Learning from the Wisdom of Practice: Engaging Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Faculty to Become Reflective Practitioners

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Engaging Faculty to Become Reflective Practitioners

- Define Reflective Practice
- Outline the outcomes of the reflective process
- Discuss methods to enhance reflective practice
THINK-PAIR-SHARE

In regard to reflection about your teaching: When, how, and in what ways does this reflection occur?
What is reflective practice?

- Develop an individual definition for reflective practice.
- Share definitions in groups of 4-5.
- Reach consensus on a group definition of reflective practice.
Reflective practice is…….

- “The practice or act of analyzing our actions, decisions, or products by focusing on our process of achieving them” (Killion & Todnem, 1991, p. 15)

- “The capacity of a teacher to think creatively, imaginatively, and in time, self-critically about classroom practice” (Lasley, 1992, p. 24)
Reflective practice is……..

- “A way of thinking about educational practice that involves the ability to make rational choices and assume responsibility for them” (Ross, 1989, p.22)

- “Deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement” (Hatton & Smith, 1995, p. 40)
Reflective practice is…….

- Both a process and a state of mind
- Inquiry oriented
- Commitment to continuous learning about and improvement of teaching
Reflective Thinking Model
(Taggart, 1996)

1) Problem (episode)
2) Problem framing/reframing (observation, reflection, data gathering, moral judgments, schema, context)
3) Possible solution sets (intervention)
4) Experimentation (judgment & observation)
5) Evaluation
   Rejection or Acceptance
What’s the value of reflective practice?

- Key to professional competence (Bright, 1996)
- Positive impact on student learning (Hawley & Valli, 2000)
- Helps teachers interpret and understand the wisdom of their practice (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991)
How do I foster reflective thinking?

- Open-mindedness - receptive to alternatives
- Whole-heartedness - mental, emotional, and physical commitment to learning
- Intellectual responsibility
How do I assess reflective thinking?

- **Technical**
  - Description of observations
  - Focus on behavior, content, and skills
  - Task-oriented, teaching = meeting a competency

- **Contextual**
  - Decisions relative to context of the situation
  - Focus on action
  - Seek alternatives to practice
  - Analyze and validate practice based upon sound constructs
How do I assess reflective thinking?

- **Dialectical**
  - Systematically question practices
  - Suggest alternatives and competing theories
  - Reflect on decisions made during action
  - Bring moral and ethical issues to bear
  - Efficacious and self-confident
How is reflective practice enhanced?

- Action research (SoTL)
- Teaching circles
- Cases
- Metaphors
- Peer evaluation (observational learning)
- Journaling
- Mentoring
- Portfolios
Promoting Reflective Thinking in Teachers: 44 Action Strategies (Taggart & Wilson, 1998)

The ultimate guardians of excellence are not external forces, but internal professional responsibilities. (Ramsden, 1992, p. 221)