VALUING AND ENHANCING TEACHING: SHARING TIPS VIA THE WEB

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ABSTRACT

This session will be a roundtable discussion on the topic of improving teaching. The session will begin with a brief presentation by the authors in which they will discuss the results of a pilot data collection they conducted to establish a web page. The page will serve as a resource for collecting the best ideas for improving teaching and increasing its recognized value in academia. The presentation will include a demonstration of the web site set up to share those ideas. The presentation will be followed by an open discussion of how and when the teaching techniques and tools presented could best be used. Information on how to access the web site and how it might be linked to other sites will be provided also.

INTRODUCTION

At the 1997 annual meeting of ABSEL the attendees were challenged to bring teaching "out of the closet." In subsequent discussions among ourselves we concluded that one way to bring teaching out of the closet would be to provide a mechanism for the best ideas of teachers to be shared. This session will begin that sharing and is intended to act as a stimulus for an ongoing process.

PILOT EFFORT

In a pilot effort to establish a usable web page for sharing ideas we asked colleagues who we considered committed teachers and trainers, for their best ideas and suggestions. Two categories of ideas were solicited. Respondents were asked to identify and describe ideas for improving teaching and ideas for increasing the relative value of excellent teaching in academia. The plan was for the responses to be compiled and organized onto a web page that could be accessed by anyone with internet access, and be linked to other sites. This session will present the results of that effort and allow for active input and discussion about improvements. The session will also allow for an active discussion of how, where, and when some the ideas may be more applicable.

THE WORKSHOP

The workshop will consist of three parts. We will give a brief (10 minutes) overview of the project. This part will explain what we are doing and how additional ideas will be gathered in an ongoing effort. The second part of the workshop will be a demonstration of the web site that has been established. This demonstration will show how to access and explore the site, how to contribute ideas for the site and how it can be linked to other appropriate sites. The third part of the workshop will be an open discussion. The discussion will be led by the presenters and focus on how this web site and the ideas presented on it can be implemented in different types of settings to bring teaching out of the closet. While the specifics of any discussion are, of necessity, somewhat difficult to specify in advance, we have several issues upon which to focus the discussion. One issue will be the appropriate application/use of the web site and the techniques/ideas presented there. Another issue will be how to inspire colleagues, administrators, and others to regularly look for new techniques and ideas and to regularly identify other sources of information that can be linked to this web site, or to which the web site can be linked. A third issue will be how to gain and/or improve institutional recognition of the importance of excellent teaching and faculty who are actively trying to bring teaching out of the closet.