Fostering Teaching Excellence, Cultivating Cross-Disciplinary Scholarly Exchange, and Promoting Faculty Development

TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP HUB
2019-20
YEAR IN REVIEW

RICHMOND

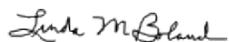# Reflections on an Inaugural Year in Review, May 2020

According to academic calendars, "summer" has arrived. The warmer weather, longer days, and the presence of yellow dust on everything that sits outdoors is a reminder of a seasonal transition that typically sparks a change in daily routines and a different focus for our summer work. In the Faculty Hub, we have been looking forward to summer as a time to reflect on work from our first year of operation, onboard new team members, brainstorm ways to expand our impact, and plan the major programs for the academic year, leaving room for great ideas that emerge throughout the year. As with the rest of the campus community, our spring term plans were disrupted and summer plans are also changing on a daily basis now. Despite these disruptions, the Faculty Hub's primary goals remain unchanged. We aim to foster excellence in teaching, cultivate cross-disciplinary interactions for scholarly exchange, and promote faculty development at all career stages.

The enclosed report is our Year in Review - a synopsis of the work we accomplished in our inaugural year. In addition to primary goals for each event or initiative, our work had a secondary goal of enhancing the culture for faculty learning from other faculty. Year one provided opportunities to develop processes for our work as a team and with faculty and campus partners. We designed programs and services to be confidential, voluntary, formative, and grounded in evidence from research and experience. We continually collected data to assess our impact. We are pleased that we contributed to the professional development of many faculty with inaugural programs on fostering inclusive pedagogy, supporting early career faculty development, building habits of reflective teaching, and intentional use of technology, among others. We aim to be responsive to faculty and institutional needs, and the emergency work added this spring exemplifies the flexibility required from us.

Nationally, the abrupt change to online instruction this spring has generated concerns about the future of higher education. I would like to share a collaboration (https://tinyurl.com/ya2jfpwp) between several directors of faculty development centers. While the linked article risks the possibility of illuminating what was "lost" this spring, our goal was to articulate the value of the educational experience we offer. We aim to use the six contexts of student engagement to guide the development of practical strategies to help faculty prepare to teach in uncertain times. The way we function as educators will not be the same as what we did before the pandemic. However, the modes of student engagement will continue to draw upon what we do best: generate creative solutions to problems, utilize our disciplinary expertise, maintain our commitment to the success of each student, and learn from and with each other. While we have been challenged in many ways as educators, I am encouraged when faculty share their new ideas and recognize that a growth mindset will be among our most useful values going forward. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and hope to engage with you this summer and in the upcoming academic year.

Thank you for reading the Faculty Hub's Year in Review. As always, we appreciate your feedback and constructive criticism. You may email us at facultyhub@richmond.edu.

With best wishes,

Linda M. Boland, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
Director, Teaching and Scholarship Hub
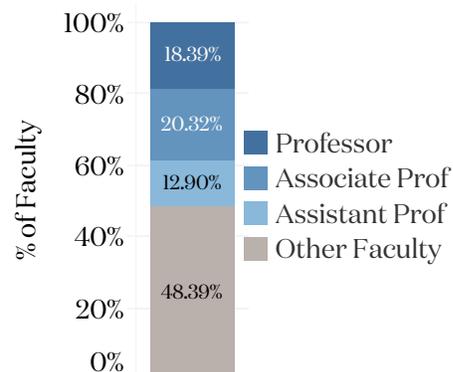
Hub Programming Summary

Programs Initiated   **12**

Events held   **34**

Number of Unique Faculty Engaged   **246**

Engagement by School

	% of Faculty
Arts and Sciences	40.0%
Business	37.7%
Jepson	25.0%
Law	10.1%
SPCS	21.1%
All Schools	31.1%

Engagement by Rank

% of Faculty

- Professor — 18.39%
- Associate Prof — 20.32%
- Assistant Prof — 12.90%
- Other Faculty — 48.39%

Inclusive Pedagogy

The Faculty Hub hosted several events for instructors to gain a deeper understanding of the value and purpose of inclusive teaching practices including awareness of assumptions and biases, selection of course content, the importance of transparency, the value of different perspectives, and ways of connecting with your students. The Faculty Hub worked with Kumea Shorter-Gooden, Ph.D., Principal, Shorter-Gooden Consulting and the first Chief Diversity Officer at the University of Maryland, College Park to deliver sessions on (1) Strengthening the Capacity to Foster Equity and Inclusion, (2) Power and Privilege in the Academy and (3) Inclusive Teaching: What It Is and How to Do It. Multiple additional sessions were designed to build a foundation of inclusive pedagogy in our work with the Early Career Faculty Career Seminar participants in fall term.

