"Stayin' Alive:" Meeting Faculty Mid-Career Professional Renewal Needs

By Amy Strage, Carolyn Nelson and Susan Meyers

Abstract

We present findings from in-depth interviews with mid-career faculty who describe themselves as "thriving." As we ground ourselves in the theoretical contexts of Erikson's stage of "generativity vs. stagnation" and Dweck's construct of "growth mindsets," we discuss themes that run through their personal narratives and delineate key elements of the role campus leaders can play in maintaining the vitality of these "keystone" faculty.

> "If a man does not know what port he is steering for, no wind is favorable" (from Roman philosopher, Seneca, first century A.D.).

With these words, Seneca captures an important truth about the critical need to establish explicit goals to guide us as we make our way along our personal and professional journeys. One could easily imagine incorporating these pearls of wisdom into a commencement address designed to inspire newly-minted college graduates. One could just as aptly invoke them in summing up advice and strategies for mid-career faculty trying to "stay alive." Below, we share findings from a descriptive study of a sample of tenured and fully-promoted faculty who view themselves as "vital." Their narratives, their interests and their areas of expertise are quite divergent. What they have in common is a commitment to identifying and pursuing explicit, authentic and personally meaningful goals, and, in so doing, drawing from and contributing to the professional communities with which they feel personally engaged. As we lay out themes that run through these narratives, we consider the implications for campus leaders and the role they can play in maintaining the vitality of their institutions.

Nationwide, over half of higher education faculty are at mid-career. These "keystone faculty" are, in many ways, the backbone of their institutions (Baldwin, Lunceford, and Vanderlinden 2005; Chang 2006). They often assume challenging and unpopular roles within their universities; they are frequently last in line for rewards and incentives. With major professional hurdles behind them and possibly twenty or more years before they retire, some mid-career faculty flourish; they are described by their peers as "vital" (Baldwin 1984; Clark and Lewis 1985); they are productive scholars and active university citizens; they are inspired and inspiring teachers and mentors. Others who seem to be floundering are described as "stagnant" or "stuck" (Boice

1993; Cheeatow 1997; Clark and Corcoran 1989; Kanter 1979; Millis 1994); they are in need of "renewal of the spirit" (Murray 1994).

The need for and impact of professional development for junior faculty is well documented. However, very little attention has been paid to the needs of mid-career faculty, despite the fact that they are responsible for more than half of the teaching, research and professional outreach conducted on their campuses and that they play a critical role in advancing the missions of their universities. Surprisingly, little empirical research has been conducted to identify characteristics of the individual faculty members that might permit one to predict how they are likely to experience the presses of mid-career or to craft professional development strategies that are particularly effective in meeting their individual needs. The most consistently reported concern among mid-career faculty is that they have difficulty staying current in their fields, or starting up again in a new field, when, as "the life-span for the standard of excellence becomes shorter and shorter" (Camblin and Steger 2000, 2) their training and areas of expertise become obsolete. Responding to the needs of students and mastering new pedagogies tend to be of concern as well, if only to a lesser degree (Baldwin and Blackburn 1981). Other research suggests that faculty disengagement can have deleterious effects on the caliber of every aspect of the faculty member's work, and ultimately, on the reputation of the institution (Boice 1993). While some authors note the relative ease with which "vitality" and enthusiasm are fostered when faculty development goals are in line with the institutional mission (Bland and Schmitz 1990; Chan and Burton 1995; Mills 2000), others have cautioned against a "domestication" and counter-productive stifling of initiative and creativity that can arise when the structures designed to support faculty are delineated without adequate input from them (Clegg 2003).

Theoretical Framework and Questions Addressed

In fall 2007, we began a study designed to identify key factors affecting the professional growth and renewal of mid-career faculty on our campus. This work is grounded in two complementary theoretical frame works. First, it draws upon Erik Erikson's (1964/1993) theory of human development by analyzing the experiences of mid-career faculty as they illustrate themes pertaining to his developmental conflict of "generativity vs. stagnation." Erikson proposed that key challenges for this stage of adulthood include seeing oneself as productive, needed, and guiding the next generation. "Facilitative environments," conducive to meeting these challenges, permit experimentation with new and varied roles, and afford the individual choices that may lead to meaningful achievement and permit time for reflection and retrospection (Widick, Parker, and Knefelkamp 1978). Unlike professionals in other realms, faculty must typically find opportunities for change and growth within the context of their universities, as relatively few opt to leave (the security of) the academy for other careers, and few change institutions.

