Melinda Sims’ Local Lecturer Support Grant Assessment Report

Program:
The University Center for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT) awarded a $5000 grant in support of professional development for the ESL Programs’ Lecturers for the 2015-16 academic year. This means that lecturers who attended and/or presented at conferences could have their registration fees covered at the Ohio TESOL and other conferences if they participated in the program. The program also required the participation in three fall workshops and three spring workshops.

During the fall of 2015 two ESL lecturers requested and received registration assistance to attend the October Ohio TESOL Conference held in Columbus, Ohio. During the months of September through November, I arranged four brown bag workshops which typically averaged about 10-12 attendees. The attendees included a mixture of administrators, lecturers, and graduate students. See the schedule below and view Appendix A:

A1) UCAT Workshop on the rationale, creation, and use of Course Portfolios:
Monday, September 28 12:15 – 1:30 PM in Arps 274: **Bring your laptop with you.

A2) UCAT Workshop on the rationale, creation, and use of Teaching Portfolios:
Monday, October 5 12:15 – 1:30 PM in Arps 274: **Bring your laptop with you.

B) Brown Bag Staff Workshop: Monday, October 26 12:15 – 1:00 PM in Arps 274 “The State of ESL Programs in Higher Education – How Does Ohio Compare?”

C) Brown Bag Staff Workshop: Monday, November 16 12:15 – 1:00 PM in Arps 274 “Using theater and improv techniques to improve grammar, fluency, and pronunciation” by Dan Montour, Lecturer of the SEP
During the spring of 2016 three ESL lecturers requested and received registration assistance to attend professional linguistic conferences. From January through March, I arranged three afternoon workshops which averaged 4-6 attendees typically. The dip in attendance was a result of having to move the workshop times from noon to a midafternoon timeframe that accommodated more of our Spoken English instructors, but unfortunately the time did not work as well for the others. See the schedule below and view Appendix B.

Monday, January 25 – 1:45 PM in Arps 002- “Adapting Open Source Texts to Multiple Lexile Levels” by ALP Lecturer Dustin Koehler and Ball State University Lecturer Cheryl Allaire

Monday, February 22 – 1:45 PM in Arps 002 – “Digital Storytelling” by ALP Lecturer Laura Thomas

Monday, March 7 – 1:45 PM in Arps 002 - “Cool Whip on High Street at Dawn: Good times!: Using dialectology to enhance speech perception and the creation of new phonetic categories” by Jocelyn Hardman, former Coordinator of the Spoken English Program (SEP)

**Fund Budget**

Appendix C shows a copy of the ESL Local Lecturer Grant Budget. Of the $5,000 designated to the project, $3,830 was used during the academic year to fund five individual requests. I am proposing that we split the remaining $1,170 between a lecturer who wishes to present at a conference and lecturers who wish to attend the fall OH TESOL convention in Columbus. $500 would be split evenly between the OH TESOL attendees and the remaining $670 could be used on a conference presenting lecturer. See Appendix C.
Lecturer Coordinator

As the coordinator, I worked with the grant writer to arrange the workshop presenters. One of the graduate students regularly made the room arrangements for me and assisted with preparing the room and arranging refreshments for attendees. I regularly sent out e-mails alerting the ESL lecturers in the program of the conference funds available. Notices were sent to everyone in the department about the workshop dates. At first, I received little to no response about conference funding, but as spring approached and opportunities to attend conferences increased, we began to have a steady stream of interested parties. Dr. Karen McBeth of ESL Programs and Dr. Alan Hirvela, Associate Professor of Second Language Studies discussed a reasonable dispersement of the funds to those seeking them. Although I emailed several Qualtrics survey reminders and I also dispersed hard copies at workshops, I received just 7 out of 18 complete forms. Initially the grant guidelines asked for those in the program to attend all six workshops, but I later realized that teaching and scheduling conflicts did not allow everyone to adhere to those specific policies. During the spring semester, I expanded the program funds to be available to any lecturer attending and/or presenting at a conference regardless of the number of workshops attended within the ESL department. See Appendix D.
Workshop Feedback

Most Popular Workshops: “Using Theater and Improv Techniques to Improve Grammar, Fluency, and Pronunciation” and “The State of ESL Programs”

Workshop Benefits Named: Expanding ESL Professional Development & Learning to Apply New Concepts to the Classroom

Open-ended comments included:
“Workshops are resourceful, so I hope the series of workshops continues.”
“I learned new information, teaching techniques, and career prep tips.”
“I enjoyed bring the team together and having collegial engagement.”
“I hope we can have these workshops next year as well.”
“It would be great if we could have this monthly workshop for professional development.”

Concluding Remarks:
Although the program was initially new to our ESL Department, we had a strong response to the workshops from the entire ESL staff and faculty. They really enjoyed spending time together to create further bonds across the programs and to grow professionally. There really were not any costs associated with the workshops since they were held internally and I usually brought in the refreshments. My recommendation would be for us to continue to hold three workshops each spring and fall for added continuity in our department. I also believe that now that our lecturers are aware that funds are readily available for conference support, they will more active in pursuing opportunities to attend and present at linguistic events in the future. I have already had a few questions related to the future funding of the program from a lecturer who is quite pleased with this great support system in place.