Faculty Learning Community on Flipped Classrooms at Valparaiso University

Alex Capaldi* and Melissa A. Desjarlais

Mathematics and Computer Science Department
Valparaiso University

MAA Session on Flipped Classrooms III
Joint Mathematics Meeting
January 18, 2014
Outline

1. What is an FLC?
2. Goals of our FLC
3. What We’ve Done
4. Feedback from Participants
Faculty Learning Community

Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- Voluntary: It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- Structured: To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- Multidisciplinary: You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- Yearlong: A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- Of size 8-12: Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- Voluntary: It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- Structured: To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- Multidisciplinary: You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- Yearlong: A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- Of size 8-12: Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- **Voluntary**: It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- **Structured**: To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- **Multidisciplinary**: You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- **Yearlong**: A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- **Of size 8-12**: Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Faculty Learning Community

Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- **Voluntary**: It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- **Structured**: To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- **Multidisciplinary**: You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- **Yearlong**: A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- **Of size 8-12**: Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Faculty Learning Community

Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- **Voluntary:** It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- **Structured:** To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- **Multidisciplinary:** You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- **Yearlong:** A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- **Of size 8-12:** Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Miami University (of Ohio) defines an FLC as having the following:

- **Voluntary**: It originates from faculty themselves because they have an area of study that they want to pursue in the company of colleagues.
- **Structured**: To seriously pursue the topic, members agree on some structure; the form is up to the group.
- **Multidisciplinary**: You get the benefits of co-learning with colleagues from other fields.
- **Yearlong**: A set time limit keeps the group focused, defines the limits of the issue to be studied.
- **Of size 8-12**: Experience has shown that too small a group has no staying power, and too large a group doesn’t allow for a real community spirit.
Meeting tri-weekly: The group decides how often to meet, but this is a good average to shoot for.

Building community: A key goal of an FLC is to create a positive community of co-learners to help combat the isolation of classroom teaching.

Development of SoTL: Often, but not always, FLC members choose to take on a classroom research project as the culmination of their work together.

Can be cohort-based or topic-based.
Meeting tri-weekly: The group decides how often to meet, but this is a good average to shoot for.

Building community: A key goal of an FLC is to create a positive community of co-learners to help combat the isolation of classroom teaching.

Development of SoTL: Often, but not always, FLC members choose to take on a classroom research project as the culmination of their work together.

Can be cohort-based or topic-based.
Meeting tri-weekly: The group decides how often to meet, but this is a good average to shoot for.

Building community: A key goal of an FLC is to create a positive community of co-learners to help combat the isolation of classroom teaching.

Development of SoTL: Often, but not always, FLC members choose to take on a classroom research project as the culmination of their work together.

Can be cohort-based or topic-based.
Meeting tri-weekly: The group decides how often to meet, but this is a good average to shoot for.

Building community: A key goal of an FLC is to create a positive community of co-learners to help combat the isolation of classroom teaching.

Development of SoTL: Often, but not always, FLC members choose to take on a classroom research project as the culmination of their work together.

Can be cohort-based or topic-based.
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement.
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library.
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year.
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10.
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week.
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently.
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement.
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
  - Meeting bi-weekly: Meet every other week
  - Building community: Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
  - Development of SoTL: Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary:** After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured:** Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement.
- **Multidisciplinary:** Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library.
- **Yearlong:** Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year.
- **Of size 8-12:** Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10.
- **Meeting bi-weekly:** Meet every other week.
- **Building community:** Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently.
- **Development of SoTL:** Option for those who are interested, not a requirement.
Our FLC works like this:

- **Voluntary**: After a survey of the faculty, Flipped Classrooms was identified as an area of interest.
- **Structured**: Regular meetings with readings (HW); signed a commitment agreement
- **Multidisciplinary**: Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Economics, Nursing, Library
- **Yearlong**: Meeting during 2013-2014 academic year
- **Of size 8-12**: Roster includes 12 names, attendance ranges 8-10
- **Meeting bi-weekly**: Meet every other week
- **Building community**: Discuss readings or what we have done in our classrooms recently
- **Development of SoTL**: Option for those who are interested, not a requirement
Goals of FLC at VU

- Share ideas with other faculty
- Provide a support group/mentoring for faculty interested in Flipped Classrooms
- Create a start-up guide to flipped classrooms
- Write a technical paper (internal to VU)
First two meetings - Each person shared experience level, how they flipped, tech used, etc.

Next three meetings - Readings (from SoTL articles to NY Times articles) and discussions

Last fall meeting - Guest speaker to describe experimental design in the classrooms
Insights participants have had

- Ways to try new things: increase participation, include videos, points for reading assignments
- They are not alone in trying to do less lecture
- Will have fewer course objectives: more depth, less breadth
- Individual teaching and course content could influence how well a flipped classroom works—may not be for everyone
- Happy that new style is encouraging us to revise/revamp our approaches
Some strengths mentioned by participants

- Meeting with others for discussion
  - Support group (with beer!)
  - Learning tips
  - Hearing what others are doing—including range of experiences, technology, methods, results, etc.
- Readings & resources that were collected—source of new ideas
- Non-threatening way to get feedback
Feedback–Areas for Improvement

Things participants would like to still do

- Participate in a flipped classroom: do an activity that someone has used
- More guest speakers

Things to improve

- Different (quieter) meeting location
- More reading or incentive to read
Thank you!

Emails:  alex.capaldi@valpo.edu  
         melissa.desjarlais@valpo.edu