2016 Part-Time Instructor Needs Assessment Report

Office of Faculty Development

Western Michigan University

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Introduction

A total of 321 Part Time Instructors were surveyed in fall 2016 for current professional development needs. The number of Part Time Instructors (PTIs) who viewed or responded to some of the questions on the survey was 187, and 134 completed it. The following report is based on the completed responses.

One observation critical to future programming is that PTIs attend professional development at WMU and at other institutions. They are interested in and committed to developing themselves that when asked about unpaid summer seminars and learning communities they responded positively, including selecting Saturday as an option for attending events.

As figure one indicates, most of our PTIs (77%) are either looking for full time employment or juggling between teaching and other jobs.

Figure 1. PTI Status

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Graduate student		12	6%	n/a	n/a
Instructor looking for full time		30	16%	n/a	n/a
Full time instructor who works part-time at WMU		3	2%	n/a	n/a
Instructor at several institutions		15	8%	n/a	n/a
Full time online instructor		1	1%	n/a	n/a
Full time professional and part-time teacher		41	21%	n/a	n/a
Full time professional and teach online		7	4%	n/a	n/a
Degreed but not working in the field		2	1%	n/a	n/a
Part-time professional and part-time instructor		50	26%	n/a	n/a
Retiree seeking part-time work		18	9%	n/a	n/a
Other		12	6%	n/a	n/a
Total Respondents		191	100%		
(skipped this question)		130			

Interest in WMU Learning Communities

Surprisingly, most PTIs (70%) are not aware of the programs. However, they indicated interest, especially in topics related to integrating contemplative pedagogy into higher education, designing a PTIs teaching and learning guidebook, and creating a community of Part Time Instructors.

Attendance of professional development events outside WMU

A total of 89 PTIs (66% of respondents) indicated that they have attended professional development events outside WMU. The following were the most cited:

- Diversity Awareness: Staff-to-Student
- Teaching effectiveness/critical race studies
- Developing online courses/material
- Racial Justice Institute
- How to Work with Military Students
- Designing Rubrics
- Using Technology in the Classroom
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trasgender, Qeer (LGBTQ)
- Writers and Writing Programs Annual Conference
- Questioning and critical thinking
- Being a lifelong learner
- Using groups and team based learning in the classroom
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)
- Fire and employee safety
- Sexual harassment in the workplace
- Experiential Education Conference
- MITESOL (Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages)
- Leadership Dynamics Program
- Crucial Conversations
- Gallup Strengths Finder
- Classroom management
- Best practice instruction
- Cooperative learning
- Engagement strategies
- Motivating students to learn
- Praising versus Encouragement
- Conflict resolution
- Crisis de-escalation
- Working with clients with suicidal ideation

Figure 2. **Size and type of class PTIs teach**

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Small undergraduate (1-25)		97	51%	n/a	n/a
Small graduate (1-20)		39	20%	n/a	n/a
Mid-size undergraduate (25-50)		66	35%	n/a	n/a
Large undergraduate (50-100)		17	9%	n/a	n/a
Very large undergraduate (100+)		13	7%	n/a	n/a
Total Respondents		191			
(skipped this question)		130			

Table 1. **Formats PTIs use to teach their classes**

	Used	Not Used	Response Total	Points	Avg
Face-to-face	85.86% (164)	14.14% (27)	191	n/a	n/a
Face-to-face with support from e-learning	69.11% (132)	30.89% (59)	191	n/a	n/a
All online	29.84% (57)	70.16% (134)	191	n/a	n/a
Blended/Hybrid (e.g. half online, half face-to-face)	22.51% (43)	77.49% (148)	191	n/a	n/a
Total Respondents			191		
(skipped this question)			130		

Figure 3. **Colleges where PTIs primarily teach**

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Arts and sciences		63	35%	n/a	n/a
Aviation		3	2%	n/a	n/a
Education and Human Development		34	19%	n/a	n/a
Health and Human Services		41	23%	n/a	n/a
Engineering and Applied Sciences		8	4%	n/a	n/a
School of Medicine		0	0%	n/a	n/a
Cooley Law School		0	0%	n/a	n/a
Lee Honors		2	1%	n/a	n/a

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Graduate College		1	1%	n/a	n/a
Fine Arts		16	9%	n/a	n/a
Haworth College of Business		14	8%	n/a	n/a
	Total Respondents	182	100%		
	(skipped this question)		139		

Figure 4. **Attendance of professional development events organized or supported by WMU departments**

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Yes		55	34%	n/a	n/a
No		109	66%	n/a	n/a
	Total Respondents	164			
	(skipped this question)	157			

Figure 5. **Attendance of professional development events organized by the WMU Office of Faculty Development**

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Yes		36	23%	n/a	n/a
No		122	77%	n/a	n/a
	Total Respondents	158			
	(skipped this question)	163			

Figure 6. **Specific professional development events offered by the WMU Office of Faculty Development attended by PTIs**