Our work also draws upon Carol Dweck's model of achievement motivational profiles, contrasting "mastery oriented" and "learned helpless" individuals (1999, 2006).

Mastery oriented individuals have a "growth mindset." They approach situations armed with the conviction that, with effort, they can succeed and that failures and setbacks constitute valuable "learning experiences." Given the choice between an easy task, where they are fairly certain to succeed but not likely to learn anything new, or a more difficult task, where they may fail but are more likely to learn something new, they will opt for the more challenging course. Learned-helpless individuals have what Dweck has termed a "fixed" mindset. They are readily discouraged "when the going gets tough;" they are easily deterred and quick to conclude that they just don't have "what it takes" when their initial efforts to rise to a challenge are thwarted. Given the same choice, they will opt for the easier, "safe bet" course of action. A vast literature consisting of both naturalistic and experimental studies of children and adults has consistently shown that conditions resembling the "facilitative environments" described above lead to the adoption or maintenance of mastery orientation and growth mindsets (Wigfield and Eccles 2001).

Our study sought to address three sets of questions:

(1) How do mid-career faculty, particularly those working in a metropolitan university like ours, "stay alive?" That is, what sorts of tasks do they embrace to retain or achieve a sense of professional vitality, and how do they come to select those tasks?

(2) What is distinctive about their approach to the tasks they have chosen to take on? Do they, in fact, view themselves as "generative" (as opposed to "stagnant")? Do they, in fact, appear to have a "growth" (as opposed to "fixed") mindset?

(3) What can campus leaders (upper level administrators, deans, chairs) do to help faculty access and create the kinds of "facilitative environments" in which they might thrive?

Methods and Key Findings

In order to answer these questions, we conducted a series of structured, in-depth interviews with mid-career faculty, individually and in small groups (see Interview Protocol, Appendix A.) Participants were tenured and fully-promoted and represented a wide spectrum of academic disciplines. Everyone we contacted agreed to be interviewed and shared their "story" enthusiastically. The findings we present here are based on a content analysis of interviews with twelve faculty members.

Three themes emerged from their responses to our questions. Taken together, they lend support to the notion that faculty who describe themselves as "vital" view themselves as falling somewhere along the "generative" end of the Eriksonian continuum, and possessing the critical attributes and dispositions of a "mastery orientation" and a "growth mindset." They also provide evidence of the positive impact that "facilitative environments" can have on engaging, sustaining and nurturing a thriving faculty.

**Theme 1. The importance, and challenge, of
setting oneself a personally meaningful professional goal.**
Our sample of mid-career faculty epitomized Erikson's struggle between
"generativity" and "stagnation" (1964/1993) as they unanimously described *the need
to delineate a clear and authentic purpose*, one that made them feel they could *make
an important and tangible contribution* to students, to faculty colleagues, or to their
scholarly or professional communities. To be sure, the particular sources of satisfaction
varied greatly from one faculty member to another.

- *For some, the focus was on teaching and on meeting the needs of students.* In these
  cases, faculty articulated goals pertaining to developing competence and confidence
  with respect to new pedagogies, new instructional technologies, new ways of relating
  to students, new roles to assume in welcoming and supporting students as they made
  their way to and through the university. One spoke of "teaching old dogs some new
  tricks" as he talked about mastering new technologies so that he could "connect with
  the millenials and speak their language." One spoke of "leaving a comfort zone" as
  he "stretched himself" and sought to master teaching techniques that had, heretofore,
  felt "foreign, kind of unnatural and just plain weird."

- *For others, the focus was on scholarship and practice.* In these cases, they described
  new and invigorating avenues of intellectual inquiry, successful efforts to secure
  funding for their research, mastery of new forms of artistic expression, and
  rewarding partnerships with colleagues on and off campus.

- *For others still, the focus was on service.* They described the new ways they had
  found to contribute to the university, as they assumed various administrative
  positions within their departments and colleges, as they mentored new faculty, or as
  they forged new partnerships with entities and colleagues off campus. One faculty
  member began creating relatively sophisticated PowerPoint presentations as a way of
  digesting data disseminated in journal articles and technical reports. Recognizing the
  value of organizing complex sets of findings in this way, he set his sights on
  preparing a series of presentations to "bring colleagues up to speed" on policy issues
  of current relevance. He derived great satisfaction from what he saw as educating
  other faculty about issues they needed to know about but maybe did not have the
  time or the skill to wade through on their own.

