Teaching Academy Learning Communities

WSU Proposal:

The CVM Teaching Academy form **Learning Communities** based from interest stimulated either from workshops or from seminars.

Possible areas of interest that have been presented at previous meetings:

- Team Based Learning – *opportunity to collaborate with Iowa State University*
- Professional Development – *Writing your: CV, teaching philosophy, & teaching portfolio*
- Test Writing & Item Analysis
- Technology in the classroom: *clickers, classroom tech basics, etc*
- Learning Objectives – *writing Learning Outcomes and assessing them*
- Educational Research – *project development, proposal, writing, etc.*
- Active Learning – *methods to actively engage students in large lectures, labs, etc.*
- Peer Observation/review of Teaching
- Using Student Evaluations to improve

Each community will be expected to perform the following:
- Meet at least 4-5 times a semester (*can meet more often*)
- In the beginning of each semester an outline will be submitted with the following areas covered:
    - Goals of the community
    - Future plans - what the group would like to accomplish that semester
- By the end of the school year (**May**) the community will have or has developed a deliverable for the Teaching Academy.
    - This can range from:
        - A noon presentation to the Teaching Academy
        - Workshop or seminar (either presented by the community or was instrumental in bringing the speaker to the college to facilitate)
        - Grant proposal
        - Research plan or proposal
        - Some form of documentation that can be used in the future
        - A record of products from the group – new test questions, supplement student evaluation questions, personal development plans, etc.

Leadership: Identify a faculty member (or 2 members) to partner with the program coordinator of the Teaching Academy to organize and structure their particular community. A $500 professional

development fund would be developed for that faculty member each semester for their use in teaching and learning.   These funds can be used to support the group (Learning Community) – e.g. purchase food, buy books, support a speaker or workshop, etc.

Background:

*The following information was gathered from Dr. Holly Bender from Iowa State University, Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) and their **Faculty Learning Communities.***

The learning communities are developed from topics that stimulate interest that were delivered during a workshop/seminar (one session programming) or (at Iowa State University) Teaching Learning Circles (TLC). At ISU, Teaching Learning Circle are developed following a workshop/seminar, to continue the discussion of topics that were presented. These circles are made up of groups of faculty, graduate students and postdocs who meet once weekly (or bi-weekly) for 4-6 times to discuss topics of common interest and/or books.

Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) (groups of faculty, graduate students and postdocs) are derived from these TLC.   Different FLCs are formed for each area of interest, and continue to meet each semester if there is still interest in those areas. For example, there can be several communities going on at the same time - see *attached 2014 fall schedule for CELT for examples of communities.*

CELT partners with a faculty member who is identified as the leader of a particular community and awarded $500 as a professional development stipend each semester to assist in the leadership of that community (*each community has a leader).* The communities set their own schedule of meetings from monthly to every other week for the entire semester around a topic of interest.

During the first meeting of the particular FLC, the group does a card sorting activity. Each person is given sticky notes, where they write down what they would like to get out of the group or what they would like to learn about. The notes are then put up on the wall and categorized into themes. These themes are the bases of what is covered during the semester within that community. *Attached is an example of the TBL Learning Community last spring schedule*

Depending on the themes, agenda items range from: bringing in guest speakers/topic experts within the university; sharing experiences and asking for feedback; developing projects, educational research, and grant proposals; etc.

Each semester is a new slate for each of the communities, where new themes are determined and processed.