

# *Problems of Faculty Development and Solutions in Local University*

## *An Example for Jilin Agricultural University*

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**Abstract**—Faculty development is considered as effective strategies and important experience, which can improve the basic ability and promote the sustainable development of university. Local universities are facing problems and challenges such as imbalance of teaching and academic development, weakness of subject consciousness of faculty development, lack of teachers' organizational development, localization about experience of foreign teachers' development, etc. This paper for the above problems combined with the reality of local universities and based on the practice of faculty development in Jilin Agricultural University, through confirming orientation and concept, functions and plans to strengthen the overall design of faculty development work, by starting the new teachers' training project, famous pulpit, afternoon tea party, workshop, open classroom, summer social practice, bore teachers' training and access, etc., promotes the implementation on faculty development plans, and on this basis proposes overall design and development strategies about the work of faculty development in local university: establish a mechanism to promote faculty development; design the reasonable project on faculty development; search for support from school policy; strengthen the team construction about work of faculty development.

**Keywords**—local university; faculty development; problems; solution

### I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the most important resource in a university and the foundation of the existence and development for it. Faculty development is considered as effective strategies and important experience that can improve the basic ability and promote the sustainable development of university. The research and practice of systematic faculty development in university began from America. Its emphasis experienced changes from academic development to more extensive fields, such as individual comprehensive development and professional development. Before the 1970s, the main form of faculty development gives priority to academic holidays and activities that improve academic level. Since the 1970s, faculty development is defined as: the comprehensive development of teachers —as a person, a profession and a member of academia[1]. Faculty development is that individual teachers have positive changes in cognition, attitudes, skills, culture behavior and other aspects, focusing on the needs of the

professional role, which is under the internal and external environment. It concludes professional development, teaching development, organizational development, personal development, etc. [2].

With the development of popularization on higher education, the phenomenon of excessive use on teachers is serious. The problem of talent cultivation quality, especially local university is relatively obvious. Generally the number of faculty is insufficient, the structure of education and title is not optimized, the overall level is not high and the problem is relatively obvious. Since 12th five-year universities have set up faculty development institutions in order to cope with demands. Faculty development institutions are now in the initial period, the discussion on overall design for the work and the development solution has important significance. It can promote the development of teachers and institutions, and on this basis promote development of students and schools.

### II. THE MAIN PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACED WITH FACULTY DEVELOPMENT IN LOCAL UNIVERSITY

#### A. Imbalance on Teaching and Academic Development

In recent years, with the "connotation" and "quality" having paid more and more attention, teaching and teachers' status are gradually enhanced in the field of higher education and university affairs. Teacher's evaluation system and salary allotment is still oriented in scientific research and achievement, teaching lacks impact on it. This leads to great difference on the power of teachers' teaching and academic development, and then leads to the imbalance of teachers' teaching and academic development. At the same time, this kind of evaluation system dominated by administrative agencies regards the teacher as a tool and mean, in order to improve the quality and efficiency of education in universities, create scientific research achievements, bring praise, and obtain title of honor. [3]For example: the ability of standing on the platform is weak, study of teaching is not enough, discipline knowledge, teaching knowledge and technical knowledge integration is not in place.

### *B. Weakness on Objective Consciousness of Faculty Development*

Faculty development basically depends on the teachers' subjectivity; the subjectivity of development contributes to strengthen subsistence power for faculty. At the same time, the strong subsistence power promotes the development of their subjectivity in return. At present, the objective consciousness of faculty development is weak in university. Teachers, who know and are engaged in the practical educational activities, are lack of consciousness on subject status, capacity and value. This kind of understanding has great influence on the development of personality and the level of self-education.

### *C. Lack of Teachers' Organizational Development*

With teachers more and more "busy", teaching organization at the basic level and its function are generally decline. Teachers' organizational development has also fallen into the "desert" in ways mainly in the defective organization system, loose organization structure, lack of organization culture, etc. Especially the construction of the teaching organizations at the basic level needs more attention, to restore and strengthen.

### *D. The Localization of Foreign Teachers' Development Experience Needs More Efforts*

Although foreign teachers have rich development experience and lots of articles, it needs a certain time to guide the faculty development work in domestic. In cases of different institutional environment, different stages of development in higher education, different in the teacher group's current situation and demands, the task of foreign experience's localization is very difficult. We need to study diligently and combine the development of university in our country, in order to make correct choices, construct faculty development's institution and strategy system with Chinese characteristics.

