Consultation for teaching and learning at UC Berkeley

Please join the **Research IT Reading Group** for a presentation by Cynthia Schrager (Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education), and Richard Freishtat and Yukiko Watanabe (Senior Consultants, Center for Teaching and Learning) for a discussion of last year’s teaching consultation survey. This survey captures many topics common to both teaching and research consultants, such as the importance of making referrals between groups, the desirability and challenges around sharing information, and issues surrounding consulting service evaluation.

**When:** Thursday, April 9 from noon - 1pm  
**Where:** 200C Warren Hall, 2195 Hearst St (see building access instructions on parent page).
**Event format:** The reading group is a brown bag lunch (bring your own) with a short ~20 min talk followed by ~40 min group discussion.

Please review the following in advance of the 4/9 meeting:  
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Teaching Consultation Survey Findings 06132014.pdf  
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**Presenters:**

Cynthia Schrager (Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education)  
Richard Freishtat (Senior Consultant, Center for Teaching and Learning)  
Yukiko Watanabe (Senior Consultant, Center for Teaching and Learning)

**Participants:**

Aaron Culich (Research IT)  
Aron Roberts (Research IT)  
Ben Hubbard (ETS)  
Bill Allison (IST-API)  
Brooks Ambrose (DLab)  
Chris Hoffman (Research IT)  
Chris Paciorek (SPELLING) (SCF, Research IT)  
Claudia von Vacano (Berkeley Digital Humanities Program)  
Daphne Ogle (ETS)  
David Greenbaum (Research IT)  
Jenn Stringer (ETS)  
John Hayes (ETS)  
John Lowe (Research IT)  
Judy Stern (ETS)  
Justin Lipp (ETS)  
Mark Chiang (IST-Enterprise Data)  
Patrick Schmitz (Research IT)  
Paula Miranda (ETS)  
Quinn Dombrowski (Research IT)  
Rick Jaffe (Research IT)  
Steve Masover (Research IT)  
Steven Williams (ETS)  
Zane Cooper (Haas)

David: Research IT very interested in building cross-cutting community for consulting around teaching, learning, research  

Figuring out what the landscape looks like  

Heard about the teaching/learning survey, interested in that perspective and where the campus is
Will follow with broader conversation about opportunities

Challenge and opportunity in trying to figure out how to do more things together

Cynthia: Center for Teaching and Learning, current unit less than 3 years old

Emerged from Office of Educational Development

Invited to think of a virtual hub, collaborative across distributed space

Wanted to invite academic partners across campus, faculty-facing in teaching and learning space

Wanted to link to existing work

Created mashup of academic partners; Richard has led this for almost 3 years

Last year, identified core group of 30 individuals working across 8 units (including ETS) working in teaching/learning, getting baseline data about rich expertise, type of consultation topics, where depths of expertise are

Lots of silted knowledge

Exploring opportunities for collaboration, baseline willingness for collaboration

Richard: Mashup of Academic Partners — no one laughed, IT room; usually someone laughs and asks what it is

Library, ETS, student learning centers — don’t know what everyone is doing, but everyone has interconnections

No coordination or discussion

Formed MUAP, opened it as widely as possible, for 1.5 - 2 years, new unit would host every month

First half-hour, host shares who they are and what they do (staff, mission, vision, goals, etc.)

Then, present pressing challenges / opportunities — use group as brainstorming partnership (e.g. how to get faculty to show up)

At some point, everyone had their turn; where do we go from here?

Past fall, decided monthly meeting doesn’t make much sense, evolving into question of how to professionally develop selves and work

Moving to once a semester format (May during RRR week) — professional development forum

Cathy Koshland, aligning work with campus initiatives

Chair of academic senate — how to communicate with faculty

Chair of undergraduate teaching group, how to connect teaching / research

10-minute talk, half hour open at the end
Look inward at group, how to tap one another for future participation in professional development fora

Everyone invited to MUAP, faculty don’t necessarily care about the unit they’re going to for help, they just want help

Tuesday 5/5 from 11-1

Cynthia: As teaching and learning and research become more tech intensive, role of academic partner is more important and more complex

Older generations of faculty, have “sage on stage”, “one man band” model

Faculty don’t understand value that staff add to the partnership

Helping faculty understand our value as a partner in a way that’s respectful of faculty space, autonomy

Yukiko: Interested in what kind of consultation goes on for teaching

Evaluation assessment specialist, so volunteered to gather data

Where do instructional designers live? What unit, how many?

