

Ep. 073: Faculty Success through NCFDD

Podcast: <https://ProDev.illinoisstate.edu/podcast/2022/ep073.shtml>

Tenured and tenure-track faculty at Illinois State can take advantage of an exciting opportunity from the Office of the Provost and the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. NCFDD's Faculty Success Program is an intensive, twelve-week online experience which helps faculty find new direction in their careers and strike a balance between their work-life, home-life, and overall wellbeing.

We dive in-depth with what the program can provide with two colleagues who experienced it firsthand, Dr. Susan Hildebrandt and Dr. Jeongae Kang, both of the Department of Special Education. Plus, Dr. Yojanna Cuenca-Carlino joins us to explain how faculty can apply for a special scholarship to pay for this workshop experience.

Transcript

JIM: Hi there, I'm Jim. Let's Talk Teaching. Welcome to Let's Talk Teaching a podcast from the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology here at Illinois State University. I'm Jim Gee. Today we're talking about an exciting opportunity for faculty on our campus at Illinois State through the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. It's an opportunity that is being piloted with some financial support through the Office of the Provost here to talk to me about this today, but folks who are organizing this program and who have actually gone through this program, we have Dr. Yojanna Cuenca-Carlino. She's Assistant Vice President for Faculty Development, Diversity, and Learning. Yojanna, welcome back to the show.

YOJANNA: Thank you, Jim. Thanks for having us.

JIM: Also joining me today, Dr. Susan Hildebrandt, she is currently the chair of the Department of Special Education. Hi, Susan.

SUSAN: Thanks for having us, too.

JIM: And finally, last, but not least joining me is Dr. Jeongae Kang, she's an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education.

JEONGAE: Hello, thanks for letting me here.

JIM: Oh, thank you all for joining us. This is going to be an interesting conversation. I know so little about this topic. And yet I have met several people who are so excited about this program. So, Yojanna, let's start with you. Can you kind of give us an overview about the National Center for Faculty Development, and Diversity in the partnership that we have with them here at Illinois State?

YOJANNA: Absolutely. So, we actually became an institutional member for the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, short, NCFDD. In 2019, and NCFDD, it's a nationally recognized, and it's an independent organization that provides online career development and mentoring services for faculty, for postdoctoral students, but also for graduate students. And what they like is that they have a wealth of resources available

for, for faculty, and you know, the graduate students to really think about career advancement, to develop, have stronger research skills to work with time management skills, and, a, there's other topics related to leadership, and also dealing with other important components that influence like teaching. So, this is an important resource for, for faculty. And again, they have webinars where they have workshops, they also have 14-day writing challenges, which are great, you could just get and then you know, you are part of a writing community that helps support you and you set goals for your writing, and so forth. They also have an entire session of programming for doctoral students who are writing dissertations, to get them, you know, training on, on how to keep up, you know, with with the responsibilities but also how to write and be part of the stronger community. So, it helps you get better success with publications, with also secure and external grant funding. There's some, some, webinars and workshops related to that. How to increase your confidence as an independent researcher and scholar, but also thinking about from the perspective of faculty as a person, right? Like how can you develop healthier and professional relationships with your departments, with your colleagues, interacts with some campus, and in general, a broad network of support? Now, NCFDD has other programs that are at an additional cost, such as the Faculty Success Program.

JIM: And we'll link to the page on the Provost Office website that kind of talks about how do you claim that membership for NCFDD? But talking about that Faculty Success Program, and, and towards the end here, we'll talk about how faculty members here at ISU can, can, apply to get funding for that in particular, but let's talk about what the program actually does. So, Jeongae, and Susan, you you are at different points in your careers. So Jeongae, I'd like to start with you. Could you tell us a little bit about just what the program is and what you what you experienced?