- In many instances, *the feeling of vitality came from finding new and exciting ways in
  which their areas of professional endeavor could inform each other.* One faculty
  member, for example, described "exciting synergies" where "the worlds that I have
  been working in finally seemed to come together in a really gratifying way," where
  "I could put ideas from my research world into place in the classroom and make
  them work and really understand for the first time."

In each case respondents described how a critical step of their process was *finding or creating the right "community."* For several, it was a matter of establishing and maintaining contact with a group of colleagues with similar research interests. For others, it was a matter of forging connections through a university-supported service-learning initiative with community partners whose need they could help to meet. For one, it was finding a "writing buddy." In each case, members of these "communities" spurred each other on. Minimal time was spent "griping and complaining." The tone was invariably constructive and "can-do."

Respondents all acknowledged that the process of articulating and advancing their goals was *surprisingly challenging* and that it required *deliberate and regular, if not constant, attention.* They also spoke of the need to devise some kind of *metric for assessing their progress* toward achieving their goal.

- One respondent described himself as "gaining traction" and "getting a second wind." He said it had taken a few years for "things to all come together," but that now he felt that he had "never been sharper."

- Another respondent who described herself as "the kind of person who can get really interested in pretty much anything," recalled being "almost paralyzed by so many options" until she realized she needed to focus on her "one true passion." She revisits her short-term and long-term plan regularly and, very intentionally, makes "mid-course adjustments" as needed.

- One faculty member spoke of "good days when she 'felt focused,'" and when "the pieces seem to be coming together" and "bad days," when "all I can do is mop up, take care of busy work."

- Another respondent, who has earned accolades and high praise for his teaching and his scholarship, reported that he was "never at a loss for projects to keep me going;" his "breakthrough" came when he "figured out my canary in the coal mine," and so was able to "pick up on signs that it was time to pull back and refocus" or "get moving again."

- Yet another respondent, who recalled her journey through the tenure and promotion process as having been "particularly bruising and infantilizing," commented on how "liberated" she had felt when she realized she had "officially made it," but then how quickly she came to feel "stuck and lost" until she could "find the thread" of her "personal narrative." She maintains an "idea journal," and rereads her entries to it regularly, to be sure she is "on track" and not "just stalling out."

Theme 2: The importance of being discerning and deliberate in embracing opportunities for growth.

Across all of the narratives we examined, a second theme that emerged was how well faculty members' reflections about how they went about addressing their professional growth and renewal needs exemplified a "mastery orientation" and a "growth mindset" (Dweck 1999, 2006).

- For the most part, they believed that, *with effort, they could master pretty much any challenge and solve any problem* on their own or with the assistance of others. One respondent described engaging in "an intentional review" of the knowledge and skills she "brought to the table," and an equally purposeful process of reflecting on the skill set she needed to look for in prospective collaborators to complement her. One faculty member described "being in tune with my own process of learning and discovery" as a "critical starting point." One faculty member described her most useful asset as "knowing who I am and what I do well." She described herself as happiest when she could focus on problems and challenges that "play to my strengths."

- They *exemplified "learning" (as opposed to "performance") goals*. They sought out opportunities where they expected they would learn something new and personally enriching. One respondent talked about flipping through conference programs to pick sessions devoted to topics she was curious but knew little about rather that sessions devoted to topics with which she was already very familiar. Another respondent described "fruitful opportunities" that would "stretch her in new directions."

- They were remarkably unafraid of making errors. In fact, they saw *mistakes as valuable leaning opportunities*. One faculty member described, with great glee, how much she had learned from "whopping productive failures" such as "courses that had bombed and projects that had not worked." Another respondent described his frustration when a colleague suggested that he invoke a loophole and remove a set of poor student ratings from his professional dossier rather than include the ratings along with the thoughtful essay he had written about what he thought had transpired in the course in question and what he had learned from the experience. Another faculty member, a chemist, described herself as "naturally drawn to uncharted waters where mistakes are more likely."

- Every one of the participants in our study was *particularly open to meaningful feedback and constructive criticism*. They welcomed "insights from a fresh pair of eyes." They sought out collaborators who would "be brutally honest" with their critiques of their work. Several respondents spoke of a tension they felt between "public" and "private" practice: they felt they needed to develop their idea or their project enough so that there would be "enough structure to respond to," and so that others' input wouldn't "derail the whole idea." One faculty member likened the process of deciding when to solicit input to "waiting until the Jell-O was past the

completely water stage, but still pretty jiggly and not yet completely set."

