

Faculty Development Menu

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Defence Education Enhancement Project

Initial assessment

We understand that the Military Institute is transitioning towards improving standards for delivery of bachelor's level academic programs, using Bologna criteria as a guide. The Institute is already a multi-agency campus, teaching military and border guard officers. A National University of the Public Service might be an effective use of resources. Civilian professors are academically qualified, and the balance of academic education, leadership development, and military training is expected to shift as the Institute moves towards its desired future as an accredited degree-granting institution offering bachelor's and master's degrees. This creates opportunities for development of a larger cadre of civilian academics, and a long-service cadre of military academics. In the short term, DEEP assistance might help with:

1. Fundamentals
2. Quick fixes internally
3. Awareness and capability development
4. Local external support
5. International support

Fundamentals of faculty development

Philips (2016) describes five fundamentals of faculty development. Here they are adapted for the Institutes circumstances as we understand them:

- (1) **Vision.** Before selecting and expanding on possible initiatives, DEEP needs to understand the Institute's vision of its future. What is it working towards?
- (2) **Excellence**, not remediation. Faculty development is more effective if it seeks excellence in specific areas, than if it seeks to remedy shortcomings. Accentuate the positive and problems will fade over time.
- (3) **Networking** and finding appropriate support should be approached strategically: on the Institute's campus; in the Bishkek higher education community; and in the international military and security education community. Who can do what, and how can you get it free or cheaply?
- (4) **Responsive and proactive:** higher military education must respond to demands of the demands of the service, but also be proactive in learning what those demands are, translating them to innovative programs, and marketing those programs so that armed forces are aware and engaged. This means a continuous conversation, not intermittent reports.
- (5) **Dependability:** The Institute should try different approaches to develop faculty within its limitations. Not all initiatives will be effective; those that deliver the most dependable results should be reinforced, and others should be dropped or downplayed.

Internal quick fixes and small changes

Here are some practices drawn from other institutions of higher military learning, which might be appropriate at the Institute, or might already be in place (apologies for our limited knowledge of the Institute):

- (1) Balancing teaching, research, and service. Whatever the nominal division of time or effort, tracking what faculty actually do and providing incentives to meet targets can help improve performance. This is normally a Department Head responsibility, but it may require powers of a Dean or Deputy Commandant.
- (2) Recognizing the educational value of training and socialization activities. Education is preparing the mind for the unknown with critical thinking and problem solving; training is developing a specific response to known stimulus; socialization is inculcating values, attitudes and beliefs. In fact, most of what a military institution does includes elements of all three, even if one is in the foreground. Recognizing the educational value of drill or physical fitness allows creative mixing of time use.
- (3) Teaching, research, and leadership awards for faculty. These might be three separate awards or one annual award issued for any of the three achievements. The recipient might be given a small honorarium, an opportunity to speak publicly, or be honored with a medal or a book award – whatever carries an appropriate incentive as motivation for excellence.
- (4) Named honors. It can cost very little to honor a professor. The Frunze Professor might get a certificate, hold the title for a year and have his or her photo on a poster in a prominent place. It's also a way to acknowledge your own founding influences and build the institutional mythology that develops loyalty in alumni.
- (5) Behavior models. Emeritus professors and honorary doctorates at graduation serve as behavior models to encourage the rest of us.
- (6) Ceremony. Adopting ceremonies like academic processions, convocations, public lectures, and formal announcements can help the Institute feel more like a university, and encourage military faculty to take pride in their academic roles; they are part of a proud tradition.
- (7) Pedagogy workshops. Regular workshops to focus on new or improved teaching techniques can be scheduled at appropriate points in the academic year – usually the beginning and/or end of an academic term. They might concentrate by department or
- (8) Faculty reads. Pick a professionally relevant book to improve teaching or research; ask all faculty to read it, then invite a guest speaker or facilitator to lead a faculty discussion. Pay for drinks on the side to make it worthwhile.
- (9) Demonstration classes. When new techniques are introduced, consider videoing a class, and discussing it within the faculty.
- (10) Cross-disciplinary teaching teams. Look for opportunities to mix faculty from different backgrounds and disciplines to provide new approaches to old subjects.
- (11) Tired teachers. Sabbaticals, rotating teaching assignments, external duties, shifts in the research-teaching-service balance, and acting appointments can all help to stop professors from getting stale doing the same thing year after year. Consult and plan on the variation as an incentive and opportunity.

Awareness and capability development

Capability development begins with improving awareness of the scope of research and teaching development.

- (1) All faculty can be practitioner-researchers, applying research principles to our daily responsibilities and sharing the results.
- (2) Involving cadets in the research creates opportunities for active learning (e.g. problem solving or in-class engagement in a “flipped” classroom) to help them take charge of their own learning.
- (3) Faculty research on hidden learning (what is learned but not taught) can help to understand the cadet learning environment. It’s also an opportunity to bring in outsiders and learn from them.
- (4) The Institute has a strong emphasis on experiential learning because of its military training background. You can leverage this by introducing experiential learning in other subjects, getting cadets out of the classroom to learn about psychology, sociology, politics, society, culture, and the arts.
- (5) Develop capabilities that will be in demand in the long term. It takes time to develop a research program and effective teaching strategies.
- (6) Cadets are institutional assets. They are smart, disciplined, adult learners with good communications and leadership skills. Get them out into the community and government as your ambassadors, research assistants, teaching assistants, and communicators.

Local external support

The best sources of support for faculty development are likely to be local.

- (1) Bishkek has some good universities and well-known faculty members. Find them and invite them to engage. Try some of the quick fixes and small changes listed above to engage external university faculty.
- (2) Find institutional allies and keep in contact with them. What research does the army need? Is the Centre for Analysis (1992) still advising the National Security Council? Are there other roles that the Research Department can play, to connect the Institute to its key stakeholders?
- (3) Try pairing new faculty members with external mentors to bring new ideas onto the campus.
- (4) Use locally published newsletters, e-news, and websites to keep audiences informed; plan this as if it were an influence activity. Tie it back to cadet learning by having the cadets assess the environment, plan the influence, and evaluate the impact. Make it a multiyear activity to allow for incremental improvement, with each year learning from all previous iterations.

International support

Many countries are in the position of having no peer institution for the military college, academy, or defence university. International networking provides a solution for both top-down and bottom up (individual) initiatives.

- (1) Identify future faculty and send them for doctoral education at civilian or military universities abroad.
- (2) Host foreign or domestic academics at the Institute for their sabbatical years or terms.
- (3) Offer to host foreign prestigious scholarships like the Fulbright for an American scholar, or the Marie Curie.
- (4) Participate in the International Seminar for the Development of Military Academies
- (5) Encourage individual faculty members to network with members of their academic community, e.g. by joining scholarly societies (perhaps subsidizing their membership fees)
- (6) Participate in the International Society for Military Sciences.
- (7) Form a partnership with a respected academic department of education (e.g. OISE, Toronto)
- (8) Explore communities of knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) where they are already networked, and apply their insights to lessons learned.

Conclusion

This may not be an orthodox list, and many of these initiatives or activities may be well beyond the scope of DEEP, or even the Institute itself. My aim has been to provide a broad, superficial menu of possibilities for discussion, which greater knowledge of the Institute can help to refine.

I would like to close by thanking the members of the Military Institute for sharing this exciting time with us. I hope to continue learning from you about innovative ways to enhance professional military education.

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