

Introduction

The Instructor Development Program (IDP) launched in the Fall 2009 semester with lots of enthusiasm but without any funding or established ways to reward participation by library staff. The coordinators decided that the program should take the form of a community of practice*, a professional development approach that fosters sharing of knowledge and mutual support among library instructors, and thus provides intrinsic motivation for participation. By relying on mainly ourselves, we would keep expenses down and leverage the expertise residing in the Berkeley campus.

IDP coordinators were chosen for two-year terms, and charged with

- developing learning activities and events
- disseminating information about learning opportunities within and beyond the library
- refining the scope, theme and goals of the program in consultation with participants
- surveying staff needs
- creating a list of teaching and learning specialists and mentors in and outside the library

Our guiding documents can be found on our wiki at <http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/wikis/dmsis/index.php?n=Site.IDP>

Topics

It was decided by the coordinators at the launch of the program that each semester would have a theme and various activities would be developed during the semester that would be centered around the theme. Themes were chosen from a survey in which staff were asked about areas in which they thought they needed improvement. The themes so far have included active learning, lesson planning, and assessment. Though it wasn't necessary to have a theme, we found that it helped us be more focused on planning activities when a topic was already selected for the semester.

Formats

We have been experimenting with a variety of formats to determine effectiveness and popularity, to address various learning styles, and to model alternatives to lecture format. As time constraints are a concern for staff of any library, we also posted materials that participants could engage with and comment on at their convenience, such as readings and videos. Formats we have tried include

- expert lectures | lightning talks
- journal clubs
- workshops
- reflective practices
- open observations
- web elements

Assessment

We hoped to develop a summative assessment of the IDP as a whole by this point, but inconsistent participation in events has made this difficult: few people were able to attend every event. Instead we elected to assess individual events, again, using a variety of assessment tools and strategies keyed to the various formats of events.

- discussion-based events: one-minute paper
- workshops / reflective practices: built-in assessment (lesson plans, revisions)
- speakers: pre/post tests and free-writes

* Etienne Wenger <http://www.ewenger.com/theory/index.htm>