

Call For Participation in a Faculty Learning Community on Engaging Students in Large Classes: Spring-Fall 2012



What: A Faculty Learning Community on Teaching Large Classes—with a focus on enhancing student learning; sponsored by the Center for Faculty Excellence in cooperation with the Center for Educational Excellence in the Eshelman School of Pharmacy.

Faculty Learning Communities provide strong support for exploration of an important topic by a committed group of faculty and often produce significant products such as papers, plans, or reports as a consequence of the program of study. For more information on Faculty Learning Communities, visit <http://www.units.muohio.edu/flc/whatis.php>.

With Whom: Dr. Adam Persky, Director of the Center for Educational Excellence in the Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Dr. David Schwartz, Content Developer in the Center for Faculty Excellence, and ten to twelve like-minded individuals who have responsibility for teaching large enrollment courses. This group will be strictly limited to a maximum of 12 participants.

Who Can Join: To join this learning community you must:

- Have a faculty appointment at UNC (either tenure-track or fixed term) and be scheduled to teach a course section with an enrollment of at least 100 students in 2012.
- Submit a short statement (no longer than one page) by January 3 describing your interests in the program.
- Commit to a meeting once per month during the Spring 2012 and Fall 2012 semesters to discuss, think, and learn together. All participants' calendars will be consulted in the scheduling of these sessions.
- Be willing to spend time and effort reading, gathering information, and analyzing instructional strategies in large classes.
- Be willing to help your colleagues in the group.

How You Will Benefit: By participating, you will benefit from the collegiality of like-minded faculty who share challenges and commitment and from the support of Adam Persky and David Schwartz as well as other individuals on campus who have experience teaching and supporting large classes. Meals will be provided at the monthly meetings, and the program will have a \$5,000 budget that can be used for books, travel, guest speakers, and to cover costs incurred in conducting activities that support this effort. Finally, depending on your interests, your participation in the program may lead to the creation of scholarly work (e.g., concerning pedagogy in your discipline) that you can submit for publication in an academic journal or for presentation at a conference.

Our group activities will include:

- Sharing plans, gathering and assessing information, looking at trends and opportunities, crafting strategies and innovative methods for teaching large enrollment classes at UNC, and talking about potential and present obstacles and problems.
- Interacting with guest speakers who have specific experience in some aspect of teaching large enrollment courses.
- Reading and discussing articles and book chapters that members of the group or the leaders think are particularly relevant or helpful.

Time Frame: During the Spring 2012 semester, the group will meet and form its agenda, identify individual projects, and get input from a variety of resource representatives. Some individuals will pilot test instructional strategies during the Spring 2012 semester. During the summer months participants will be encouraged to meet informally, work on their project, and stay in contact electronically. In fall 2012, the group will work to complete projects and share their findings.

To Apply: Please write a brief (i.e., maximum one page), double-spaced, 12pt font *statement of your interests* in this program and send it by email no later than January 3 to David Schwartz (dschwartz@email.unc.edu) and cc: Adam Persky (apersky@unc.edu). This statement should include a description of the large enrollment course you will be teaching, what you consider to be your primary challenges in teaching the course and how you plan to address them, and any specific areas in which you have worked to increase student engagement in courses (not necessarily large enrollment courses) you have taught previously.