

**Title:**                    **Research as Ongoing Professional Learning in College Based HE: A new approach to achieving excellent teaching?**

**Presenter:**            **Philip Miller**  
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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify differences in scholarship within college and university settings.
- Identify issues with / concerns about traditional staff development models.
- Recognise the benefits to individuals of formally engaging with the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Generate ideas on how to stimulate further collaborative research outside of institutionally organised staff development time.

### **Session Outline**

The Quality Assurance Agency (2013) state that Scholarship and research lie at the heart of higher education and go on to state that at Levels 4 and 5 there is a need staff to have understanding of scholarly developments in their discipline area and that at level 6 teaching will be informed, if not led by the research / scholarship of staff. QAA (2013) do recognize that this does not necessarily mean doing original research but it does mean doing more than simply professional development. A University and College Union (UCU) survey suggested that whilst there is some evidence of this type of scholarly activity within colleges individuals are often 'scholarly' in their own time due to maintaining class contact hours in excess of 800 hours per year (UCU 2013).

Within most colleges continuing professional development (CPD) is viewed much more as information dissemination and updating rather than an opportunity to engage in a professional and scholarly community of practice, or acting as a learning professional (Lucas and Unwin 2009; Lingfield 2012; Rand 2015). There is a range of literature to support the claim that existing models of staff development are ineffective. Savoie-Zajc and Deschamps-Bednarz (2007) have stated that one day workshops provided by experts have not yielded any significant changes at the classroom level. Zeichner (2003) stated that staff neither like these programmes nor use them to improve practice, and that this sort of training model is unconnected to teachers' daily work and is disrespectful of their knowledge. With a bigger need than ever before for institutions to be able to demonstrate teaching excellence a new

programme of CPD may be crucial in allowing staff to develop in a way that creates long lasting impact upon their practice.

The alternative model is therefore designed to allow staff to become architects of change by building upon their current conceptions (Parke and Coble 1997), and will hopefully prove to be an effective professional development tool that promotes inquiry, reflection, and problem solving that results in action or change (Jaipal & Figg 2011).

### **Session Activities and Approximate Timings**

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

- Starter (5 mins) –** Participants to create a definition / description of scholarship in their institutions with brief notes regarding how it is facilitated.
- Introduction (5 mins) –** An overview of scholarship within college settings and current staff development models.
- Activity (5 mins) –** Participants to identify issues / concerns regarding these traditional format staff development programmes.
- Presentation (15 mins) –** Findings from focus groups within colleges will be discussed, followed by an introduction to the alternative model of staff development and update on the work carried out on its trial so far.
- Activity (5 mins) –** Participants to identify perceived benefits to the new programme for individual staff members and consider how it might be similar to initiatives already in place within their institutions, or how something could be put in place.
- Activity (5 mins) –** To help further develop the current trial and overall engagement in scholarship the participants will be asked for input with regards how, on the back of this staff development model, further collaborative research could be fostered within the college setting outside of the institutional development time.

### **References**

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