## III. PRACTICAL EXPLORATION AND THINKING OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

### *A. The Integrated Design on Faculty Development Work*

#### *1) Orientation and concept*

Orientation and concept of faculty development depends on school-running orientation and future development strategy of a university, it reflects the value orientation of universities and directly determines direction and emphasis of faculty development work. If the orientation is not accurate, it will bring a series of doubts and hesitation which contains orientation about oneself, discipline, students, theory and practice.[4] In order to promote faculty development and teaching ability, Jilin Agricultural University sets up Center for Teaching and Learning Development by investigating the situation of faculty development work in domestic universities, fully integrating functions and resources between related and internal departments. The center is defined as "teaching promotion and service organization with faculty development as the core, and made teachers' training, career planning, teaching research and the exchange, evaluation of teaching quality and support and guarantee as an incorporated part." The four distinct directions of faculty development on this basis are

that teacher's training, research and exchange, quality evaluation and support service. The concept of faculty development in Jilin Agricultural University is that: making excellent teachers excellent; respecting teachers as a supporter, helper, server and facilitator of faculty development; insisting on promoting resources advantages transform into development advantages, scientific research advantages into teaching ability.

#### *2) Frame and plan of the work*

The integrated goal of faculty development work is to promote, help and support growth and development of teachers, promote the integrated level of teachers and teaching quality improving, promote scientific research advantages transform into teaching ability, and then plays a role in teachers' training and communication in regional universities. The target task planned in the five years is as follows:

##### *a) To establish systematic training system*

As teachers' characteristics and development needs: teachers who are new, in the early, mid and different stages of career development, we implement multi-level, multi-type, covered the entire career of teachers' training programs and projects to cultivate and promote ability of faculty development. And we gradually establish the database of teachers' information, teachers' personal growth file and a systematic system of training to help teacher plan career and promote teaching and professional development.

##### *b) To establish an open research and exchange platform*

For the teachers' "teaching", students' "learning", and faculty development theory, we carry out the intensive study to promote the modernization of educational concept; we carry out a variety of academic communication and access to strengthen the promotion of advanced education concept, teaching method and professional skills; we build communication platform in the campus by means of teaching discussion, salon, afternoon tea and other series of activities to promote the communication and experience sharing between professional teachers from different disciplines and gradually establish an open research platform to satisfy the needs of teachers' growth and development.

##### *c) To establish a long-term mechanism of quality evaluation*

"Teachers' evaluation should be a regular task to ensure obtaining persistent information reflecting faculty development. We should carry out scientific evaluation, reflect the results objectively, and promote professional development of teachers effectively." [5] On the basis of self-assessment about undergraduate major, we carry out in-depth investigation and diagnosis teachers' teaching and students' learning state by an emphasis on class teaching quality evaluation. Depending on the data platform of teaching basic status from the Ministry of Education, carry out status of teaching data collection, statistics, analysis and released in the whole school; We should carry out works on special supervision evaluation and students' information feedback, establish a long-term mechanism of quality evaluation and guarantee in order to provide the reference for management departments in the school.

#### *d) To establish personalized service system*

In order to satisfy the needs of different disciplines, types and development stages, we need to directly carry out teaching consultation, educational technology support and all kinds of resources sharing, etc., and establish personalized service system by focusing on the main activities of teachers' teaching, scientific research and problems in the process of teachers' growth.

#### *e) To establish professional work team*

On the basis of the existing institutions on daily work and academic supervisors, we establish expert consultative committee, hire famous teachers at all levels, well-known experts and scholars from intramural and external universities. They provide consultation for the center, as speakers or reviewing experts of important training activities; Hire the excellent young teachers as directors and assistants of part-time project, they are responsible for organization and implement on part of the faculty development project. We establish a professional work team guided by experts and counselors, full-time and part-time combination.

### *B. Practical Exploration of Faculty Development*

#### *1) Carry out basic training on new teachers' teaching skills with focusing on how to give a good course*

In order to cultivate basic teaching skills of new teachers, have good basic skills on class-teaching, and promote the fast growth of young teachers and pursuit of excellence teaching, our university starts "new teachers' training project". On the basis of pre-service training, we develop implementing plan about the new teachers' training project. Focusing on how to have a good course, we carry out training program on new teachers' basic teaching ability which contains teaching design, class-teaching, courseware designing, students' assessment and evaluation, document writing, using of library network resources. Identify the teachers at the training; the results will be used as important basis of the title appraisal and assessment.

We support the first round of teaching process for the new teacher through all kinds of teaching research activities throughout the semester. We help teachers understand the class and students, improve basic teaching skills, such as teaching design, organization of class-teaching, evaluation of students, help teachers learn to deal with the relationship between teaching and scientific research, have solid foundation of faculty development and professional growth for new teacher.

#### *2) Carry out a series of teaching activities with basic principles of active participation*

##### *a) The famous pulpit*

Famous pulpit is the program on the type of lecture and report set up by center. The main purpose is to promote advanced teaching concepts, define the situation that university faces with, and promote teachers' career plans and reform of teaching and education. We also provide thoughts leading, situation analysis and reflection on space through subjective report and interactive questions and answers. Since September, 2014, there are 8 famous pulpits conducted, accumulated more than 700 people participate in. It has positive influence on

promoting teachers' career plans and reform of teaching and education.