		Response Total	Response Percent	Points	Avg
Teaching with Technology Symposium		17	9%	n/a	n/a
Teaching and Learning Bash		5	3%	n/a	n/a
Game Your Class		4	2%	n/a	n/a
Flip Your Class		6	3%	n/a	n/a
Re-design Your Course		3	2%	n/a	n/a
Critical Thinking		6	3%	n/a	n/a
Fall Convocation		5	3%	n/a	n/a

Cool Tools		20	11%	n/a	n/a
	Total Respondents	181			
	(skipped this question)	140			

Interest in Future Professional Development Offered by OFD

Most PTIs agree that these professional development programs are helpful and indicated interest in attending more in the future. Some of the challenges they expressed include inability to attend at a physical location and suggested more "online resources or webinars; more times would be nice, early evening, weekends, during break when the kids are still in school, I have more time then." Also, "I am not really aware of what is available, so perhaps better 'advertising' to us part-timers. Being paid for my time."

PTIs further indicated that they were interested in the following events:

- Creating a safe/inclusive environment in the Classroom
- Developing and maintaining a teaching portfolio
- Self-assessing teaching skills and developing a reflective approach to teaching
- Identifying and designing a personal-professional needs plan
- Creating active student engagement and participation in an online course
- Fostering and enhancing instructor-student relationships in an online and or hybrid classroom
- Creating effective online learning activities and assessments
- Determining ways to assess student progress in an online course
- Providing meaningful, constructive, and timely feedback to online/hybrid learners
- Choosing appropriate technologies to enhance online/hybrid classes
- Designing teaching strategies and content to match learning outcomes
- Designing effective instruction and assessment for undergraduate students
- Writing objective and measurable learning outcomes
- Enhancing small group teaching and group projects
- Dealing with issues related to all aspects of diversity and cultural competencies in the classroom
- Selecting appropriate teaching and learning methods for specific instructional objectives
- Incorporating writing and communication skills in the classroom
- Using different pedagogical styles when facilitating various types of critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Incorporating sustainability into your course

- Working with non-traditional students (e.g. adult learners, disabled students, international students, veterans)

Other Comments

- "I am an instructor who lives in Muskegon and teaches in Grand Rapids. I would love to take more professional development trainings if they were offered online."
- "This is my first semester teaching at Western, and I was not even aware of the development classes mentioned in this survey. It would have been nice to be aware that those were offered."
- "Most of us feel completely isolated on campus."
- "Respectful pay."
- "Support was very limited unless I was willing to drive to Kalamazoo at my own expense and put in considerable time at my own expense. The university should reimburse the expenses of part-time instructors for professional development. To my knowledge, there is no reimbursement, nor is there much availability of assistance outside of Kalamazoo."
- "I live 4 1/2 hours away from Kalamazoo so I find going to seminars on campus difficult. I would love to have them offered electronically or scheduled in Kalamazoo with quite a bit of notice."
- "I find communication from WMU is somewhat lacking."
- "These questions seem to assume that there has been some outreach on the part of Faculty Development. I've never been offered nor asked to participate in anything, never been offered support."
- "All of the faculty development workshops listed seemed interesting to me. However, I don't know that I was aware of when and where they were held. I'm assuming I got an email but perhaps another mode of dispersing this info would help. I will be sure to look for these moving forward."

Interest in Summer Intensive Workshops, and summer I or/and summer II 2017 availability

Most PTIs were available in the Months of June, July and August, Monday through Saturday, from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Summer intensive workshops are for instructors that want to explore a subject matter in depth. Currently the summer intensive workshops are "Flip Your Class", "Game Your Class", "Course Re-Design", and "Performance Task". Summer intensive workshops have the goal of being of practical value and instructors are encouraged to bring their course materials. During summer intensive workshops, instructors work on improving their classes and should leave the workshops with a clear vision of how to utilize the ideas in their respective classes. Summer intensive workshops are run over a couple of days and can be half day or full day events.

Table 2. **Interest in Summer Intensive Workshops, and summer 2017 availability**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Response Total	Points	Avg
I'm aware of what summer intensives workshops are being offered	5.43% (7)	11.63% (15)	13.18% (17)	38.76% (50)	31.01% (40)	129	n/a	n/a
I'm aware of when summer Intensives workshops are being offered	4.8% (6)	9.6% (12)	12.8% (16)	39.2% (49)	33.6% (42)	125	n/a	n/a
Summer intensive workshops are accessible to me	4.76% (6)	10.32% (13)	50% (63)	16.67% (21)	18.25% (23)	126	n/a	n/a
I'm interested in attending summer intensive workshops	16.8% (21)	25.6% (32)	38.4% (48)	11.2% (14)	8% (10)	125	n/a	n/a
					Total Respondents	129		
					(skipped this question)	192		

How to increase summer intensive accessibility for PTIs

Forty respondents suggested that, for those who teach off-campus, options in other locations could increase the possibility of attending. Otherwise, it not only includes personal time, but expenses related to additional drive time, and parking fees.

Early communication about events and marketing the workshops more (more emails, announcements on newsletters or WMU page, announcements on e-learning, etc.). Give advance notice (at least 3 weeks) to allow those working full-time or off campus to arrange their schedules. Having them in an online format was another suggestion.