

Bridging the Generational Divide: Working Together to Teach Millennial Students

November 13-14, 2009
Bloomington, MN

Call for Proposals deadline: Wednesday, April 8, 2009

The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching & Learning invites proposals from college and university faculty, staff, administrators, and students for concurrent sessions on the conference theme. We especially encourage proposals for sessions that will promote stimulating dialogue, reflect diverse perspectives, and involve student presenters or co-presenters from across institutions. Proposals are peer reviewed and sessions are selected based on criteria listed on page two.

Generational differences are affecting the college teaching and learning environment as never before. Born since 1981, Millennial Students, also called the “Net Generation,” form the largest cohort since the Baby Boom, numbering more than 80 million and constituting more than 41% of the current population.¹ Bringing many unique characteristics to the learning environment, from their familiarity with technology to their attitudes toward collaboration, achievement, diversity, civic values, and their parents, Millennials are predicted to enter colleges in record numbers in 2010.

At the same time, the profile of college and university faculty in the U.S. is also changing. By 2004, the average age of full-time instructional faculty in U.S. higher education had increased to 50 according to the National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, a project of the National Center for Education Statistics. The average age of full-time tenured faculty was 54. And for most institutions, retaining current faculty and recruiting new faculty, most of them members of Generation X, are of almost equal importance.²

There is a growing divide between senior faculty and their younger colleagues and a gap between faculty in general and the new generation of students. Now, more than ever, the need to understand and address generational differences is critical for campuses to provide good work climates for all and for teaching and learning to be effective.

The goal of this conference, then, is to discover how faculty and staff are tackling the issues and challenges that arise between generations, both between faculty and students and among faculty themselves. We invite proposals for concurrent sessions that address the conference theme by disseminating and modeling effective practice or promoting stimulating dialogue, inquiry, and problem-solving on topics such as these:

- **Millennial Students:** How do we best serve the needs of this current group of students? How do their learning styles and educational expectations differ from previous generations? What teaching and advising practices are most effective, and how can new technologies be introduced successfully into courses? How does faculty work constructively with “helicopter” parents who seek more engagement than parents in the past? How can student development specialists contribute to creating effective learning environments by partnering with faculty and through approaches to cocurricular programming, residential life, and other areas?
- **Faculty and Staff:** What challenges arise in departmental and other campus settings as the generational divide widens between experienced faculty and staff and their junior colleagues, and how can these issues be managed successfully? How can veteran and newer faculty and staff work together successfully to improve the environment for teaching and learning? How can they benefit each other by sharing their distinct perspectives and through mutual mentoring? How does the economy’s impact on faculty and staff decisions to postpone retirement affect the educational community? How can faculty and staff sustain and reinvigorate their work as educators at critical junctures in their careers?

See “Tips for Preparing a Successful Proposal” on the following page.

¹Reynol Junco and Jeanna Mastrodicasa, *Connecting to the Net Generation: What Higher Education Professionals Need to Know About Today's College Students* (NASPA, 2007), 6.

²*Survey of Changes in Faculty Retirement Policies* (AAUP, 2007)

Tips for Preparing a Successful Proposal

The following guidelines are based on past evaluations and Collaboration policy. Please read these instructions carefully and be sure to submit all three sections of the session proposal (cover sheet, narrative, and abstract).

1 COVER SHEET

Session title Craft a title that is clear and concise (10 words or less) and will pique participant interest. Participants want practical ideas and information that they can apply in their own settings. Choose a title that clearly conveys the subject of your session so that participants know what to expect. Appeal to a broad mix of participants, and avoid using language that might limit your audience.

Presenters Teams of two to four presenters are most effective. Keep in mind the length and content of your session, and plan ways for all presenters to contribute in a meaningful way.

Successful sessions often include undergraduate student presenters or others who can lend different perspectives, such as faculty from different disciplines, student development staff, or administrators. *Note that undergraduate student presenters from Collaboration member institutions can register for free.*

Presenter commitment: By submitting this proposal, you are indicating that you are all available, committed to participating, and prepared to register at the regular conference fees. Presenters whose paid registrations have not been received at least two weeks before the conference may be dropped from the program.

Audio-visual request: Equipment rental is expensive and must be covered by fees, so please consider your request carefully. If you need a laptop computer for your session, you will need to bring your own. If you plan to show web pages, download them onto your laptop instead of requesting a live Internet connection. For other equipment, we will meet your needs within reasonable limits of cost and availability.

