



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / PROGRESS REPORT

RTA (“regional Teaching Academy”)

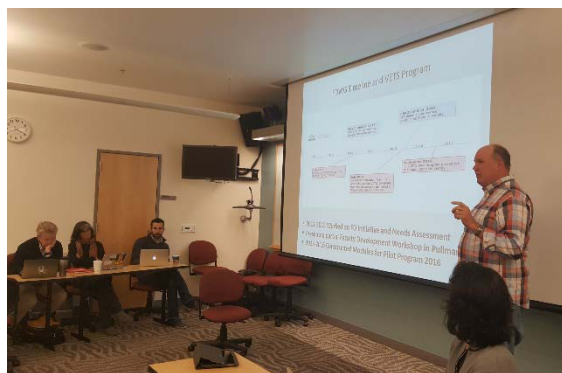
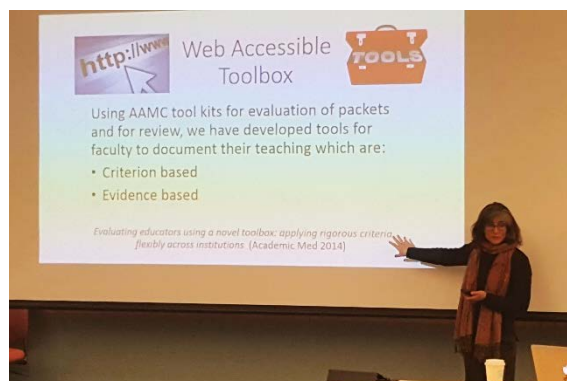
March 1, 2017 - Following RTA January Meeting at UC-Davis in Davis, CA

Committee Meetings:

- RTA Steering Committee
- RTA Working Groups
 - ✓ Faculty Development Initiative
 - ✓ External Peer Review of Teaching Initiative
 - ✓ Local Peer Review of Teaching Initiative
- RTA Biennial Meeting Planning Committee



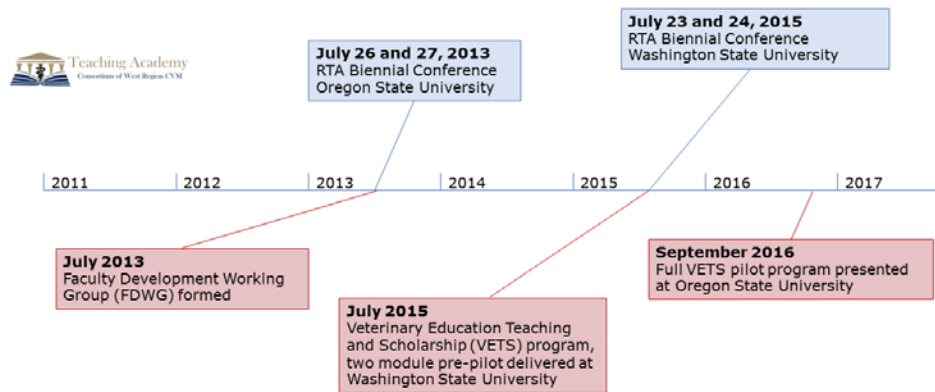
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January 28, 2017
Davis, CA



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January 28, 2017
Davis, CA

REPORT: FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE – January, 2017

Background: In July 2013, at the first biennial RTA Summer Conference, attendees from the five veterinary colleges identified two areas of focus for which they formed two working groups: a Faculty Development Working Group (FDWG), and an External Peer Review Working Group (EPRWG). In January 2014, the FDWG identified their goal – to design and implement a faculty development program for new-to-teaching faculty. A timeline of key events of the FDWG is included below.



FDWG Project: A needs-assessment survey was sent to faculty at member institutions and a program was then developed to foster a culture of evidence-based best practices in teaching by providing professional development in:

- **Principles of teaching and learning**
- **Outcomes and student assessment**
- **Approaches to student-teacher interactions.**

The FDWG set out to develop educational modules that could benefit all faculty, but were designed to benefit early career faculty in particular; these modules could then be used as a part of a full program or as stand-alone sessions (one or more modules) for faculty development. The initial program, Veterinary Educator Teaching and Scholarship (VETS) program, was designed to cover a breadth of topics using an interactive and experiential approach.

Goals of VETS Pilot Program: The overarching goal of the VETS pilot program was to advance teaching practices to support student learning. To address this, modules were presented **to introduce, demonstrate, and model effective methods in teaching** for participants in both clinical and preclinical curricula.

VETS Program Objectives:

- Gain knowledge of educational concepts and effective teaching skills for both the clinical and didactic setting.
- Understand one's perspectives on teaching and learning and know how these influence one's teaching.
- Be able to recognize and apply diverse methods of instruction.
- Be able to apply the concepts of giving and receiving feedback to improve teaching and

learning.

- Understand and apply the concepts of a Community of Practice (CoP) to advance one's ongoing professional development as an educator.

