

Breakout 2A: Staying Current - Knowing When to Innovate

From Amy and Lauren's pre-session email discussion:

This title suggests looking for a balance (harkening to our theme). Yes we stay current with trends and new tech but when and how do we introduce them to our faculty, to our students? When is it appropriate to innovate with something new and when is it not and how do we convince our faculty to try something new? I think the question of "what is Innovation" should be explored when discussing what is innovative to each campus.

Question #1: What does innovation actually mean to you?

Anonymous Hedgehog

- Innovation - changing the way something is done or is completely new
 - Inclusive of tools and/or pedagogy
 - Not change for change's sake

Animal/Vegetable/Mineral:

Definition of Innovation:

- A novel solution
- a meaningless buzzword we use because everyone else is
- Not just about efficiency, not just about new tools -- new approach
- Critical thinking
- A spark of interest that gets spread into wildfire of change
- Definition from Horace Deidu (@asymco) -
 - Novelty: Something new
 - Creation: Something new and valuable
 - Invention: Something new, having potential value through utility
 - Innovation: Something new and uniquely useful

The MEECK:

- Depends on context; innovation in classroom might be different from innovation campus-wide
- Like to think innovation would provide efficiencies, improvements - better/new outcomes,
- Older, stodgy folks need to catch up
- Seems to be a generational thing, whether that is true or no
- Irony in technology is that things seem to be cyclical - innovation can be a "look backward"
- Does innovation imply newness - well, newer, anyway
- We're working in institutions that are deeply conservative
- Innovation in pedagogy might not align with a technology we're interested in
- Much more innovative on the "machine" side; slower on "soft" side - how does the technology side share its enthusiasm in a way that is not "scary" to everyone else

HeyYou

Doing things differently from the way before. Taking risks to find better solutions to real problems. It is ok to fail to push farther. Creating a “Space” to play.
Change, transformation, breakthrough, revolution, etc.
Pushing against the resistance to change.

Question #2

Do you feel innovative? why or why not?

Have you attempted to innovate? Was it successful? why or why not?

The culture needs to support innovation. If you are immediately evaluated you don't feel safe. Again failure needs to be okay. The push for “assessment” creates hesitation.
Wouldn't it be great if a grant funding process or promotion and tenure gave encouragement to use a development cycle of failure and improvement.
Dave gives example of creating masters program. Lots of autonomy, cycle of funding three years. Eventually the project will be evaluated, but not yet.
Kyle gives example of his augmented reality project. Took a chance. No one asked him to do it. Felt passionate and curious. Then get feedback from others and take it in new directions.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Amazon-Offers-Up-Research/234081>

Question #3 How do we start to be innovative and why?

We need space and time. But while it is best for someone to give it to us, we might have to make it for ourselves (subversion).

Be willing to invest in the young pros who may not be there forever - they are less afraid of failure.

Give our staff weekly time to work on something that has nothing to do with their job (Nobel prize winner example of receiving award for something not part of their job.)

The Five Stooges

Strategies for new technologies

Redefining uses and purposes to broaden the experiences

Problem Solving in new ways

Often undefinable until you actually do it

Revolution

Question#2:

Do you feel innovative? Why or Why not?

Have you attempted to innovate? Was it successful? Why or why not?

The Five Stooges

training faculty through HR

lack of resources make innovation challenges

approaching faculty through their colleagues

enterprise technology makes it challenging to innovate

The MEECK:

- “It’s what I do; I’ve been told I’m ‘geeking out’”
- If you get too busy, loud, bright it can take away from what you’re trying to do
- We need to be good listeners = “I’m hear to help make what you want to do work”, perhaps “I hae some suggestions you might want to think about”
- We don’t want to just say “What” and “How”; someone needs to be asking “WHy?” Look at problem based on objectives; faculty often don’t know the answer to WHY
- THere are ways that faculty are keeping pedagogy and material current without technology; there are faculty that will never be innovative with us and that’s fine
- help faculty become comfortable and proficient enough with a tool or tools that they can then become innovative in that context
- we explore and test things; faculty job is to decide among available things
- sometimes people come up with spectacular solutions working with something they know next to nothing about

Animal/Vegetable/Mineral:

Support for doing things differently -- every meeting is an opportunity for professional development. Working around the edges by knowing the skills/strengths of your team.

Seek out different philosophical views- caution -- can get watered down

Listening and talking to gather data - a safe space to share ideas. People feel consulted.

Balancing tending - harvesting - hunting (keeping the lights on, finding efficiencies, seeking innovation)

Running until tackled

“Liquid syllabus” -poplar.me

Stealth Innovation - LINK HERE TO HBR <https://hbr.org/2013/03/the-case-for-stealth-innovation>

Blocks to innovation include:

having to deal with locked down policies.

long testing periods

fear of new, fear of failure

opposing views of what innovation is

trying to be too inclusive of ideas

top down model rather than investigating potentially (non-sanctioned) innovative ideas

Anonymous Hedgehog

- Looking at new ways to use existing tools
- What are the assessment methods?
- Formative?Summative?
- What are the risks?
- Culture of risk embracing/aversion
- encourage “bold, risky ideas”
- Permission to fail
- Space to fail

Question #3: How do we start to be innovative and why?

The Five Stooges

The MEECK:

- Identify what the need/problem is
- Sometimes needs are diametrically opposed: Provost needs classes to go online; faculty is appalled at idea of classes online
- Find some ambassadors who can jump on bandwagon and lead conversations
- Start small and provide as much support as possible

Animal/Vegetable/Mineral:

We already are.

To be a Faculty Member is to be an improvisational life coach.

Synergy between our research practices and the Faculty's life experiences.

Feedback built into progress/change.

Breaking through the status quo by setting expectations of "Beta mode"

Excitement about being part of the process.

Tying it back to the purpose of education. Not getting grades, learning how to learn/adapt/be a person.

Throw things against the wall and see what sticks.

Anonymous Hedgehog

- Motivating faculty to be innovative - need to meet the baseline first
- Finding examples of successful for innovation - then motivate to others
- Become innovative to address a common problem