



Collegial Study Groups and GraSUS GK12: A Novel Approach for Professional Development

North Dakota State University GraSUS-II

Graduate Student University School

Collaborative for Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology

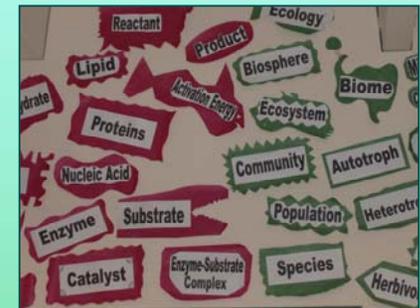
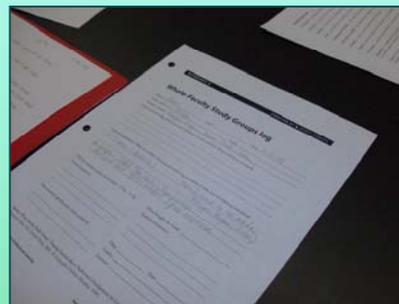
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Professional development is an integral component for all participants in the NDSU GraSUS project. This year the project has implemented a unique form of participant collaboration that is based on the *Whole-Faculty Study Groups* developed by the National Staff Development Council [Murphy C, Murphy M. Study Groups. In: Easton LB, editor. *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning*, Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council, 2004. p.217-230.]

We call our version *Collegial Study Groups* (CSG's). Teams of 5-8 teachers, fellows, and NDSU faculty members meet for several hours 1-2 times each month to identify instructional and learning goals and to determine how to document the impact of GraSUS classroom activities on student learning. Teams focus not only on developing enhanced content, but also on gathering data to measure the effectiveness of the activities.

With the CSG concept, participants can best determine the needs of their students, the interventions that will promote learning, and the means of determining whether those learning goals have been achieved. The emphasis is on shared responsibility, accountability, and leadership using a cooperative and collaborative framework that recognizes and values the expertise and contributions of all group members. The collegial study group process is designed to help participants make data-driven decisions about appropriate enrichment activities and their apparent impact on student learning.

"The CSG has been great. I think that we have shared some good ideas, and received input/insight from different perspectives.... During the first semester our "thread" was assessment. We looked at standardized test scores, our content standards, and how we could better track student learning by using the Interwrite PRS system.... Sometimes an hour isn't enough, but we can always pick up where we left off. I like the format and like the interaction. I feel that we accomplish more in this format than we do during our school PLC time due to the fact that we are in charge of the content and less time is spent on administrative things."

~GraSUS Teacher

An example of an intervention recently developed by a Collegial Study Group is a "Science Vocabulary Improvement" study which is aligned with a district initiative. In this plan, "Wall Words" posters are being constructed that aim to assist students in learning basic science vocabulary associated with the scientific method. These posters will be placed in all science classrooms at a partner high school. Pretesting and post-testing will occur to measure the effectiveness of this intervention.



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