VETS Pilot Program: The first two-day pilot of the VETS program was conducted at Oregon State University on September 9th and 10th, 2016 and was attended by 22 participants representing all five RTA member universities. Prior to the program, the participants identified teaching areas in which they would like to develop and outlined these projects. The program was facilitated by 10 members of the FDWG using a variety of teaching and modeling strategies to address the goals of the VETS program and to support the projects that were developed by the participants.

At the conclusion of the program, participants were surveyed for their feedback on the experience. Focus group interviews conducted at the end of the fall 2016 semester revealed that many participants incorporated ideas from topics and formalized their projects. **Examples of ideas and projects generated from the VETS program included: creating lecture and lab objectives that align with assessments, integrating a wider variety of question types into assessment, incorporating varied student responses, implementing alternative assessment strategies, soliciting feedback from students immediately following lectures, and shifting from teacher-driven to student-driven instruction.**

Claims for the Effectiveness of the VETS Program: (Based on both pre- and post-program surveys and focus group interviews.)

- The program resulted in gains in participant knowledge of educational concepts and pedagogy.
- The program promoted confidence and empowered participants to explore alternatives to didactic teaching.
- The program catalyzed changes in actual classroom, clinic, and lab teaching.
- The program helped to foster Communities of Practice at participants' home institutions, promoting ongoing faculty development.

Faculty Development Working Group Future Plans:

- Showcase a VETS module on assessment strategies at the RTA Biennial 2017 Summer Conference to highlight the program and encourage participation in future offerings.
- Modify and improve the VETS Program based on participant feedback in order to strengthen future offerings.
- Prepare a scholarly publication describing and presenting the preliminary findings of the VETS program.
- Support past participants through communities of practice and invite them to participate in future VETS programs as mentors to new participants.

REPORT: RTA Initiative on EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

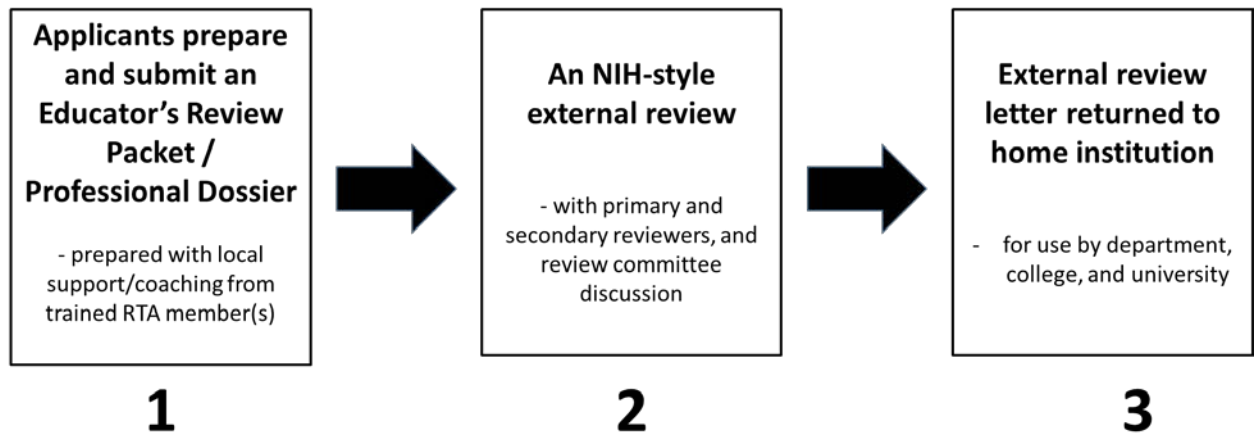
Project Goal: The goal of this project is to address 2 major obstacles to recognizing and rewarding teaching in our colleges:

1. The lack of defined and ready-to-use tools to assess teaching, teaching-related professional activities, and the scholarship of teaching.
2. The lack of a respected and rigorous external review process.

Deliverables: – *identified at onset*

1. A document that outlines recommended best practices for assessment of teaching and teaching-related activities at consortium schools.
2. A common template for a Promotion Packet/Teaching Portfolio that can be submitted for comprehensive external review.
3. An evidence-based process, based in our regional Teaching Academy, by which teaching and promotion packets from member colleges can be externally reviewed.

THE PROCESS



A rigorous external review process: modified from the AAMC Task Force “Toolkits for Medical Educators”.

