Ambassadors, Innovators, Fellows and Coaches: Technology Integration Across a Campus

This poster session will utilize both attractive graphic materials and a looping computer display to present several of the innovative efforts of Kean University’s PT3 program.

As a large-scale institution (with over 3,000 students in the teacher education program), Kean University’s PT3 office has sought to use multiple strategies to foster the integration of technology into preservice education. While the university’s PT3 program maintains a full range of workshops and support systems, it has attempted to decentralize some of its activities through several innovative programs. These programs involve the efforts of both faculty and students as Technology Ambassadors, Technology Innovators, Portfolio Coaches, and Technology Fellows.

Technology Ambassadors are students in their junior and senior field placements who provide professional development in the area of technology integration in the schools where they are placed. These technology ambassadors are expected to present a professional development training program either as several brief workshops or as a mentor to an individual teacher. The PT3 Office offers suggested topics, as well as any equipment necessary to the program’s success. Technology Innovators are faculty who have volunteered to work with a well-respected consultant in the integration of technology into their curriculum in rich and meaningful ways, e.g., using technology as a tool for problem-based learning. The innovators are also expected to provide turnkey training to other faculty after they complete the initial phase of the program. Portfolio Coaches are well-trained students who work in various computer labs across campus to assist other students in their development of electronic portfolios. These coaches provide expertise that ranges from the planning and development through the production of electronic portfolios. And, Technology Fellows are faculty at the department level who serve as local experts to colleagues who seek assistance in any phase of technology integration. These fellows are expected to provide at least one office hour each week dedicated to PT3 activities, as well as a brief presentation at a department meeting at least once a semester.

Kean’s PT3 project’s evaluator has been involved in all phases of these programs, from initial planning to assessment of their efficacy. Each of the programs does have and evaluation component, and these evaluation strategies will also be presented.

Additionally, to achieve the presence that the PT3 Office at Kean currently maintains, the program has worked with several key departments and offices across campus. For example, the PT3 Office works very closely with the university’s Center for Instructional Resources and Technology (CIRT) on a number of technology initiatives, the latest of which is the hosting of a statewide showcase (with NJ Edge) to showcase faculty technology initiatives across the state. Such a team-building effort has enhanced the ability of the PT3 Office to provide a wide range of technology support to the faculty and students of the university’s College of Education, and beyond. In return, the PT3 program often makes seats available to faculty from other colleges within the university when conducting its training activities.

Over the past academic year, the PT3 Office has offered approximately 30 workshops, two retreats, and several other technology oriented initiatives. It has become a visible and well-respected program at the university. While the office will maintain its commitment to an array of services, the leadership of Kean’s PT3 program believes that it must also maintain a “local” presence. In that way, not only can faculty in the college of education, spread among several buildings, visit the PT3 Office, they can also go to a colleague “down the hall” for assistance. Thus, the Kean PT3 program presents both a strong presence on campus both through the efforts of its office and through the combined efforts of faculty and students working in a number of unique initiatives both on and off campus. And these initiatives will be central in sustaining PT3 activities beyond the grant funding period.