"The speaker provided actionable strategies that anyone could employ in the classroom and fostered a lively discussion among the faculty in attendance."

"There are many ideas-- some small, some more substantial--that will make my teaching more inclusive and better overall."

Pedagogy and Scholarship Tool Learning Modules

Recognizing the need to provide faculty with on-demand support for academic uses of certain technologies, the Faculty Hub assembled several pedagogy and scholarship tool learning modules for asynchronous use by faculty. Each module focuses on a specific academic purpose (e.g. web publishing and pedagogical approaches to content management), assumes little to no background by the viewer, and includes written documentation and video guides created by the Hub as well as links to appropriate external resources vetted by Hub staff. In the 2019-20 academic year, the Hub produced 32 video guides.

Early Career Faculty Seminar

The Faculty Hub offered a fall and spring semester seminar for first- and second-year faculty and had 18 participants in the fall and 19 in the spring. The first goal was to build a foundation for inclusive excellence and build community with other faculty. The second goal was to work on strategies to improve student learning with modest but powerful changes, guided by James Lang's *Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning*.

"I [have a] new understanding of diversity in the classroom."

"The Early Career Faculty Seminar provided a key suggestion that helped me refocus my teaching using the midterm to informally survey students and then immediately act on some of their suggestions. I feel this very much helped get improved 'buy-in' as we moved toward more challenging course material."

"I have already added more specific language about inclusivity in my (teaching) statement!"

Teaching Squares

Peer observation of teaching is a way to learn from and with other teachers. Although traditional programs are designed to provide feedback to the instructor as a way of improving their teaching, the Teaching Squares program is purposeful in its non-evaluative nature. As such, the goal is to observe the components of effective teaching and use these observations to reflect upon one's own teaching. Thirteen faculty members from across multiple disciplines participated in the Faculty Hub's inaugural program, visiting each other's classrooms and engaging in guided self-reflection about effective teaching practices.

"It was incredibly helpful to exchange teaching insights and approaches with colleagues from other disciplines. I learned a great deal in the Teaching Squares, and I would readily recommend the experience to others."

"I was able to draw parallels between my colleague's approach to teaching with mine, to determine areas of success and areas of improvement"

Creating Syllabi for Courses You'll Love to Teach and Students Will Love to Take

The Faculty Hub hosted Michael Palmer, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, University of Virginia, for a session designed to help faculty re-think the purpose and approaches to syllabus design. This highly interactive workshop was held just before spring term began and 62 instructors participated from all five schools. Participants explored the differences between traditional and learning-focused syllabi, were introduced to a rubric to qualify and quantify the differences, and discussed how to apply student-centered approaches to their own syllabi.

"It's made me re-think some long-held assumptions about my syllabi, which is a good thing! It reaffirmed some of them, but I'll be making some changes, too. Well done!"

"A valuable lesson for me was changing my perspective of the syllabus as a document, a contract, to a valuable learning experience of a motivational aspect."

Intentional Tech

Our first Faculty Hub Book Group explored the role of technology in the classroom. This spring, we explored how using technology thoughtfully and intentionally can help students achieve course learning objectives. Using Derek Bruff's (Vanderbilt University) new book, *Intentional Tech,* as a guide, we discussed when and how technology can be used effectively to enhance learning.

In addition to guided conversation, the Faculty Hub produced chapter briefs and tip sheets for quick reference when (re)designing your course. Those resources can be accessed at https://richmond.box.com/v/intentionaltech.

Faculty Hub Talks

Hub Talks were designed to engage faculty in discussing creative, informative, or thought-provoking completed works or works-in-progress while building community across disciplines. Faculty gather for lunch and to meet new colleagues and listen to an 18 minute talk followed by 30 minutes or more of discussion and Q & A. The format differs from traditional seminars and was received well. We were pleased to sponsor four talks in AY19-20.

What Can a Taxidermied Horse Tell Us About Public Memory?