JEONGAE: Sure. I'm going to say my life to keep for FSP and after FSP. My overall experience is very happy before FSP which is the equity Success program. You know, everyone, our equity members, everybody, I'm sure we are working hard. I'm one of them. I remember I was working. I was sitting in front of my computer from the morning in the afternoon. And at the end of day, I was thinking what did I achieve? Nothing. I did something but I don't know. And then, at the end of or a month, at the end of the semester, I was thinking about what did I achieve? I really work hard, but, and also, as your faculty members, we are juggling three things, research, teaching, and also services, teaching and service. Do you know we have a very clear deadline, and we are getting very immediate feedback from students and other committee members? But research is kind of very flexible, and also always negotiate trouble, if I'm okay. So, I was thinking, I really did my best in teaching, I did my best in service. I was kind of negotiating with the research. So, at one point, I was thinking getting, I was getting nervous, because I realized that my research activity didn't move along. So, at the time, thankfully, I got an, I got an email from Sue, she's here, and also, I got to know that Special Education Department and also Provost Office supporting for us to participate the opportunity Faculty Success Program. So, I volunteered. And I, after I did, I realized that I mean... I did the faculty Success Program was kind of a 14-12 week boot camp. So, we are kind of matched us based on our interest. And we got me... we get together every week. And we are kind of working together, making a strategic plan and we coach. I have to share what is my plan and what I did during the week. So that

means I really needed to be on the top of what, what I'm doing and I also should be very intentional of what is my goal and how I'm moving on. And also, another thing is because of the network, my group members are pre-tenured faculty members in the nation, and they are truly the same people as me. So, pretend you I and also based on my interest, they are female, and also they have some kids. So, we are kind of sharing, we are celebrating together we are sharing. Support was something like so we the community, I was so excited and also getting skills, we learn the every skills every week, one by one. And I was a practice that I reflected myself for what I did and how I'm moving to work. So, FSP was talking about their motto is working smart, not hard. So, I was thinking in the past, I was very nervous. And even though I spent the same hours, but I was not happy. But right now I see. I am controlling my research agenda and activities. They are not controlling me. I'm the one controlling me. Yeah,

JIM: That sounds that sounds wonderful. And of course, you know, my teaching background, I come from a very particular profession. That's how I got into into teaching on the university level research was never really, there was a production component from time to time, but research has never really been that sort of thing. As, as, you and I found it very interesting you were talking about not only does it kind of keep you honest and on task, because you know, you have to explain this to other people. But did you find that there was some benefit in actually having to explain it to other people like you were able to clarify in your own mind what you were accomplishing?

JEONGAE: Mm hmm, exactly, so, there is one time there are some time to when we are doing when we are having a meeting there are some portions you what do, you do. What did you achieve? So, and at the time we are kind of explain how I did this one, but what is my feeling and how emotion bore in? And I think one of the thing I remember from the training, the webinar was about talking about my, our journey as a professional. So, chapter by chapter, by the years, and I have been talking about based on the guidance, and I did my homework and I talked about I did this one and I really want to work for our students and I want to thrive in researcher teacher. And then I realized that if I want to my goal is really thriving in this job and then means I really enjoy what I'm doing. So rather than reactive, I really needed to proactive and really strategy. So yeah, this opportunity gave me... It taught me a lot of things. So, I really appreciate...

JIM: That, that sounds wonderful. And Yojanna, we had talked before in a previous episode about, you know, our hypothesis that that a happy teacher is a more effective teacher and Happy Teachers equal happier students. And, and from what I'm hearing here, Jeongae, it's not just being happy about the teaching side of your life, but it's again, holistic, is that, is that whole thing? Susan, you were doing... We're recording this for everyone at home, this is an audio podcast. Susan, you're doing a lot of nodding there. Well, well, Jeongae was talking. Could you share a little bit about what your experience was like going through this and then maybe we can also talk about putting on your department chair hat for a second, and taking a look at it from, from, that perspective, too.

