How College of Agricultural Science Faculty at the Pennsylvania State University Engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

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Presentation Outline

1. Background
2. Overview of Research Process
3. Research Study
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Background

Penn State

- Founded in 1855 as one of the nation’s first land grant institutes
- Large public research institution; $97 million annually in the College of Agricultural Sciences
- University Park is “main campus” with 24 other commonwealth campuses
- 46,000 students at University Park and 99,000 worldwide
- 3,000 students enrolled in the College of Agricultural Sciences
Overview of Research Process

The Study Team

- Bryanna Kenno, Spring 2015 Graduate in Agricultural and Extension Education with Honors
- Dr. Daniel Foster, Assistant Professor of Agricultural and Extension Education, Thesis Supervisor
- Dr. John Ewing, Associate Professor of Agricultural and Extension Education, Faculty Reader
Overview of Research Study

Basis of Study

Undergraduate Research Assistant with Ph.D. candidate Mrs. Laura Rice to Sweden in May 2013

Focused on identified award winning faculty members at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Led into formulation of undergraduate research study focusing on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
Purpose of Study

The purpose of the descriptive research study was to determine how faculty in the Pennsylvania State University’s College of Agricultural Sciences engage in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL).

Research Objectives

1. Identify Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences faculty sources of instructional assessment.
2. Describe Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences faculty perceptions of effectiveness of instructional assessment to improve teaching practice.
3. Describe other measures of scholarship of teaching and learning College of Agricultural Sciences faculty engage in.
Overview of Research Study

Target Audience
Any faculty member of Penn State’s College of Agricultural Sciences who has taught an undergraduate course between January and December 2014 at the University Park campus.

Focus of the Study
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (Boyer, 1990)
- Specifically instructional assessment

Four Main Sections
1) Student Rating of Teacher Effectiveness (SRTE)
2) Evaluation of Teaching
3) Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
4) Demographics
Overview of Research Study

Timeline
- Previous research was collected and analyzed during June, July, and August of 2014
- An online survey was developed and reviewed during September 2014
- 168 identified possible participants were notified in October 2014 of their selection
- Data was collected between November and December 2014 over a four week span using Survey Monkey; 113 respondents
Conclusions

1) Student Rating of Teacher Effectiveness (SRTE)
   - Mandated student evaluation tool at Penn State
   - Student feedback is main benefit; 29%
   - Low student participation is main limitation; 35%

2) Evaluation of Teaching
   - 94% of 113 respondents partake in self-evaluation
   - 96% of 113 respondents partake in student evaluation
   - 78% of 113 respondents partake in peer evaluation
Conclusions

3) Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
   ✿ 58% of participants partake in other forms of the SOTL while 42% do not
   ✿ Includes conferences/seminars, reading material, instructing classes

4) Demographics
   ✿ Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Full Professor
   ✿ 47% have 19+ years teaching experience
Peer, self, and student evaluation are critical to improve instructional assessment

Benefits and limitations to student evaluations

Students need motivation or incentive to complete; requirement?

Teaching faculty do not seek out SOTL opportunities as much as they can; requirement?

Future research:
1) Why certain methods of instructional assessment used and others disregarded
2) Faculty perceptions of SOTL
Questions?