellent, 17% Good, None Fair or Poor]
Materials and Registration

Feedback was sought on institute materials and processes; dimensions were queried regarding advanced materials (e.g., website), on-line registration, on-site conference check-in, scholar application process, and conference materials. All registration and conference materials' ratings were improved over 2008. Therefore, our work to clarify these processes and increase communication appears to have improved attendees’ experiences; however, additional improvements can be made with advanced communications regarding the institute experience and scheduling.
Mentoring Sessions

The heart of our Institute is a process of mentoring work-in-progress, modeled on that developed by the Carnegie Foundation for their Scholars of Teaching and Learning residencies. When asked to rate the mentoring sessions, 72% rated them as excellent.

![Chart showing percentages of ratings: 72% Excellent, 26% Good, 2% Fair, 2% Poor]
Workshops and Speakers

Beyond the mentoring sessions, the main aspects of the Institute include workshops and speakers. When asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with how significant the workshops were and how engaging and thought-provoking the featured speakers were, 98% of respondents showed overwhelming agreement and satisfaction with each of the primary dimensions of the Institute.

Workshop topics for 2009 included:
- Framing the Question: The Heart of the Research Design
- Anatomy of a Question: Refining the Burning Question
- Ethics of Inquiry: Navigating the Institutional Review Process
- Moving SoTL Projects Forward: Applying What You Already Know and Do to SoTL - Methodologies and Literature Searches
- Literature Reviews: Disciplinary and Multidisciplinary Approaches
- Standards for Evaluating SoTL Work in the Promotion and Tenure Process
- Using Web 2.0 Tools for Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
- Studying How Students Move Toward More Complex Thinking in a Course on Comedy and Laughter

Suggestions for 2010 workshops included:
- Refining the Research Question
- IRB and Ethical Issues of Classroom Research
- SoTL Perspective: Preparing for Tenure
- SoTL Literature: Searching and Staying Up To Date
- Web 2.0 Continuation
- The Application of SoTL to Service Learning and Specific Pedagogies
- Action Research Designs: Analyzing the Data

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Overall Atmosphere, Locations and Food

Local arrangements feedback, primarily for the host institution, was also solicited. Feedback indicated excellence in all three venues. Technology can be improved, but otherwise we plan to maintain standards and meet or exceed expectations for 2010.
Summary

Creighton University’s Office for Academic Excellence and Assessment (AEA) thanks all of the 2009 National CASTL Summer Institute participants, scholars, mentors, and presenters for their feedback about their experiences. A summary of your feedback includes:

• Ratings of conference materials and on-site registrations were rated particularly exceptional, and 83% of participants rated their overall institute experience as excellent (with the remaining 17% rating their experience as good).

• Mentoring sessions remain at the heart of the institute, with informative workshops and stimulating speakers complementing these scholarly presentations. Many of the 2009 workshops will be repeated in 2010 but opportunities exist to introduce new topics, particularly as the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning relates to distance/web and service-learning pedagogies.

• The Harper Center offered a distinctive learning venue, but the wireless (overhead projector) technology needs to be improved to prevent the “glitches” experienced during the 2009 Scholars’ sessions.

The 2009 National CASTL Summer Institute exceeded expectations in the areas of: conference organizing; friendliness of the staff, presenters, and participants; mentoring information; quality of the keynote/presentations, to include “all notable characters from Carnegie/SoTL work;” and the receptions. Special thanks to the AEA staff who were identified as “exceeding my expectations” and to all who contributed to the friendly learning environment. In one attendee’s words: “Although this was my first year, I did not feel like a stranger.”

Creighton University and the Office for Academic Excellence and Assessment look forward to next exploring the vast terrain that is “Creativity” in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Please plan to join us on June 2-5, 2010.