SUSAN: Absolutely. One of the things that when people asked how I enjoyed the Faculty Success Program, one of the things that I always come back to is I wish I'd had this in 2006, when I came out of grad school, I'd have saved myself a lot of wasted energy. I imagined myself in the position that Jeongae described earlier in the beginning of her comments, of sitting and staring at the screen, and not knowing how to start, even though I'd been through a doctorate program, it's still coming out the other side, and that, that work that we do so independently, and need to do independently, even if you're on a writing team, you still have that independent work that you have to do. You're accountable to your students, immediately, you're accountable to your committee members, immediately, if you don't do the work, it shows immediately. Scholarship, it's just me that knows it. So, if I miss a deadline with myself, nobody else knows it. And it's easy to kind of internalize that sense of failure. I think FSP did a really remarkable job of reframing those sorts of thoughts, activities, helping give direction to the energy that we do have, and helping us focus that energy. And then it provides an accountability circle that Jeongae had mentioned with three other colleagues from across the country. I don't know what magical elixir or potion that they use to create these groups. But I'm still in conversation every other week with my three other members. We would talk every week during the 14 week experience, but we've continued those discussions. And these are people who have language teaching backgrounds like I do, they're in their same phase of their career as I am, we're all in our 50s we are all, have experiences, chairs or directors of centers. So they did a really great job matching us and helping us kind of set the stage for that longer term community too, we can get kind of isolated. Sometimes even within our departments, if we're the only one that specializes in what we specialize in, can be a little isolating. So, it really helps with that community too, to be able to discuss the things that are important to us at that moment. And I learned a lot about time management myself that has helped me in my role as interim chair.

JIM: Okay.

SUSAN: Help me be more productive in my, my, administrative work. One of the good habits that they promote and ask us all to do is to write 30 minutes a day, I wish I could say I've kept up with that every single day, I will own that I have not. But I still do it a couple times a week. And I've still held on to that and have made good progress on on articles that that are in my pipeline. So it really was a win win for me as a scholar as a as and as a chair as well, putting on that chair hat. I think this was one of the best investments we've made as a department all year, there were five or six of us Jeongae that participated in the program? And I think all of us really came out the other side with a positive experience with some evidence of the work that we've been putting in and some some enriching discussion with with people who have become friends.

JIM: What other for either of you, if you could, you know, if we had the time machine of teaching and learning, I'm still working on it. But if we actually had a time machine where you could go back and talk to your younger self, still in grad school even what's one piece of advice that you got out of this program that you would have given yourself?

SUSAN: One of the most powerful things that I think was part of the program is that holistic part, they didn't just treat us as scholars, they treated us as people. And they talked about a "no" committee. So a group of trusted friends, colleagues that will help you with think through invitations to service, all of us get a lot of invitations to service and all 99% of that service is important and is going to get, get the job of the university and the profession done. But we can't do everything. And early in my career, I saw a lot of shiny things and pursued all of that, and then got spread really thin. And then I didn't have the time or the energy physically or emotionally, to invest in my own scholarship, it was always last. So that idea of a "no" committee is really powerful. And also, the idea of, I think self-care is a much used phrase these days. But they had a robust definition of self-care, I think that I found powerful. And that reminder that we are whole people. And we do need to exercise we knew we do need to eat well, we do need to get our 9878 hours of sleep. And when you neglect those things, other things fall apart, too. So those were my two biggest takeaways that I wish I could have whispered into my ear in 2006, or before,

JEONGAE: I am a mom of a young child. And during for last two years, during COVID, she was learning at home and I was teaching at home and people, FSP, I was sitting all the time and I didn't have quality time with her. Because every agenda, every To Do List, never you get just a or day. But after taking after learning and going through FSP, I did a strategy plan and I was kind of I was kind of intentionally cleaning out what I needed to do every day. And then I tried my whole age to shut down by 5pm. So that I can have a quality time with my family. So, thanks to FSP I feel like I make no balance not only about research, teaching service, but also about between my personal life and professional life.

JIM: So, Yojanna work will talk here in a moment about how members of the Illinois State University community can be a part of this program going forward. But before we do that, for those who are listening, and may be considering this further, Jeongae, or Susan, do you have a piece of advice for people to be successful doing this Faculty Success Program actually going through the 12 week process?

