**What Faculty Say about Teaching with Cases**

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In 2010-11 we surveyed more than 100 faculty who had attended our four day Summer Institute on Teaching Native Cases and/or our one day workshops. We were interested in knowing how they used cases in their courses and the impact it had on students. Here is a brief summary of what they had to say.

**Who responded? What is their background?**

Sixty six of the faculty and administrators attending our faculty development activities responded. Half of the respondents identified themselves as Native American. While the largest number worked at four- year colleges or universities (43%), sizable numbers worked at tribal colleges (18%) or two- year colleges (10%). Fifty three per cent (53%) were full time faculty: a large majority (70%) had taught for 8 years or more. Only 24% of the respondents said they had no background or practical experience with American Indian studies. In terms of courses taught, 52% said they teach interdisciplinary courses, 29% teach graduate studies, 47% teach general education courses, 35% teach intro courses in the major, and 22% teach more advanced courses in the major. Twenty two percent (22%) teach online courses.

**Use of Cases**

Fifty two percent (52%) of the respondents said they had used cases prior to attending our Summer Institute or workshops. After the Institute or workshops, the percent saying they used cases rose to 77%. This figure understates the use rate since a substantial number of respondents indicated they were now in non –teaching roles. An overwhelming majority (91%) of the respondents found the case teaching method compatible with their usual teaching approach.

In terms of how they typically use cases, many respondents (53%) reported using cases that can be completed in one class period, but 42% also said they use cases that extend over 2 to 5 class periods. The respondents were divided in terms of the number of cases they use each term, ranging from 1 to 6 or more. There was overwhelming agreement among the respondents that cases were very appropriate for online courses.

**What are the results of using cases ? Native cases?**

When asked about the results of using cases in their classrooms the respondents reported very positive results with large majorities agreeing with the following statements about impact:

* Students learn to view issues from multiple perspectives-97% agree
* Students are more engaged-93% agree
* Students develop stronger critical thinking skills-90% agree
* Students have a better grasp of the practical applications of core course concepts-89% agree
* Students strengthen communication skills-85% agree
* Students develop positive peer-to-peer relationships-78% agree
* Students gain confidence working in groups-61% agree

Additional benefits of using cases reported by smaller numbers of faculty include attendance increasing, fewer students failing or withdrawing, and student evaluations of faculty becoming more positive.

The above responses were about the impact of using cases in general. When asked more specifically about the impact of NATIVE cases the respondents pointed to several noteworthy dimensions:

* Students gain understanding of important issues in Indian Country-100% agree
* Native cases raise awareness of non-Native students about Native perspectives and issues-100% agree
* Native cases enhance the scientific curriculum for Native students-100% agree
* Students feel the curriculum is more culturally relevant- 83% agree

**What is challenging in using cases in the classroom?**

61% of the respondents reported that some students find the format challenging. Group work is particularly noted as an obstacle at times. 58% of the respondent s indicated that dominance of some students in discussion groups can be a challenge, and 40% noted some unevenness in student willingness to work in groups. When students do not see a clear connection between the cases and the overall curriculum, this can also be an obstacle according to 25% of the respondents. Faculty also pointed to lack of appropriate cases can also be an obstacle as well as lack of prep time.

**How is student learning assessed? What is assessed?**

Faculty report that they assess students learning with cases through a variety of different approaches including course evaluations, tests, case analysis, journals, peer evaluation forms, projects, and papers. They were interested in data on motivation, perceptions, attitudes, motivation, attendance, student engagement, grades/completion rates, learning and clinical skills/tasks.