PACE Center

Assist Instructors To Become More Effective Teachers

Goal Description:

The Professional and Academic Center for Excellence (PACE) has the major aim of promoting excellence in teaching among all instructors; faculty who are adjunct, clinical, or tenure-track, staff instructors, and graduate student teaching assistants. This in turn will result in improved student learning, which is the primary goal of a university.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Best Teaching Practices

Performance Objective Description:

PACE seeks to encourage all SHSU instructors to use evidence-based best practices in teaching and learning. This means being aware of and applying educational research in their teaching.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Teaching Practices Evaluation

Indicator Description:

PACE has been planning the Teaching Innovation Grants (TIGs) program. This will have focused small groups of faculty working to employ evidence-based practices into their courses and curriculum. TIGs will be an internal competitive process, similar to the existing successful ERG and FRG system used by ORSP. TIGs will fund planning and implementation of practices, intending to transform the institutional culture so that teaching and learning is viewed and practiced as a scholarly activity, just like research.

Criterion Description:

PACE will establish the TIGs program.

Findings Description:

A proposal for TIGs was not funded in the FY17 budget proposal for PACE. However, the Reimagining the First Year project here at SHSU will be funding a pilot year for TIGs, with an estimated $35,000, which will fund 5-8 grants, depending on their budgets.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Teaching Practices Action

Action Description:

All plans, forms, and procedures for TIGs will be developed in the summer of 2017. The first cycle of grant competition will run early in fall 2017, with completion of the funded projects by May 2018.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Developing Future Faculty

Performance Objective Description:

Nationally, graduate programs often do well at teaching students the content in their discipline, yet do not train those students to teach in the discipline. Several professional and government organizations (NSF, AACU, and Council of Graduate Schools, among others) have called for training in pedagogy to become integrated into graduate schools. The Office of Graduate Studies and PACE have partnered to initiate the Teaching Assistant Certification Series (TACS) at SHSU. This voluntary program was first offered in 16-17 to all graduate students, as an addition to departmental TA training, to prepare students who are interested in becoming future faculty. To earn the certificate, participants must be involved in six workshops, have their statement of teaching philosophy revised, and receive feedback from a teaching observation. The goal is to better prepare our graduates for careers in academia (and other careers with a teaching focus) and to improve their competitiveness in the job market by officially recognizing a dedication to improving their teaching.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Developing Future Faculty Evaluation

Indicator Description:

In the inaugural year of the TACS program, the goal was for some graduate students to participate, some to complete the program, and for students to come from graduate programs in multiple disciplines. Graduate Council approved the program, as did the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice-Provost.

Criterion Description:

Graduate students had to apply and register for the program, using an online survey. Participating in workshops was tracked by requiring student reflections after the workshops posted in a Blackboard organization. A faculty committee performed the teaching observations, and sent copies of the rubic and their comments to PACE upon completion.

Findings Description:

Fifty graduate students registered for the program, from 18 different programs. Twenty-three completed at least one component, and eleven completed all requirements and received the certificate.

Developing Future Faculty Actions

Action Description:

This program was initiated without any budget. Next academic year, the Office of Graduate Studies will fully fund the program, with PACE assisting in implementation and organization. The goal will be for at least a dozen students to complete the program.

Instructor Assessment

Performance Objective Description:

IDEA is implemented university-wide as a survey of student opinions on instructor effectiveness. Since it is well designed for formative assessment, PACE will promote use of IDEA by faculty in improving their teaching.

Instructor Assessment Evaluation

Indicator Description:

PACE offers IDEA workshops to faculty to show them how IDEA results can be used to improve teaching. Goals are that 1) in their first five years, all tenure-track faculty will participate in a workshop, and 2) all faculty participants will indicate that they understand the IDEA system and implement one teaching improvement idea from the feedback resources.

Criterion Description:

Faculty participation in IDEA workshops is tracked, which addresses goal one. A post-workshop survey will be generated to measure goal two achievement.

Findings Description:

In 2016-2017, three IDEA workshops were offered. A total of 19 faculty participated. Eleven of these were in their first five years of tenure track. Survey will be developed and implemented next year.

Instructor Assessment Actions

Action Description:

Last year, the approach was taken to market IDEA workshops to each academic college. This had a poor response. Next year, workshops return to being open to all, and advertising will spread through the PACE newsletter, AA weekly emails, the university calendar, and mentioning at other PACE events.

In spring 2017, an IDEA workshop was given for graduate student instructors at the request of Graduate Studies, with seven participants. This will now become an annual event, to help these instructors see assessment as a powerful tool for improving teaching and learning.

As a broad goal, PACE will seek to replace the common departmental practice at SHSU of only using the IDEA to evaluate faculty teaching effectiveness with a more evidence-based and expert-recommended approach. This approach will combine student evaluations, self evaluation, and peer evaluation.