##### *b) Afternoon tea party*

Afternoon tea party provides a place and platform to teachers in order to exchange teaching experience freely, discuss teaching problems, solutions and share life experience. There is one theme in each afternoon tea party which is conducted by part-time teacher. Generally there are 1 or 2 teachers sharing their views, opinions and experience, all the teachers at the party communicating with each other. Afternoon tea party is a kind of loose and free communicating activities, there are 8 times conducted, accumulated more than 700 people participate in. The party attracts many teachers coming from University of Chinese Medicine, Jilin University of Finance and Economic, Changchun University of Finance and Economic participating in it. Most of the teachers like the relaxed atmosphere and have a lot of harvests.

##### *c) The workshop*

The teaching workshop is a series of activities combined with study, discussion and practice for a teaching topic. The way generally is trainer's explanation and guidance, interaction and discussion between trainers and teachers or teachers and teachers. The main content of teaching workshop focuses on the teaching mode and strategies in the application and promotion of teaching progress. The workshop of "the learner-centered approach" which is advanced by Xiaoyang Zhu, Canada is welcomed by many teachers of the workshop. The teachers at the workshop have in-depth discussions on helping each other and PI teaching method. The group discussion is fierce, atmosphere is active, the effect is significant and the teachers' guidance is targeted.

##### *d) Open classroom*

We build platform of learning, communication, discussion and sharing for the teachers of the whole school and carry out open-classroom activities in order to improving our school teachers' teaching level, promote the reform of teaching methods and means and play a role in teaching demonstration of excellent teachers. We choose famous teachers in our school who are winners of all kinds of teaching competition, heads of high-quality and excellent courses, excellent young teachers. The activity is part or full open to the teachers of the whole school. There are several ways to found "open classroom", such as designated by faculty development center, recommended by supervisor, college or teachers themselves, etc. The classroom is divided into two parts, listening, evaluation and discussion. The way of listening is in the class, according to the teaching schedule; Evaluation and discussion are organized in stages in the principle of similar subject or method. There were 13 excellent teachers come from 13 colleges participated in the first open classroom in 2014. In this semester there are 13 colleges and 20 teachers, accumulating more than 300 people listening to the class.

#### *3) Based on school-enterprise cooperation, organize young teachers to take exercise in practice*

We should stick the principle of "combining with college students' social practice", "combining with teaching", "combining with scientific research" and set up practical

platform for young teachers to the enterprises and institutions and basic units. In order to make teachers be similar with management, production, trade and service processes of the relevant units and promote teaching practical ability of young teachers in scientific research to serve local economic construction. There were 56 people taking practical exercise in the summer of 2014 and 49 had passed.

*4) Focusing on promotion of teaching and academic ability, carry out core teachers' training and access*

We carry out the study of core teachers' training and work of access and communication through the combination between long-term and short-term training, provincial and national training and school's training, theoretical study and practical exercise, tutor's guidance and self-regulated learning. There were 104 people in short-term training, 20 people in national network training of high quality, 7 visiting scholars, and 7 people visited and the cooperated study in the domestic over the past year. We received 7 people from different levels studied abroad and 6 people were trained overseas.

*5) With the purpose of supported services, promote the improvement of teaching ability*

In order to satisfy the needs of different disciplines, different types, different development stages, we need to directly carry out teaching consultation, educational technology support and all kinds of resources sharing, etc., and establish personalized service system by focusing on the main activities of teachers' teaching, scientific research and problems in the process of teacher growth. We have obtained More than 200 questionnaires on teachers' demands and more than 50 pieces of opinions through Afternoon Teatime Party and the meeting for new teachers, and improve related work according to some suggestions.

We develop the website of faculty development center and systematic platform for teachers' training and promote the information level; We are sharing active videos, documents, competitive videos and PPT of activity to provide teaching reference; provide middle service for students' feedback for 1 teacher and help teachers obtain feedback from students to improve teaching; As the platform of faculty development and cultivated service approved by Jilin Province, we provide service for faculty development, at the same time strive to impact universities in the province. There are 140 people from

other universities participating in the afternoon teatime party and reports of famous pulpit.

*C. Solutions and Thinking on Faculty Development*

Universities generally improve the quality of teachers and make it as the key and core work to pull the schooling level. Faculty development of university has become tendency of educational reform and development about international teachers. Facing with the expanding teachers who are young teachers as the main body, increasing of degree has already not been the main demand. But the most important work is: keep teaching and scientific research balance, release the vitality of teachers, arouse the initiative consciousness and plan career development reasonably. The author puts forward the following solutions of faculty development in local university. At first, establish a set of mechanism promoting faculty development, which contains system of teachers' evaluation and training, in order to guide teachers towards scientific development, balanced development and healthy development.; Secondly, design faculty development project reasonably, pay attention to the combination of leading and desiring type; Thirdly, Seek support from school policy, increase the investment in manpower and financial resources to the faculty development, and pay attention to the performance of accounting. In the end, strengthen the construction of faculty development team, establish a high level and professional work team, at the same time combine the power from each side and help faculty development together.

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