What topic? Most frequently requested topics?

Training needs around campus policies

System for referral & info sharing

Impact, evaluation — do people track it?

Did a survey across academic units, 37 total consultants, 30 completed survey

Center for Teaching and Learning — had 3 consultants, many programs just had 1; ETS had 9, BRCO had 7, Library had 4

Consultation topics: pedagogy #1 (teaching strategies, classroom engagement, learning outcomes), #2 instructional technology, #3 student research & writing, #4 experiential learning

Where do faculty go for consultation topics

Lots of overlaps — faculty don’t specifically choose a group, they take whatever help they can get

Should think about how to make connections, refer to each other

Some consultants may need to know more about campus policies & guidelines

Do consultants feel comfortable addressing campus policies? Often not.

Do faculty ask about campus policy? Request frequency isn’t all that high.

Academic integrity, accommodations — have been putting more resources in ETS, CTL; may be a connection between identifying these things and putting in more resources
Most people who are requested to provide consultation on these topics do feel comfortable with those topics.

New mechanisms — information sharing/referral system, be easier to refer to each other.

Share info about hot topics in teaching.

Should we create a shared mechanism for consultation referrals? Yes - 68.

Some concerns in information sharing; lots of “maybes”.

Available tools, challenges in timing of information sharing, logistics, how frequent should they be updated.

How meaningful would it be? Hard to predict what it will be used for until you see data patterns.

By having shared understanding of what kind of expertise exists where, this leads to better referrals.

Capturing impact of consultations — still struggling, need to show impact to campus.

Not many explicitly make goals part of the meeting.

More than half track number of consultations.

Harder to track impact on pedagogy, student learning — not tracking at all.

Document reviews, anecdotal evidence, surveys, email tracking (from faculty, students), observations.

David: If you add up all groups you surveyed, do you have approximate sense of number of faculty consultation engagements in a year?

Yukiko: Do have a system for tracking for CTL, not all partners necessarily do it.

Cynthia: Was an effort a few years ago for tracking and categorizing faculty consultations; was extremely hard to implement.

Hunger to collaborate that exceeds our capacity to do it on the ground.

Trying to come up for common classifications for interactions, units do things differently.

Some resistance in some pockets; data seen as sensitive.

Wouldn’t it be great if you know that someone’s working with same faculty member.

Faculty may be seeking out consultation due to weak teaching evaluations; concern about protecting confidentiality.

Ben: For ITLGers, pursue around service now and ticketing for One IT, but need to go beyond boundaries of IT orgs, have to work together.

Jon: This is a way to measure impact; want to be able to measure that systematically.

Ben: Types of consultations we’re doing, knowledge we want staff to have; want to think across organizations.
Jenn: Was done year and a half ago; would be interesting to see if this has shifted, especially re: consultation and effectiveness

Have been doing more one-on-one consultations than before in ETS

Cynthia: If we administer again, may ask people to tell us how they’re currently tracking data, a lot can be done to encourage common practice

Collected all ways of tracking, suggested common model, could get a lot of alignment quickly without having to be heavy-handed

Aaron: What would you do differently that you can’t change now?

Cynthia: Great collaboration with ETS; part of this is we report to the same person

Challenges of distributed environments

Richard: If we could streamline it, it’d be “everybody start from scratch”

Can’t just make everyone change

We all know there will be some changes, so how do we all find ways to change that bring us closer together, but still works for the goals of units

Chris: Several of us are working on starting consulting services now

Working on research data management program; consulting is part of the services we want to offer

Wrestling with how to do referrals across organizations, not just sending people around in circles

Cynthia: You have opportunity o do things differently; we had all these units that already had their own consultation

We’d have a common request/intake request portal if we could start from scratch

Then, allow someone to triage the person to the right unit / expertise

Would be very hard to bring that about now

Ben: Service Now might be an opportunity there.

