Collaborative Professional Development Process (CPDP)

The Professional Development Committee has developed a method to replace our current teacher evaluation process that at the very least will provide a more comprehensive evaluation of teachers. We call it The Collaborative Professional Development Process.

I. The Rationale:

Why change our traditional evaluation of teachers?

We propose a way that puts evaluation in the service of growth and collaboration where it can best serve our faculty and our school. Its objective is not to find out how well a teacher is doing, though it will do this better than the old process, but to maximize how well collaboratively s/he can grow.

Whereas, we’ve found, a traditional evaluation only minimally assesses skills or contributes to growth:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Evaluation:</th>
<th>The Reality:</th>
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<td>Assumes mastery is achievable—teaching is performance-based.</td>
<td>Teachers perpetually seek mastery—teaching is also learning-based.</td>
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<td>Assumes teachers grow through compliance, say to standards, to earn “carrots” and to avoid “sticks.”</td>
<td>Professional growth is also intrinsically motivated—teachers love to improve at what they love to do.</td>
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<td>Assumes teaching is largely a left-brain activity (sorting, organization, norms, etc.).</td>
<td>Teaching also demands creativity.</td>
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<td>Assumes teachers teach independently.</td>
<td>Teachers also rely on community and teach to be part of a larger purpose.</td>
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The process we propose accurately reveals how you’re doing, and, accurately, it assumes you want to get better at it for its own sake, but also for the sake of a greater purpose. Thus CTDP is not school directed; it is teacher directed. It is also intensely collaborative.

In fact, research tells us that we teach because it constantly presents challenges, and because the profession provides noble pursuit and the interpersonal connectedness that high aims engender. In other words because teaching is intrinsically motivated and ever-demanding, and because it serves high aims, it provides the three possibilities that motivate us all: autonomy, mastery, and belonging.

According to Daniel Pink, author of *Drive, The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us*, studies of motivation reveal that “Human beings have an inner drive, to be
autonomous, self-determined, and connected to one another," to be part of a larger purpose. More importantly, he adds, “when that drive is liberated, people achieve more and live richer lives.”

[Click here](#) for Pink's own explanation.

CTEP is designed to liberate drive:

1. It gives teachers autonomy over the procedure.
2. It stimulates the pursuit of mastery.
3. It instills an overall sense of purpose and a connectedness to others.

II. The Process:

A. Self-Review
   a. Engagement (or “Flow”) Test
   b. Self-Analysis
   c. Review Meeting
B. Fieldwork
C. Sharing: one at a mid-year PDO, another at an end-of-year PDO

A. Self-Review

Minimally, since it nourishes our natural inclination to grow, the self-assessment piece of this process delivers an unbiased review of ability, including how and to what extent a teacher struggles with professional responsibilities. The more impartial the self-evaluation, that is, the better the growth.

Impelled and informed by this frank evaluation, the process can then intensify improvement in teacher performance in the short and long run.

But more importantly, freeing the innate "drive" of Porter's faculty will place at the core of school culture innovation, leadership, and sharing, with one another and with the world, in ways we can only now imagine.

a. "The Engagement Test"

We may assume that the goal of mastery is what psychologists call “autotelic” experience, or “flow,” that is, when the reward of performance is the performance itself, when ability is neither more than is necessary nor inadequate to excelling at a task--you might say the grace of mastery.

Times when we lack flow in our jobs can be either

1. when the task is too easy, creating low engagement, or
2. when the job is too difficult, creating apprehension.
Moments of either extreme indicate the specific aspects of performance that the teacher may need to improve. On the one hand, mundane tasks (1) may demand innovative ways to restore novelty or power to engage; or on the other, jobs creating anxiety (2) indicate the skills or techniques that need developing.

For more information on Flow, Click here to watch a TED Talk explanation by the leading scientist on the subject, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.. For brevity's sake, begin at 14:00.

We imagine a phone app for self-administration of the Engagement Test through September of the review year. The app could import the teacher's schedule and randomly "message" the teacher to collect and then analyze data on the teacher's various qualities of engagement. The screen displays the following diagram, which the teacher merely touches at the point that corresponds with the feel of his/her experience.
b. The Self-Analysis

As a learning-based activity, teaching mastery takes time, years in fact. It’s hard, so we need to give it time.

Assuming the difficulty of teacher growth, the process begins with the teacher’s own assessment of who they are and where they want to be, not only in a year, but also in the long run, say in ten years.

Thus, following the Flow Test, the teacher is in a good position to write two statements, (1) explaining his/her long term goal(s), and (2) their year-long goal(s).

c. Self-Review Meeting

The teacher then meets with his or her dept. chair and Associate Head to elicit support, feedback and wisdom on how to devise a specific calendar for assessing progress toward achieving goals. The discussion should

1. keep the process heuristic and
2. keep the teacher in charge.

B. Fieldwork

The Fieldwork Team serves primarily as a support group for each member of the team. In effect each member has as support a group consisting of the other members. Members examine, write about, and discuss one another’s classes, but one member in particular, a *“partner” monitors the overall progress (through his//her own and through others’ observations) of this colleague, and vice versa, and in May writes a summary of growth as part of an overall final Team report.

Thus, the role of each member of the team is to observe and support others, and to do so for one colleague in particular.

III. Tentative Schedule:

Spring Prior to Process:

1. Discuss purpose of the process and role of each person.
2. Elect and discuss role of facilitator (who will receive NAD credit for his/her role).
3. Facilitator then meets with A.H. to update.

September:

1. “Flow” Test and Self-Analysis
2. Individuals meet with Dept. Chair and Associate Head to discuss strengths, weaknesses, short- and long-term goals.

October:

1. In first meeting, members discuss self-evaluation results and continue to imagine innovative ideas for individuals and for group to work on. Facilitator collects these statements.
2. In second meeting, team meets to establish *partnerships (see above), to set schedule of bi-monthly meetings, arrange class visitation schedules, and to begin discussing individual, small-group and overall group projects.
3. Facilitator updates A.H.

November:

1. First Meeting: Fieldwork Team meets.
2. Second Meeting: Partners meet.

December

1. First Meeting: Continue reporting, analyzing, inventing.
2. Second Meeting: Prepare for PDO.
3. PDO: Report to faculty on progress and Fieldwork goals.
4. Facilitator updates A.H.

January - April

Meetings continue to alternate between entire Fieldwork team meetings and partner meetings.

May

1. First Meeting: Partners meet.
2. Second Meeting: Fieldwork Team meets.
3. PDO: To share final results of Team activity.

June

Final Report due:

- Reports on members’ and group’s progress;
- Makes recommendations for each member ‘s continued growth;
- Reports on group project(s);
- Reports on recommendations for the process as a whole.
III. Summary:

To maximize the short- and long-term growth of Porter's faculty, The Collaborative Professional Development Process enlists teacher autonomy over the procedure, liberates the prospect of mastery, and reinforces a sense of overall purpose and belonging—encouraging unforeseen innovation, leadership and collaboration in the process.

Work Remaining:

- Finding time in the schedule for those under review;
- Developing report guidelines/questions/templates;
- An efficient and minimally-invasive Engagement (Flow) Test.