- These "vital" faculty members were *hard task-masters*. They set themselves ambitious goals and criticized themselves when they saw themselves "being lazy and complacent." They were equally unsympathetic about colleagues who they perceived had chosen to be disengaged. They had little patience for faculty whom they saw as "stagnant" or "dead wood." They were frustrated that they "sucked up resources and couldn't be trusted to carry their own weight." They felt relatively little empathy for them, given what they saw as "so many opportunities, everywhere!" and "the hundreds of ways to stay excited and involved."

Theme 3: The importance of the culture and climate and policies and practices established by institutional leaders.

As they described the conditions that enabled them to thrive, our respondents were quick to comment on the vital role institutional leaders played in the process. The cultures and climates they felt their chairs and deans and upper echelon administrators had created, and the policies and practices they had set into motion exemplified precisely the sorts of "facilitative environments" that have been shown to nurture "generativity" and "mastery orientations" (Widick, Parker, and Knefelkamp 1978).

- Respondents described being *encouraged to "step up to the plate" and to push themselves to assume new and different roles* as mentors, as team leaders, as point-people for college-wide responses to initiatives from off-campus. As she recounted the circumstances that led her to ascend to a leadership role in her college, one faculty member described her dean as someone who seemed to have an "uncanny ability to know when I was ready for something new and to know what I was ready for."

- They described *administrators who were supportive of their requests* for new assignments or release time to pursue new interests. They described leaders who were accommodating, open and flexible. One faculty member commented on how he would be forever grateful to his chair "for always trying to find a way to make things work."

- They described climates and cultures where they felt they were given the *latitude to experiment with new ideas*, but where there was also an *expectation of accountability*. One faculty member spoke of feeling she had "the freedom to try out new ways of doing things, as long as, in the end, the job got done."

- Faculty were also quick to describe cultures and climates and policies and practices that they found unintentionally antithetical to their professional growth and development, that they felt threatened to make them feel stagnant. For example, one faculty member recalled a time a few years earlier when the offerings at the campus' center for faculty development consisted almost exclusively of sessions on innovative instructional technology. He described this as "an insidious deterrent to authentic professional growth and development" inasmuch as it made him feel like "a tree that was being pruned to grow in a shape that certainly did not come naturally."

Closing Thoughts:
Implications for Institutional Leaders

There are undoubtedly nearly as many "stories" as there are individual faculty members, and it would be inappropriate to attempt to paint the experience of their professional trajectories with too broad a brush. It is clear, however, from this modest sample that "vital" faculty enthusiastically apply their talents and their efforts as they embrace their work. They are, in fact, paradigm examples of Erikson's "generative" individual, and they do, in fact, appear to have a "growth mindset," as described by Dweck. To the degree that these preliminary findings hold up across a wider sample of our faculty, the question will then be how best to ensure that the institution provides a context for faculty to chart their course, as well as resources to help those who may get "stuck" along the way. In the meantime, we close with a set of considerations concerning implications for the role of institutional leaders.

- As the people who are ultimately accountable for moving the work of the institution forward, it is incumbent upon institutional leaders to keep the "big picture" in mind. On the one hand, this entails looking forward and outward, monitoring what opportunities and challenges lie ahead, what jobs need to be done, and what roles need to be filled. On the other hand, it involves looking inward, to see what talent can be deployed, what kinds of expertise can be nurtured and honed so that the work can get done.

- Leaders must know their people and the roles they can play; know their strengths, their needs, their dispositions, their passions, and how to engage them. They must be prepared to be the "connector" (Gladwell 2000) who brings teams of people together to work toward a common goal which none of them could achieve alone. Authentic win-win situations can be set up by enjoining mid-career faculty to play key roles in advancing the mission of the university, key roles that will allow them to thrive as they take on new kinds of responsibilities.

- Leaders must keep the institutional mission and vision in mind but be wary of "domesticating" the faculty (Clegg 2003). Good "connectors" recognize the importance that faculty place on autonomy and self-determination.

- Leaders must recruit new faculty carefully, looking for evidence that they approach their work with "growth" mindsets. As they move through the tenure and promotion process, they will need those dispositional traits to set new goals for themselves once they find themselves at the point in their professional trajectory where motivation must be intrinsic.

- And last but not least, institutional leaders must not give up on "dormant" mid-career faculty. As much of a liability as they may be when they consume resources, under-produce, and endanger morale, they can be re-energized. While their more vital and engaged colleagues may have grown impatient with them, it is all the more imperative that someone with the leader's distance and perspective step in to create a meaningful opportunity for professional growth that will re-engage them.

