

**Scholarship of Teaching and Learning  
Summary Report  
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**Situation:**

The Chancellor's office of University Extension nominated me for the distinguished Wisconsin Teaching Scholar's Program 2005-2006. One person from each UW System campus is recognized for this award, yearly. I was the first University Extension person to be so recognized. The award provides time to further develop teaching and research within an educational program. As per the suggestion and support of Northern District Director, John Preissing, I pursued development of a teaching related to the FIRO-B (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior).

**Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) "What Works?" question**

All SoTL participants develop a scholarly question to pursue. My question was: How can learners increase their awareness and understanding of interpersonal needs\* and be able to apply their learning to interactions with others?

\*as defined by Will Schutz' FIRO-B (Fundamentals of Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior) instrument that measures interpersonal needs for inclusion, control, and affection

**Project Design**

The FIRO-B is a powerful tool that assesses how someone's interpersonal needs affect their behavior towards other people. The theory behind the FIRO-B instrument is based on the assumption that all human interaction may be divided into three categories: issues surrounding inclusion, issues surrounding control, and issues surrounding affection.

I developed a teaching/learning experience (3-4 hour workshop), using the FIRO-B tool and other active learning activities to assist my colleagues to consider how expressed/wanted inclusion, control, and affection affect their interactions with colleagues and community members. The FIRO-B instrument has the potential (along with other tools and approaches) to increase team productivity and reduce conflict.

The FIRO-B is commonly used to help people:

- \* Become aware of their interpersonal needs
- \* Develop strategies to meet their needs
- \* Become aware of how their needs may be perceived by others
- \* Identify sources of conflict with others
- \* Build more satisfying relationships
- \* Understand their own leadership behaviors

Understanding of self and others contributes to improved learning and has the potential to help us work more effectively with others. Recognizing how we come across to others, how and why conflict may develop, and understanding our own needs helps a person to see how they might adjust current behavior to increase effectiveness.

**Inputs:**

As part of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning I attended the following Office of Professional and Instructional Development offerings. Key seminars are noted.

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| May 31 – June 2 | Faculty College, UW-Richland<br>L. Dee Fink, Designing Courses for Significant Learning<br>Elizabeth F. Barkley, Engaging Students in Active Learning through Collaboration:<br>Integrating Theory, Research, and Practice |
| June 20 - 24    | Summer Institute<br>Barbara Walvoord, Assessing Student Learning<br>Anthony Ciccone, Rubrics for Educational Assessment  |
| October 21      | Fall Meeting   |

I had recently attended the FIRO-B Masterclass Qualifying Program (December 2004).

Support from the Northern District Director significantly assisted in my SoTL project and included the following:

- Arrangements (promotion, registration, facilities, audio-visual equipment) for my FIRO-B professional development inservice to Northern District colleagues
- Funding to pay for FIRO-B instruments and the Introduction to FIRO-B booklets for all participants

**Outputs:**

I developed a half-day participatory workshop including the following:

- Self-scorable FIRO-B instrument
- Introduction to FIRO-B booklet
- Rubric for addressing interpersonal needs within a group
- Theory of Self-Concept form and self-reflection about significance, competence and lovability
- Flip Chart/Discussion looking at parts of a board meeting and how that fits meeting interpersonal needs
- Group Grid activity for sorting characteristics into interpersonal needs—inclusion, control, or affection
- IFAT (Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique) multiple choice quiz to help learners distinguish between expressed & wanted inclusion, control, and affection
- Power point slides used to visualize ideas presented in lecture/discussion
- Castaway movie segments
- End-of-session and follow-up evaluations

I piloted the workshop in December, 2005, with four colleagues; then, made adjustments and revisions.

Human subject forms were completed for the Institutional Review Board approval. Both end-of-session and follow-up evaluation forms were submitted and approved.

