Hello Unilearners and “Forumers”

We would like to continue to follow up our discussions with you in relation to the draft paper we presented at the AALL conference (well done organizers – it was very productive and well-organised event). For those who were not there and to refresh the memories of others, we have reproduced part of the “Where to from here?” section of the paper below. The full paper is attached to this posting.

The process of developing and delivering the “Learning from our Students” workshops has demonstrated the collaborative nature of the AALL community and confirmed the role of LAS practitioners as actively engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning. However, one cannot help but wonder why the sorts of issues raised by students in this paper continue to be raised despite the evidence in the literature and the work of LAS practitioners and others working with academic staff. Successful workshops with groups of committed academic staff do not necessarily guarantee institution-wide changes in teaching practice so perhaps for the LAS practitioner we again return to ponder our role and influence in our universities and the possible theoretical frameworks that underpin this role. The authors would like to conclude with a series of questions for ongoing discussion with other LAS practitioners.

• Is it only through an institutional commitment to teaching and learning driven by strong leadership that institution-wide changes to teaching practice can be changed (Radloff, 2005, Yorke, 2006)?
• Should all LAS and academic staff development practitioners be physically and/or organisationally located (embedded) in university faculties (Green, Hammer & Stephens, 2005)?
• Is it a lack of an agreed theoretical framework or definition of the work we do as a ‘discipline’ or ‘community of practice’ that is preventing more widespread influence in our institutions (Percy & Stirling, 2005; O’Regan, 2005; Milnes, 2005)?
• Is it only through research and publication of their research that LAS practitioners are able to have institution-wide influence in matters of teaching and learning (Chanock and Vardi, 2005)?

We hope to promote continued discussions about the learning issues that are facing students as well as the most effective methods of influencing teaching and learning practice across our institutions. We are interested in any comments you may have.

Cheers
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  • Research help [3]

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