References

Baldwin, R. 1984. The changing development needs of an aging professoriate. In *Teaching and Aging, #19*, ed. C. M. N. Mehrotra, 45-56. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Baldwin, R. 1990. Faculty vitality beyond the research university. *Journal of Higher Education*, 61:160-180.

Baldwin, R., and R. Blackburn. 1981. The academic career as a developmental process. *Journal of Higher Education*, 52:598-614.

Baldwin, R., C. Lunceford, and K. Vanderlinden. 2005. Faculty in the middle years: Illuminating an overlooked phase of academic life. *The Review of Higher Education*, 29:97-118.

Bataille, G., and B. Brown. 2006. *Faculty career paths*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Bland, C. J., and C. C. Schmitz. 1990. A guide to the literature on faculty development. In *Enhancing faculty careers*, eds. J. H. Schuster and D. W. Wheeler and Associates, 298-328. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Boice, R. 1993. Primal origins and later correctives for mid-career disillusionment. In *New directions for teaching and learning: Developing senior faculty as teachers*, eds. M. J. Finkelstein and M. W. Lacelle-Peterson, 33-42. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Camblin, Jr., L., and J. Steger. 2000. Rethinking faculty development. *Higher Education*, 39:1-18.

Chan, S., and J. Burton. 1995. Faculty vitality in the comprehensive university: Changing context and concerns. *Research in Higher Education*, 36:219-234.

Chang, D. 2006. Reinforcing our "keystone" faculty: Strategies to support faculty in the middle years of academic life. *Liberal Education*. http://www.thefreelibrary.com/_/print/PrintArticle.aspx?id=155111123.

Cheeatow, A. 1997. The challenge of faculty renewal. *College Quarterly*, 4:1-8.

Clark, S. M., and M. Corcoran. Faculty renewal and change. 1989. In *New direction for institutional research: Managing faculty resources*, eds. G. G. Lozier and M. J. Dooris, 63:19-32. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clark, S. M., and D. R. Lewis. 1985. *Faculty vitality and institutional productivity—critical perspectives for higher education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Claxton, C., and P. Murrell. 1984. Developmental theory as a guide for maintaining the vitality of college faculty. In *Teaching and Aging, #19*, ed. C. M. N. Mehrotra, 29-44. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clegg, S. 2003. Problematising ourselves: Continuing professional development in higher education. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 8:37-50.

Dweck, C. 1999. *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality and development.* Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press/Taylor & Francis.

Dweck, C. 2006. *The new psychology of success.* New York: Random House.

Erikson, E. 1964/1993. *Childhood and society.* New York: Norton.

Gladwell, M. 2000. *The Tipping Point.* New York: Little Brown & Company.

Kanter, R.M. 1979. Changing the shape of work: Reform in academe. In *Current Issues in Higher Education*, ed. R. Edgerton. Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education.

Millis, B. 1994. Faculty development in the 1990's: What it is and why we can't wait. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 72:454-464.

Mills, N. 2000. Now that I'm tenured, where do I go from here? *Council on Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, 181-183.

Murray, J. 1994. Why teaching portfolios? *Community College Review*, 22:33-43.

Sorcinelli, M. D., A. Austin, P. Eddy, and A. Beach. 2006. *Creating the future of faculty development: learning from the past, understanding the present.* Boston, MA: Anke Publishing Company, Inc.

Widick, C., C. A. Parker, and L. Knefelkamp. 1978. Erik Erikson and psycho-social development. In *Applying new developmental findings, new directions for student services, #4*, eds. L. Knefelkamp, A. Widick, and C. Parker. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wigfield, A., and J. S. Eccles. 2001. *The development of achievement motivation.* San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Appendix A
"STAYIN' ALIVE" FACULTY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Name: _____ Dept/College: _____

Rank: _____ Age:_____ Years at SJSU: _____

Years in Higher Education: _____ Years to anticipated retirement:_____

1. **General career path overview.** Please summarize your career path to the present. Where do you see the path leading over the course of the next 5-10 years? (Follow-up prompts will ask respondent to comment on how professionally satisfied they felt/expect to feel at each point, and what prompted/is likely to prompt major changes, as appropriate.)

