



Towards effective Training of Faculty at Swiss universities

This paper has been compiled by a group of faculty developers from 7 Universities¹ in Switzerland who reached a consensus about the characteristics of faculty development activities. It is for faculty developers and complements the document "Towards effective teaching and learning at Swiss universities : underpinning principles and values & objectives and outcomes."

Aims of this paper

The recommendations presented in the paper aim to improve university faculty training and address all training activities, including comprehensive programmes.

More specifically, this paper aims:

- To give guidelines for faculty developers.
- To provide a basis for designing faculty development programmes and facilitate comparisons between the different training programmes and activities
- To underline essential conditions for training faculty and that apply to all activities including comprehensive training programmes.

Issues to be considered for implementing faculty development activities

Faculty developers should examine the following issues when creating and implementing faculty development activities

PARTICIPANTS

Activities should take into consideration various levels of experience in teaching, so that not only young faculty but also those who have many years of experience can benefit from training.

Training activities should allow for mixing experiences and disciplines, unless there is a specific reason to do otherwise.

Participants should have a minimum experience of teaching and/or opportunities to teach during or shortly after the training since faculty development is an "on the job training".

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CONTENT

Programmes and activities should be planned to meet faculty needs and should be in line with the objectives defined in the paper "Towards effective teaching and learning at Swiss universities".

They should rely on theoretical understanding of learning and teaching.

A comprehensive training programme should be designed so as to integrate three elements:

- Course attendance or formal training
- Transfer work or application
- Reflection on practice.

Other activities, such as seminars, workshops, counselling etc., should aim to integrate these elements when appropriate.

Contextual factors such as institutional missions, departmental cultures or discipline-specific needs must be taken into account.

METHODS

Training activities require active involvement of the participants and encourage sharing experiences and reflective processes.

DURATION

Full training to acquire the 8 objectives in a way that reflects the 6 underpinning values stated in the paper "*Towards effective teaching and learning at Swiss universities*" is a long process and should be considered as an ongoing one.

Although programmes and activities can be of different duration, in all cases duration must be consistent with the objectives of the training in question.

EVALUATION

Faculty developers should address 3 aspects of evaluation:

1. When appropriate, evaluation of whether teachers have achieved the stated objectives should be based on a formative approach (i. e portfolio)
2. Faculty developers should encourage teachers to implement self, student, peer, mentor evaluation, especially for reflective practice.
3. Faculty developers should themselves regularly review their programmes and activities, in order to ensure quality and improvement. This review should involve feedback from external peers.

All these 3 aspects should be evidence based