

Lincoln University

Blue Tiger Commons

Title III Professional Development Reports

Title III Programs

2023

A Teaching Professor Attending a Conference Called The Teaching Professor

Kurt DeBord
debordk@lincolnu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://bluetigercommons.lincolnu.edu/training-report>



Part of the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

DeBord, Kurt, "A Teaching Professor Attending a Conference Called The Teaching Professor" (2023). *Title III Professional Development Reports*. 55.

<https://bluetigercommons.lincolnu.edu/training-report/55>

This Blog is brought to you for free and open access by the Title III Programs at Blue Tiger Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Title III Professional Development Reports by an authorized administrator of Blue Tiger Commons. For more information, please contact bilald@lincolnu.edu, durhamj@lincolnu.edu.

A Teaching Professor Attending a Conference Called The Teaching Professor

June 15, 2023

Blog entry for Title III grant funding allowing for attendance at meeting of “The Teaching Professor” in New Orleans, Louisiana in June 2023.

I will begin with the side note about New Orleans. If you have never been, a visit will prove to you that it earns the nickname, “The City that Care Forgot.” Anything goes. It’s hot, it’s dirty, it’s jammed full of people. The food is exquisite. Please explore the options. As a gay man, visiting during Pride Weekend was quite enjoyable. The city is known for its gay neighborhood on Bourbon Street. It’s colorful and entertaining. I recommend it for straight people, too.

This information (see below) should motivate others to consider their use of group work and rubrics in the classroom. It is my hope that anyone who reads this report will make use of the resources I mentioned in the report. Hopefully, others will be inspired to attend The Teaching Professor conference in the future.

This is the third blog I have written for a Title III funded trip to a conference for Lincoln University of Missouri. This conference was stimulating and worth attending. The plenary session was primarily motivational. The speaker, Dr. Bridget Arend, focused primarily upon how a professor’s intentionality can dramatically influence the quality of in-class connections between professor and student. Her challenge to have professors daily consider what big ideas they want to communicate actually made a lot of sense. She focused on the importance of letting your students know that you care about them, partially by being cognizant of how a lack of equity in educational settings can hinder student efficacy and performance. There was a strange moment when she addressed diversity by telling a story about how her child was a student in attendance at a school that had a school shooting. She did not really connect it to other diversity issues and it didn’t really relate well to the other material. But, I think I understood her intention.

The poster session was adequate. It seemed primarily geared toward younger professionals. I appreciated the actual presentations more.

There are two presentations that I would like to comment upon. The first, “Cultivating Connections” by Jeremy Rentz and Michelle Blank, was a good demonstration of how to conduct a classroom. As an early morning session, everyone arrived and sat at least five chairs away from other attendees. The presenters immediately started with putting us into groups and having us discuss how we engage with students. Their approach immediately jumpstarted discussion on their presentation topics. I learned more from my group members than anything else, but I believe that was the idea. By feeling connected to my group members and speaking for them when it came time to share main ideas, they solidified their point that learning happens best for many people when they are socially, and subsequently, mentally engaged. They recommended the book, *You’ve Gotta Connect*, by James Alan Sturtevant. I plan on using that book in preparing for my next semester.

The second presentation I would like to comment on was called “Using Rubrics to Assess Learning Objectives Rather than Finished Projects” by Dr. Jenelle Abnett. The primary reason I attended the session is that I hate rubrics. I must say that Dr. Abnett made a convincing argument as to how rubrics can save time and improve the kind of guidance and feedback that you give to students. We started by using rubrics to grade different forms of currency. Then, we discussed how we applied the rubrics. It was interesting to see how lack of clarity in a rubric can make for wide discrepancies in how different people scored the four kinds of currency. We then discussed how to apply Bloom’s taxonomy to formative assignments. The most helpful tip provided in the session was the resource webpage entitled “iRubric.” This site allows professors to share their rubrics with others. One can download a rubric for any class and any assignment and tailor it to fit one’s own needs. The template is transferrable to Canvas and most other learning management systems. I also plan to use this resource in the coming semester.

Two other presentations were relevant to my experience but did not provide me with much more than I already knew. “What Trauma-Informed Teaching Strategies Effectively Support Higher Education Students” and “A Time for Action: Empowering Trans-Spectrum College Students” were well done presentations, but as a psychologist with my own private

practice specializing in Trans-Affirming care, I was hoping for new and interesting ideas about how to pay attention to mental health with a diverse body of students.

Overall, the conference was worthwhile, and I would recommend it to other educators in the future.

Kurt DeBord, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology
Lincoln University
Jefferson City, MO