

Preface

In May 2011, educators from around the world gathered in Toronto for the 1st International Conference on Faculty Development. Organized by McGill University and the University of Toronto, this conference was designed to encourage the exchange of best practices and research findings, and to build a global community of leaders dedicated to the professional development of faculty members in a variety of settings. Convinced of the importance of faculty development to achieve the goals of medical education in a global context, international faculty development leaders and educators in the health professions came together to explore how faculty development can prepare health professionals for their multiple roles as teachers and educators, leaders and managers, and researchers and scholars.

This book, which is a natural outgrowth of this conference and the deliberations that took place in large group plenaries, workshops, research presentations, and social events, aims to continue the dialogue that took place in 2011. By exploring the scope and practice of faculty development in the health professions, we hope to stimulate discussion about the current status of faculty development, ensure that research (and evidence) informs ongoing practice, and highlight future directions for research and practice.

Palmer (1998)¹ has said that the ‘growth of any craft depends on shared practice and honest dialogue among the people who do it’ (p. 144). In multiple ways, that is the goal of this book: to make sense of the practical experience and research findings that have accumulated in this community of practice in order to help move the field of faculty development forward.

Faculty development has become an increasingly common enterprise in health professions faculties and schools (and their affiliated hospitals), specialty societies, regulatory bodies, and national and international associations. As a result, this book

¹ Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The Courage to Teach*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

marks a moment in time where we can look back at past accomplishments and begin to chart future directions. While there is still much to be accomplished, it is hoped that the ideas and concepts in this book will help to inform future growth and development.

This book is divided into six parts. Following a discussion of what we mean by ‘faculty development’ and the core concepts and principles that underlie the design and implementation of diverse faculty development initiatives, we will describe the capacity of faculty development programs and activities to enhance teaching and education, leadership and management, research and scholarship, academic career development, and organizational change. Based on the available literature and experience in the field, we will then discuss a number of approaches to faculty development, including work-based learning and communities of practice, peer coaching and mentorship, workshops and seminars, fellowships and other longitudinal programs, and online learning. In addition, we will highlight practical applications and describe how faculty development initiatives can be used to promote role modeling and reflective practice, competency-based teaching and assessment, interprofessional education and practice, and international collaboration and partnerships. The design and development of a comprehensive faculty development program will also be addressed, as will the role of research, scholarship, and knowledge translation in faculty development. The final part of this book will draw upon lessons learned in each chapter and try to develop a road map for the future.

It is hoped that this portrait of faculty development will be of interest to different stakeholders, including faculty developers, educational leaders and administrators, teachers, students, researchers, and policy makers in all of the health professions who are interested in pursuing their own professional learning and that of their colleagues. Although many of the examples in this book are drawn from medicine, the general principles and strategies apply to the professional development of all health professionals. Similarly, although this book is designed for health professionals in particular, many of its concepts and insights are relevant to individuals interested in faculty development in other fields.

Each chapter in this volume is meant to review what we know about faculty development in a designated area, discuss avenues for further development and innovation, and where appropriate, provide a case example. Those who read the book from cover to cover will obtain a comprehensive overview of what faculty development can achieve. However, each chapter can also stand alone and appeal to readers with specific interests.

This book represents the collective efforts of a team of international scholars and educators who accepted the challenge of forging new territory and pushing the boundaries in their thinking and writing about faculty development. Synthesizing the current ‘state of the art’ and extending the reach of faculty development is no easy feat; however, each of the authors, who represent a broad range of clinical and educational backgrounds, has risen to this challenge, bringing meaningful insights to faculty development based on their experiences in a variety of interprofessional and international contexts.

This Springer Series focuses on innovation and change in professional education. In this case, it is the professional development of faculty members that we are addressing. We hope that this collection, which includes content that is not otherwise available, will facilitate program planning, implementation, and evaluation, move the scholarly agenda forward, and promote dialogue and debate in this important field of practice and scholarship.

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