Forty-seven (47) colleagues attended the professional development on February, 7, 2006, in Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

**Impacts:**

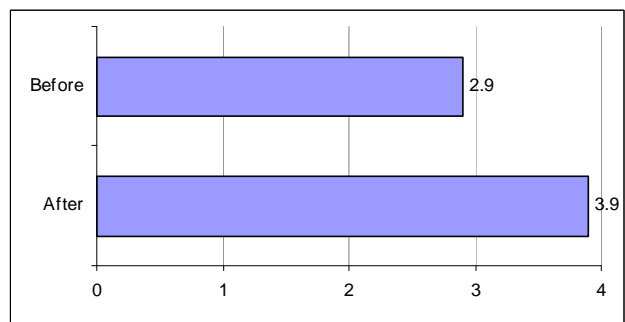
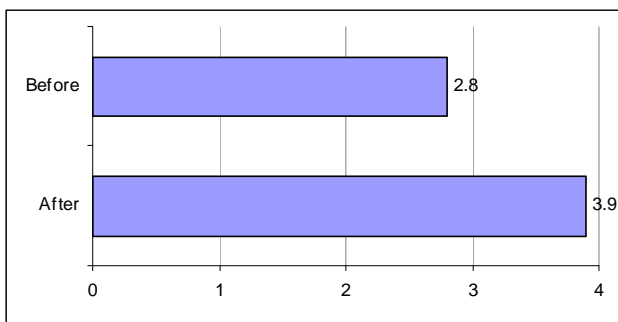
**End-of-Session Evaluation**

Forty-four completed the end-of-session evaluation. Using the scale:

1 = not aware, 2 = slightly aware, 3 = somewhat aware, 4 = aware, and 5 = very aware, mean results from the retrospective evaluation were as follows.

I am aware of characteristics and behaviors associated with interpersonal needs.

How likely are you to apply your understanding of interpersonal needs to your group leadership roles and activities?



At the end-of-session, participants were asked, “As a result of participating in this program, how might you apply understanding of interpersonal needs to your work?” Selected responses are as follows:

- Involve more people in meetings; be more inclusive.
- Bring more "control" to my leadership roles. New understanding that the term "control" is not necessarily bad; before presentation I viewed this dimension in a negative way.
- Will help me provide for the needs/wishes of volunteers/volunteer appreciation/planning.
- Continue addressing needs of youth so as to encourage their participation.

- I liked the end piece where I applied it to my work with groups. I will use that tool to help me be a better group facilitator. I also will reflect on the information about my own profile.
- Even though I prefer flexibility, I need to recognize that some others need organization.
- Try to figure others out and how I can adjust to the situation.
- Recognizing one's driving force/purpose.

### Six-Month Follow-up Evaluation

Sixteen participants provided input to the six-month follow-up telephone interview. Using a scale of 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = very much, resulted in the following mean ratings:

#### For Self:

- 2.4 Have a better understanding of your interpersonal needs
- 2.3 Understand your driving interpersonal need
- 2.3 Experienced self-affirmation through improved understanding of your interpersonal needs

#### For Others:

- 2.4 Recognize others' interpersonal needs
- 2.1 Able to recognize another person's driving interpersonal need
- 2.7 Feel better able to accept others through improved understanding of their interpersonal needs
- 2.6 Adjust your interactions because you are more aware of other's interpersonal needs
- 2.3 Used understanding interpersonal needs to improve relations with others

#### As a Group Leader/Facilitator:

- 2.2 Adjusted group functioning to address interpersonal needs
- 1.1 Used the rubric to assess group functioning where I have a leadership role.

It appears that most participants gained a better understanding of their own interpersonal needs. Furthermore, attendees are better able to recognize others' interpersonal needs and accept and adjust interactions with others.

Although they had adjusted their group functioning to address interpersonal needs, the rubric was not used after the session. Participants had completed the rubric for a group with which they work during the workshop. A Pearson Correlation relating FIRO-B scores to rubric ratings had two significant findings. Wanted control FIRO-B scores are negatively correlated to rubric ratings for expressed inclusion (0.01 level) and wanted affection (0.05 level).

In the six-month follow-up interviews, it became very clear that colleagues were using FIRO-B knowledge to improve their effectiveness with people. Powerful examples of understanding interpersonal needs are illustrated in the following case studies. (Definition notes: *expressed* indicates how much you prefer to initiate the behavior and *wanted* indicates how much you prefer others to initiate behavior. *Inclusion* relates to including others and how much attention and recognition is wanted from others. *Control* indicates how much influence and responsibility you want and how much you want others to lead you. *Affection* denotes closeness or distance with others.)