2 NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

Your narrative should be two to three pages in length and address the following:

Topic: Explain clearly what your session is about, how it relates to the conference theme and the intended audience.

Rationale: Explain why your topic will be of interest to your intended audience, including any connections with current research literature or education trends.

Goals: Clearly identify what your audience will learn.

Participants are interested in gaining practical, innovative strategies and techniques that they can use in their own classes and programs.

Participant involvement: The Collaboration has a commitment to active, inclusive learning and to modeling outstanding teaching. We encourage presenters to provide opportunities for meaningful interaction. Activities should be designed to help participants achieve the learning goals for the session; they should not be “busywork.”

Organization: Regular sessions are 75 minutes. Double sessions, which are less frequent, are 2½ hours, including a break. Plan carefully to achieve your goals in the allotted time. Provide a timeline for your session, outlining the sequence of activities and providing short descriptions to explain them. For example:

Introductions and Icebreaker (10 minutes)
Interactive Presentation (identify key points) (15 minutes)
Activity 1 (describe) (15 minutes)
Group Discussion (10 minutes)
Activity 2 (describe) (15 minutes)
Review and Reflect (5 minutes)
Wrap-up and Evaluation (5 minutes)

Materials Provide participants with copies of overhead transparencies, PowerPoint slides, or other material you use. Provide a bibliography or resource list, if appropriate.

Session results How will you know whether participants have achieved your learning goals? Please offer something concrete, such as “participants will develop a plan for identifying the relevant characteristics, backgrounds, and needs of their students on the first day of class.”

3 ABSTRACT

Content: Your abstract should be 120 words or less. If your proposal is accepted, your abstract will be used to market your session to potential participants. It should communicate your session plan clearly and accurately, so that participants know what to expect. A useful approach is to explain (1) what your session is about, (2) what participants will experience and do, (3) what they will learn, and (4) what materials, if any, they will take away. If you develop your plan further after the abstract is published, be sure to honor what you promise in the abstract, so participants aren't disappointed.

Style: Use the active voice wherever possible, and avoid unexplained acronyms and jargon.

QUESTIONS?

Contact The Collaboration at (651) 646-6166 or collab@collab.org. Additional information on this and previous conferences is available on our website at www.collab.org.

Proposal Cover Sheet

Bridging the Generational Divide

Proposals must be typed and received by **April 8, 2009**. Please complete and submit the following according to the "Tips for Preparing a Successful Proposal": (a) this cover sheet, (b) your narrative proposal (2-3 pages), and (c) your abstract (no more than 120 words).

We will let you know the status of your proposal in May and will be preparing the conference brochure in June and July. Please make sure that we will be able to reach your primary contact during that time (see below).

1. **SESSION TITLE:** _____

2. **PRESENTERS:** In most instances, we recommend limiting the number of presenters to four. If necessary, list additional presenters on a separate sheet and include rationale in the proposal narrative. For titles, use "associate professor," "dean," etc. For students, list year in college and major (see "c" and "d" below). If there will be more than one presenter, designate one individual as the primary contact person.

a. **Primary Contact**

Title

Department

Institution

Address

Telephone

Fax

Email

b. **Name**

Title

Department

Institution

Address

Telephone

Fax

Email

Student Presenter Major

Student Presenter Year in College

c. **Name**

Title

Department

Institution

Address

Telephone

Fax

Email

d. **Name**

Title

Department

Institution

Address

Telephone

Fax

Email

Student Presenter Major

Student Presenter Year in College

3. **INTENDED AUDIENCE(S):** Faculty Academic Administrators Student Affairs Faculty Developers Others

4. **INTENDED AUDIENCE'S PRIOR EXPERIENCE WITH TOPIC:** Basic Intermediate Advanced

5. **FORMAT** (check one): regular session (75 min) double/workshop session (2 1/2 hrs)

6. **AUDIO-VISUAL REQUEST:** See the instructions under "Tips."

LCD Projector Flipchart Overhead Projector Screen DVD/Monitor Other _____

PRESENTER AGREEMENT: *If selected, we agree to offer the proposed session, to pay registration fees by the Early Bird deadline, and to participate throughout the conference.*

SIGNATURE OF PRIMARY CONTACT _____



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Fall 2009 Professional Development Conference

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