- Nicole Maurantonio, Rhetoric & Communication Studies and American Studies, School of Arts and Sciences

Building Classroom Community: Reflections on Nurturing Relationship-Centered Learning Environments

-Doron Samuel-Siegel, School of Law

Making and Unmaking Egalitarianism in Human Societies

- Christopher R. von Rueden, Jepson School of Leadership

A Pedagogy of the Undercommons: Black Study, Black Studies, and the Fate of the Humanities

- Corey D. B. Walker, Jepson School of Leadership Studies and School of Arts and Sciences

"Absolutely fantastic: stimulating, challenging, affirming."

"The shorter talk is GREAT for keeping everyone engaged and leads to the ability for audience members to generate more meaningful questions."

Individual Consultations

In addition to group workshops or other programs, The Faculty Hub hosted hundreds of one-on-one consultations for faculty. Consultations were in person for most of the year, and by telephone, email, or Zoom once we migrated to remote teaching. Examples of consultation topics include:

- Developing an assignment for dance students to capture and reflect upon their work using digital media projects

- Co-creating effective implementations of virtual reality experiences across many disciplines

- Identifying cloud solutions for assessments involving scripting languages

- Confidential conversations about learning from student evaluations.

- Identifying the best way to digitally write math equations for an online lecture

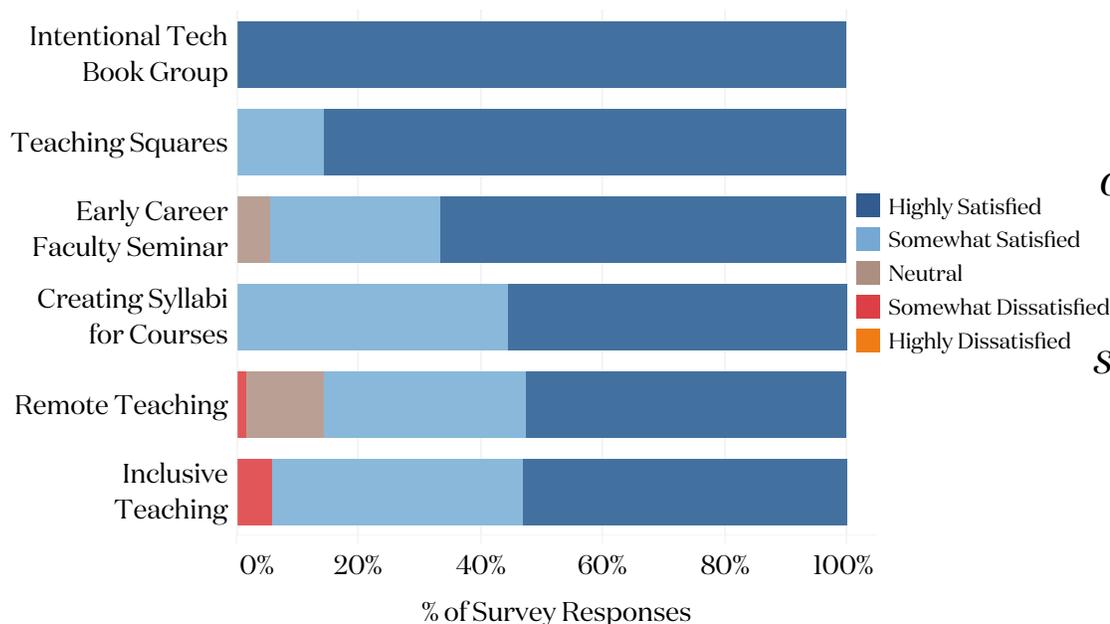- Developing effective assessment strategies for take home exams

Rapid Preparation for Remote Teaching

The Spring 2020 semester was upended by a global pandemic that forced the second half of the semester online. In collaboration with our partners and colleagues in Information Services and the School of Professional and Continuing Studies, the Faculty Hub co-developed a number of sessions to help faculty understand and make use of technologies – Zoom, Blackboard, and Panopto, among others – so they could migrate to remote teaching as quickly as possible without sacrificing the quality that is the hallmark of a Richmond education. These online sessions included:

- Using Zoom for Remote Teaching

- Using Blackboard and Panopto for Remote Teaching

- Summer School Online: Course Design & Pedagogy

- Summer School Online: Tools and Practice

Faculty Satisfaction in Programming

91%

of faculty were highly or somewhat satisfied across selected Hub events