The Open Studio: Extending the Traditional Workshop

How do we help faculty create time and space to reflect on and apply what they learned in a traditional workshop? Debra Lohe, Ph.D., Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning at Saint Louis University

UNSTRUCTURED HANDS-ON WORK SESSIONS
Unstructured, hands-on working sessions offered as follow-up to traditional one-off workshops, open only to attendees of the initial workshop. Scheduled a week or two after the initial workshop.

GOAL SETTING & CONVERSATIONS
Faculty bring course materials to work on, a laptop, and anything else they need to adapt workshop lessons or concepts to their own course(s).

Sessions may include:
- Initial goal-setting
- Brief discussion of key workshop concepts
- Peer-to-peer feedback on course materials
- One-on-one consultations with teaching center staff

CREATE A DEDICATED TIME FOR FACULTY
- To create dedicated time for faculty to apply workshop lessons to their own teaching situation
- To address the fact that traditional workshops often spark ideas but not necessarily pedagogical change
- To provide evidence of a traditional workshop's impact

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET STARTED?
Open Studios are low-investment, requiring only the cost of staff member time and little preparation.

All you need are:
- A flexible meeting space
- Center staff member(s) on hand to pose and field questions as needed
- Dedicated time for individualized, hands-on work

DOES IT WORK?
Yes! Typically, we draw a fairly small number of participants (<10 per Open Studio), but the payoff for them seems high.

In follow-up surveys, 100% of respondents:
- Indicate that the Open Studio is a good use of time
- Rate the Open Studio as excellent or good
- Agree or strongly agree that the Open Studio helped them to clarify, prioritize, and apply ideas from the earlier workshop
- Agree or strongly agree they would attend future Open Studio sessions

OTHER KEY RESULTS
- Center staff can see evidence of a workshop's impact on faculty behavior
- Faculty often schedule follow-up consultations with teaching center staff
- Sessions lead to unit-level workshop invitations

TRANSFERABILITY
The model is flexible, multi-functional, and easily tailored; all institution and center types can use it.

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