- Criterion-based
- Evidence-based

Gusic ME, et al. [Evaluating educators using a novel toolbox: applying rigorous criteria flexibly across institutions](#). Acad Med. 89:1006-11. 2014

Packet Review: 4 Central Criteria

Quantity

Quality

Impact

Scholarship/Scholarly Approach

6 Domains: *(most faculty will be active in just 2 or 3)*

1. Teaching
 - 1a: Teaching activities
 - 1b: Development of Enduring Educational Materials
 - 1c: Educational Professional Development: (efforts to improve your teaching)
2. Mentoring and Advising
3. Learner and Outcome Assessment
4. Educational Research
5. Curriculum and Program Development
6. Educational Leadership and Administration

Products developed *(as of January 28, 2017)*

1

Applicant Toolbox (web based resources)

- Review packet overview
- Writing an Educator's CV
- Writing a Teaching Portfolio / Educator's Reflective Document
- Using an Appendix to provide supporting materials
- Constructing a Cover Section & Summary Statement for your packet

- Recommended best practices in local peer review/observation of teaching
- Recommended best practices in reporting student ratings and comments

2

Reviewer Toolbox (web based resources)

- 25 item Evaluator Guidelines – with examples
- Evaluator Worksheet

FUTURE PLANS:

- Web based toolbox launch
- Roll out to consortium dean
- Roll out to department chairs and associate deans (after deans)
- 90 minute workshop at RTA Biennial Meeting: July, 2017 (Ft. Collins)
 - training for faculty coaches
 - intro to packet construction for junior faculty approaching promotion or review
- Encourage all RTA members to use the tools and to promote at home institution

REPORT: LOCAL PEER OBSERVATION INITIATIVE – January, 2017

At the 2015 summer RTA conference in Pullman, Washington, a third RTA initiative was tasked with generating a useful and workable system of local (AKA institutional) peer review/observation. The primary goal of this process is to enhance teaching. To address this, we initially developed two outputs:

1. A straightforward instrument designed to facilitate the peer observation process
2. A set of guiding principles, or best practices, to facilitate implementation of local peer observation

An emphasis was placed on “observation/reflection” rather than “evaluation” of teaching. Throughout this process, we have attempted to navigate the narrow passage between a useful, expedient system of peer observation and yet another unsolicited mandate on faculty time and creativity.

Using available materials as a starting point, we created a three-page instrument for local peer observation. This instrument is comprised of three subcomponents focused on a pre-observation meeting, the actual observation of teaching itself, followed by a post-observation discussion. The instrument's format is designed to be both formative and summative, to both assist the maturation of the instructor and to provide a focused synopsis their teaching acumen.

In Pomona California, the WG completed the primary instrument and then focused on developing a set of best practices to guide implementation of local peer observation. We were aware that adoption of local peer observation would be institution-specific. What works for one institution will not necessarily work as well at a different school.

RECOMMENDATIONS ARE LISTED BELOW:

Who will be observed?

- **Junior (e.g. pre-tenure) teaching faculty**
- Additional, tenured faculty, at request of department head or faculty member

Who will perform the observations?

- **Two people**- ideally both a content expert and non-content expert
- Observers selected by observee (*some* choice)/self-selected/selected by administrators

How frequently will peer observations be performed?

- At least **two times before tenure** (e.g. @ 2 and 5 years)
- An "observation" = one or more teaching events

Will there be any training mechanisms for peer observations?

- Institution dependent
- It is the contention of the WG that there is **sufficient instructional assistance implicit in the instrument itself** (OSU, CSU and Davis)

Types of teaching to be evaluated

- **Lecture (LEC), Laboratory (LAB), Discussion (DIS)**
- This instrument is less appropriate for small group (e.g. PBL) and clinical teaching

Peer observation of small group and clinical teaching: (e.g. for PBL and rounds purposes)

A separate instrument has been developed for this purpose and is in the process of early implementation. Feedback on its application was obtained and the document was refined at the meeting in Davis in January, 2017.

As of January 2016, it was determined that this system for didactic lecture observation was ready for implementation at the member institutions. We are proud of our efforts and fully anticipate that the system will independently evolve, driven by the unique needs of each veterinary college. Currently, it has been adopted as drafted by the Department of Clinical Sciences at CSU, all 6 departments of the School of Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis, the Department of Biomedical Sciences at OSU and a modified version is currently in use by the Clinical Sciences Department OSU. Washington State University has a separate but similar pre-existing document already in use. Western University does not utilize didactic lectures so this form is not suitable for their problem-based learning format.

It is the opinion of the WG that the primary task is completed and it is the responsibility of the individual members of the WG to put forth the document and recommendations to their own institutions.

In January, 2017, we accomplished the following:

- Completed the clinical teaching and small group/PBL observation instrument including the pre-observation form, the observation form with guidelines, and the post-observation form
- Proposed refinements for the Large Group Teaching instrument and Guidelines
- Completed the narrative for RTA web page
- Prepared the Executive Report for this RTA Initiative

Future directions:

- Training
 - Application to resident training
 - The form is currently being implemented at CSU for observation of resident small group teaching rounds and is being integrated into a Resident Teacher Training Program
 - Tool for annual or biannual resident observations
- Distribution to other institutions outside of the Western Consortium RTA
 - RTA website – Documents to be available for download
 - AAVMC
- Development of a mechanism to recognize and reward the peer reviewer/observer for their efforts during local and external peer review of teaching such as establishing peer observation standing committees at individual institutions (with contribution toward FTE)