SUSAN: They give a lot of ideas and a lot of good habits for folks to develop. But you may find that some just don't fit your needs or fit what you need right now. And I they're not proselytizing and saying that you need to do all of them. They encourage you to explore them to play with them to to to be creative. But there are some things that just just didn't work for me as they were listed. But I could figure out another way to make them work for me, slightly askew of what they were, what they were describing. They were based in really valuable lessons and valuable skills for us to take away but there's still that flexibility to personalize and take what you need at that moment.

JIM: So, Yojanna, how can members of the Illinois State University faculty take advantage of it this year?

YOJANNA: There has been a lot of emails that I have received from faculty all across the university inquiring about funds for participating in this program. So, as I mentioned, this is not covered as part of our institutional membership. The actual tuition for this for this program is \$4,500. So, what we could do, what we decided to do is do a pilot program

where we the Provost Office will provide scholarships for up to eight faculty members, but we will provide a scholarship to up to \$2,800 with a commitment that then the Dean of the college that the faculty is from will provide the rest of the tuition. So that's what we're doing this year. And FSD the Faculty Success Program is offered three times per year while we're doing this pilot is for this summer, it starts may 15 through August 6 It's a 12 week program as, as, Jeongae, Sue talked about um so what we're trying to do is we we open the registration on a little before February first, I think it was at the end of January, people will have up to March 1 to submit the application for funds from the Office of the Provost. Obviously, you know, it might be competitive depending on how many people apply for the grants for from the Office of the Provost. And then the application is very simple. You ask questions as to why do you want to participate in this? How can you, you know, how is how do you think this is going to help you move forward in your career, and then they have to attach an endorsement letter from their chair and signed by the Dean saying that, yes, they will support this faculty going through these programs. So that's that the application process will probably take you less than 10 minutes to complete, or 15 minutes on, and then that's it. So, we're going to review the applications that come in and then make the session. So, by March 15, we hope to be sending the letters, letting you know, either you got it or not, at this time, if funds available, perhaps later, so that faculty could, you know, go ahead and register faculty will be responsible for the registration. So once they get the funds, if they get the funds, we will transfer those funds to their department, and they have to work with their chair to complete the registration and pay for the program. The other thing that will be a requirement is, let's say that I fund eight faculty members this summer, one of my goals is to actually create a cohort of those 8 faculty that goes through the program, and then have find a way of them getting back to the university either by helping us promote the program, by they themselves, maybe having a panel or writing a blog, or facilitating maybe a writing group, something that will give back so the whole idea is that cohort one that goes through it can then later support all the other cohorts and kind of grow this kind of community at ISU. I'm opening this for, to tenure track faculty or tenured faculty, right. Just as examples. Susan, you know, Sue, she said tenured, you know, Professor. Right. she has, she's a full professor, Jeongae here is an Assistant Professor. So, this is beneficial for anyone at older career. So, for this pilot, um, you know, if you're interested, go ahead and submit your application. And again, it will be competitive, depending on how many apply, but as a pilot, right, and then from there, we'll see, you know, hopefully we'll get secure funding for later on.

JIM: So, we'll link to all of that information online. There's a there are a couple news stories that have already been published about it. But also, will link directly to the very, very in depth page on the Provost Office website that has all the information about what you need to do before you click that apply button and what you need to do during the application process. So that sounds really exciting. Yojanna, Jeongae, Susan, thank you so much for joining us today.

GUESTS: Thank you. Thank you.

JIM: And that's all the time we have for this episode of Let's Talk Teaching. Find out more about this program and how you can apply to get funding for it. Go to our website,

CTLT.Illinois State.edu. You can click on the podcast link on the homepage that will take you to this episode. And we'll have links to all of that stuff. So, for my guests it for all of my colleagues here at the Center for Teaching Learning and Technology until we talk again, happy teaching.