Previous Objectives

Performance Objective Description:

The performance objective of "Effective Teaching" was included in assessments for previous years. With a new Director and significant realignment and expansion of PACE programs/activities, the previous measures are no longer relevant.

Previous Objective Conclusions

KPI Description:

One previous measure included the goal of increasing Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) scores of faculty. However, research on student evaluations indicates that many factors beyond the instructor's methods control the evaluation score. IDEA is intended for formative assessment not summative; to help instructors improve teaching, not to determine instructor effectiveness or compare instructors to each other. A more appropriate performance objective related to instructor evaluation is now included in the assessment plan.

A second previous measure was related to the Project-Based Learning program. PBL training has been placed on hold indefinitely for budgetary reasons. It was the most expensive program per participant that PACE offered, and the participation rate was dropping each annual cohort. In order to develop multiple new programs from PACE on a fixed budget, and reach more participants, the PBL funds were redirected.

The third previous measure was monitoring how many faculty consult with PACE. However, this is voluntary, and PACE has no control over the numbers, thus it is not a useful indicator. Two faculty consulted with PACE this year, using this confidential service to obtain input on improving their teaching.

Professional Development For SHSU Staff

Goal Description:

The goal is to provide professional development for staff that is unique compared to Human Resources or Staff Council.

Book Club

Performance Objective Description:

Book club is an annual program lasting from August to May, focused on discussions of content in a scholarly book and how to apply it to our work here at SHSU. The number of staff who participate will increase 10% each year. All staff who participate will be able to name three strategies/ideas they have implemented to improve their professional productivity.

Book Club Evaluation

Indicator Description:

The number of staff participating in the book club will be tracked. A survey needs to be developed to determine what strategies the participating staff have implemented.

Criterion Description:

Staff participation rates and survey results.

Findings Description:

For the 2015-2016 book club, based on the "8th Habit," there were 23 total participants, 17 of which were staff. For the 2016-2017 book club, based on the "Happiness Advantage," there were 64 registered. There were 30 regular participants, 20 of which were staff. The survey of staff is not yet developed. However, a focus group at the end of the book club revealed that staff valued being able to interact with faculty, and being able to select the book as a group, so these practices will be continued.

Book Club Actions

Action Description:

Survey will be developed using SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics to give to staff next year. The goal of increasing participation by 10% (two more participants) was achieved, and will be repeated.

Support New Faculty

Goal Description:

The goal is to assist new full-time faculty (tenure-track or adjunct) in awareness of the services and programs available for faculty and students on campus.

New Faculty Investment

Performance Objective Description:

Faculty attending the NFI will learn about the culture here, and become aware of all appropriate resources. More than half of all newly-hired full-time faculty at SHSU will attend the NFI.

New Faculty Investment Evaluation

Indicator Description:

An evaluation survey at the end of the NFI collects faculty opinions. NFI should objectively include all resources/programs important for faculty on campus. The number of newly hired faculty participating in NFI will be tracked.

Criterion Description:

The majority of attending faculty will rate the NFI as useful and comprehensive.

Findings Description:

Of the 84 newly hired full-time faculty at SHSU starting in fall 2016, 55 (65%) attended the NFI. On a 10-point Likert scale, faculty attending NFI rated the usefulness at an 8.5 average, with 38% selecting 10, "highly useful." On a percent scale, the faculty answered "would you recommend this voluntary program to other faculty?" at an average of 87%. When asked if any questions were not answered by the NFI, only 10% of respondents answered yes, with the majority of those questions being related to Human Resources, which has its own independent orientation.

New Faculty Investment Actions

Action Description:

For the 2017 NFI, the new EURECA center needs to be added to the agenda, and presentations related to online teaching need to be expanded. A panel of 2nd and 3rd year faculty needs to be added to help the attendees see examples of successful adjustment to the SHSU culture. An onboarding session from HR needs to be linked to the NFI. The date of the NFI needs to be moved closer to the start of the fall semester. The participation goal will be expanded from more than half of all new faculty to more than 90%.

Pathfinders Scholars Program

Performance Objective Description:

Pathfinders Scholars is a voluntary program for new faculty which matches them with tenured faculty mentors to discuss successful strategies for teaching, research, and service. A goal is for one-third of all newly hired full-time faculty to participate in the Pathfinders program.

Pathfinders Scholars Program Evaluation

Indicator Description:

Numbers of new faculty are obtained from the Dean's Offices annually.

Criterion Description:

The goal is for one-third of all newly hired full-time faculty to choose to participate in this year-long program.

Findings Description:

For the fall of 2016, 84 new full-time faculty were hired at SHSU. Of these, 24 (29%) participated in the Pathfinders program. This is almost the one-third goal.

Pathfinders Scholars Program Action

Action Description:

For the Pathfinders program, additional funding is needed to expand the program. Now that one-third of new faculty participate, the goal will be expanded to one-half.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

New Plan for Continuous Improvement was not created in 2015-2016 cycle.

Improvement Plan

Closing Summary:

add summary