Yukiko: Much easier to think through evaluation from the start when you’re beginning
Steve: Data comes from perspective of providers of consultation to faculty; can you speak to what mechanisms there are, if any, for faculty expressing unmet needs?

Yukiko: Faculty who don’t come to us, it’s hard to track those things unless we do a town hall meeting / focus group

Steve: Have you tried or considered something like that?

Jenn: Have done a few things, have been trying to bring people together to offer collaborative services

Team did faculty interviews, talked about sharing at future reading group around personas of faculty type behaviors

Types of people, kinds of needs they have

Just brought in consulting company to do key stakeholder interviews, ran two faculty workshops to get to teaching and technology needs

Faculty want space to learn from each other, people to be there to hold their hand when they want, and they want a relationship with those people

They really wanted a mentor and a partner, even though they often don’t behave that way

Cynthia: Challenge of portal model — that’s the opposite

Faculty develop relationships with people, they’re the go-to people

Networks we form with each other become important; we become the portal

Ben: Had a good conversation about how to get faculty engaged

Opportunities around communities of practice

Similar opportunities to MUAP with faculty/staff engagement side

Develop tracks that are really appealing for faculty, get them in the door, lead to informal engagements that can grow into something more

Have to keep transactional support in balance; it doesn’t go away

CTL dialog sessions are amazing

Cynthia: Problem with dialog, getting faculty to come

Not getting a lot of faculty, even after moving to faculty club

Shifting model to pop-up dialogs

Impromptu collaboration; moderate teachnet, see some energy around a topic (e.g. laptops in classroom)
We’ve seen some faculty do this on Teachnet

Aaron: Being there at the right time

How do you make popular consultants scalable

Cynthia: Trying to get faculty peers to lead things

Invite colleagues out for lunch over the course of the semester

Electronic newsletter that Melanie Green coordinates, goes out to all teaching faculty 6x/year

Made fellowships product-based; resources for teaching, promote it through the newsletter

Investing in single faculty member but it scales out

Yukiko: See patterns across multiple consultations, feel like people should be connected

Put people together via email

Can email because tracking consultation topics, know contact / faculty name

Patrick: Built strong partnerships across world, focusing on teaching

Our work is on tech in support of research

How much exposure did you have to crossover where there’s heavy computation in the teaching aspect, need considerable resources in teaching context

Bridging our culture and yours, how much engagement you’ve had with those kinds of discussions

Cynthia: Emerging area due to data science curriculum

Will start seeing more of this

Richard does more of the on the ground consultations

Yukiko: One of the grant recipients is building a computation track for bioengineering program

Creating interdisciplinary program, think through how to connect computational statistics & other components

Jenn: Been involved in data science curriculum around tech support, computing environments that follow students throughout career, will do research w/ faculty on these data sets
Visualization piece — big intersection between teaching and research

In-depth consultations with faculty: parallel to teaching and learning, lots of people are looking to leverage idea of communities of practice

Can't spend that amount of time with faculty members

Cynthia: With undergrad initiative, steering committee working in depth this semester on initial vision, broader engagement in fall

Looking at lower-level curriculum

Once it’s defined, will become basis of fundraising

Role in educating faculty about value of academic partner

Once they clear up what the program should look like, lots of opportunities for partnership

Will need to talk about the value that can be added, pain points that can be solved

Rick: Did people learn on their feet when facing a consultation question they don’t know?

Yukiko: If you don’t have expertise, often refer to other people

Will ask colleagues about policies, get back to faculty member, or refer to specific consultant

Jon: How to use data around consultations, another example of why we need to mash these things up to pull communities together

Do you have strategic initiatives or drivers that you are vetting in your service, priorities coming down that you’re focused on

Cynthia: Always looking for alignment with campus initiatives

Academic integrity — around the time of academic code

Turnitin tool — promoting academic integrity

Lots of opportunities for alignment with data science

Curriculum innovation grants — if undergrad initiative has defined areas of priority by next year, will be more specific

More campus develops its vision, the better we can support it

See vision as strategic academic partners; units have to define their priorities

“Here’s our agenda, how can you help us?”

Need to be plugged in with this leadership, hear what they’re working on