#### Wanted Inclusion examples:

"One that sticks out in my mind is my work with our VISTA worker. When we talk about her assignments, we consider her definite need for recognition. She has to have affirmation for her work. She thrives and excels in those situations. Also, I have to take time to hear about her experiences as she gets a second layer of recognition by having me listen to her tell me about her experiences where she was recognized."

"With Friends of CCCC citizen group, XXXX was hurt and offended because he was not recognized for his past efforts--which were substantial. I worked with the group and others to recognize his work by giving him the attention, stroking, and appreciation he needed for the work that he had done. He is now a county board member and is in a position to wield his sword for the group not against the group."

"I help host a LLLL Lakes Conference that attracts 240-300 people. We hold about six planning meetings during the year. Each person is the most prominent lakes person from their county. Most are retired professionals. XXXX, chair of the group from CCCC County, is fierce about his ideas. Group members call him, "pit-bull of the group." He and YYYY want to have everyone hear all their ideas. XXXX is retired CEO of a manufacturing company and YYYY is a retired history professor from an Ivy League college. I stroke XXXX and YYYY by calling them and sending them separate emails. I help them see their ideas are great. However, not everyone in the group wants their ideas. But by applying an understanding of wanted inclusion, I have XXXX and YYYY engaged and productive, not hostile and unproductive toward the group. Life is better this way."

**Expressed Control examples:**

"In different organizations with different styles of people, some have to be in control. I think to my self, "You want to be in control? Ok, here...." I step back and let go knowing that the person has to have that control. I am better able to satisfy and work with them."

"I have mostly applied it to my work. The awareness I got was the control piece and how important it is. I used it in office with colleagues and in the community. It frees me up to build relationships. I acknowledge the other person and validate their worth."

**Wanted Control example:**

"It seemed like everyone else in the group did not want to take the leadership role. So I stepped up and took the lead, but included ideas from others. I developed an agenda and a list of topics for in-service. Before when I asked for input, I got nothing. But when I had a list of topic ideas, they gave their ideas and input. They had wanted control and looked to me for the leadership to organize the group and professional development in-services."

**Expressed Affection example:**

"With the XXXX I and the co-chair have incorporated different activities at the beginning of the meeting to address different styles. We wanted to have people connect on a more personal level. We used an activity from the Quick DISC cards with one word adjectives, describing contributions you make to the group. The activity helped us realize our and other's contributions to the team. It built trust and rapport among our group members who have a common interest by starting with a people focus."

**General examples:**

"On my leader board, I am more aware of leaders and their differences and how they view their volunteer roles. Sometimes they would jump right in and other times are standoffish. By better understanding what motivates them, I sell the pluses to them. I am a better sales person."

"I used the FIRO-B in working with families where I do home visitation. I have to build trusting relationships so I reviewed the FIRO-B information looking for ways to make people more comfortable. I developed questions to get at their driving needs so we could set goals."

"I am incredibly picky about inclusion. I think about why I haven't allowed a person into my life who wants to be a part of it. I consider my decision and wonder if another person should be included. With work and inclusion, for me, it's putting principles above personalities. Having a professional relationship does not mean friendship. I am getting better at separating work relations from private, personal relationships."

"After I had the training, and I had our staff meeting, I tried to include their (nutrition educators) thinking, reasoning--to listen to them. When you listen to somebody, you include them. Not being heard/seen can cause conflict."

"It's another tool I've used to do some serious reflection on a personal relationship that was following an old familiar pattern. I looked at a budding relationship and made an assessment--no, thank you and go our separate ways. This tool helps empower us to be who we are and not struggle to be what someone else wants us to be."

It appears that having knowledge about and application approaches for relating to interpersonal needs has the potential to improve interactions with others. The FIRO-B is a tool that helps to make this understanding possible. The author's development of the rubric and other active learning strategies empowered colleagues to apply the knowledge to their work with others.

Original work created as part of SoTL:

- Teaching curriculum for half-day workshop
- Group Grid activity for sorting characteristics into interpersonal needs—inclusion, control, or affection
- IFAT (Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique) multiple choice quiz to help learners distinguish between expressed & wanted inclusion, control, and affection
- Rubric for Applying FIRO-B Interpersonal Needs to a Group Leadership Role
- Evaluations: End-of-Session and Follow-up

**Implications**

The workshop has been adapted for use with community leadership groups such as the Vilas Visions Leadership Program. Future opportunities will be sought for sharing this useful and helpful tool.