2. **Satisfaction, vitality, "stuckness" and stagnation.** Are you a "happy camper?" Follow-up prompts will ask respondents to elaborate on their numerical ratings.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = very low, 10 = very high), how happy are you with the balance between time for:
    Your personal and professional life?
    Your teaching/scholarship/service/other professional commitments?

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = very low, 10 = very high), how happy are you with the amount of time you dedicate to:
    Teaching, or preparing for teaching?
    Working with students individually (mentoring, advising,,.)?
    Engaging in scholarship or creative activity (staying current in your field, writing grants, conducting research, disseminating your work…)?
    Engaging in service to the university (administrative work, committee work…)?
    Establishing or maintaining collegial relationships?
    Engaging in other professional work?

Many researchers have described a construct of "professional vitality" to capture the essence of faculty who are intellectually engaged, energetic, proactive about establishing professional goals and working toward them. This concept is contrasted with the concept of "stagnation" or "stuckness," wherein the person feels mired, bored, obsolete, professionally disengaged and uninspired.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = very low, 10= very high), how "vital" do you feel?

    What about your work makes you feel vital?
    (How) has this changed since you began working at SJSU?
    What have you done to maintain your vitality?

What, if anything, about your work makes you feel "stuck" or stagnant?
(How) has this changed since you began working at SJSU?
What have you done to try to overcome feeling "stuck" or stagnant?

3. **Mindset toward challenge and opportunity.** How do you respond to challenge and opportunity? Carol Dweck has described two contrasting "mindsets:" a "growth" mindset and a "fixed" mindset. For the most part, people with each of these mindsets are equally smart, equally talented. Where they differ is in terms of their approach to challenge and opportunity. They differ in terms of how they set their goals, about their willingness to try new things, about their responses to failure.

Please describe a challenge you encountered in your professional life in the last two years and how you responded to it.

Please describe an opportunity that came your way in your professional life in the last two years and how you responded to it.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = strongly disagree, 10= strongly agree), how would you rate/respond to the following statements? Follow-up prompts will ask respondents to elaborate on their numerical ratings.

- I like to practice something new in private before "going public."
- I like to solicit as much help and support while I am trying something new as I can.
- I pick challenges where I stand to learn something, even if I fail.
- I pick challenges where I stand to succeed, even if I don't learn much from them.
- I believe I can succeed at pretty much anything, if I try hard enough.
- I believe there are some things that I am just not cut out to master.
- My errors are…a sign of my limitations.
- My errors are … learning experiences.

4. **Professional renewal.** Which of the following have you done in the past 5-10 years? What would you say was the impact on you, professionally or personally?
- Took a sabbatical leave (or DIP leave)
- Attended a conference off campus
- Published your work
- Attended a professional workshop or institute off campus
- Attended a professional development session sponsored by SJSU
- Developed new professional collaborations (for teaching or scholarship)
- Delved into a new area of inquiry (for teaching or scholarship)
- Other (please elaborate)

Some researchers in the field concluded that mid-career faculty needed "renewal of the spirit" more that traditional forms of professional development. (How) does this apply to you?

Can you describe a professional activity that you participated in during the past 5-10 years from which you emerged "renewed?" How did you come engage in that activity?

What, if anything, have you done to sustain the sense of renewal that came from that activity?

Author Information

Amy Strage is Professor of Child and Adolescent Development at San Jose State University. She serves as the Coordinator of Professional Development in the College of Education, and as Faculty-in-Residence for Teacher Scholars and Retention, Tenure and Promotion in the SJSU Center for Faculty Support and Development. In that capacity, she works with faculty to develop, articulate and present their professional agendas and portfolios.

Carolyn Nelson is Associate Dean of the Connie L. Lurie College of Education and Chair of Elementary Education at San Jose State University. In that capacity, among other tasks, she works closely with constituents across and beyond the SJSU campus to ensure the continuing professional growth and development of College of Education faculty.

Susan Meyers is Dean of the Connie L. Lurie College of Education at San Jose State University. In that capacity, she plays a vital leadership role in recruiting and supporting faculty and advancing the mission of the college.

Amy Strage
Department of Child and Adolescent Development
Connie L. Lurie College of Education
1 Washington Square
San Jose State University
San Jose, CA 95192-0075
E-mail: aastrage@email.sjsu.edu
Telephone: 408-924-3715
Fax: 408-924-3758

Carolyn Nelson
Connie L. Lurie College of Education
1 Washington Square
San Jose State University
San Jose, CA 95192-0074
E-mail: nelsoncj@email.sjsu.edu
Telephone: 408-924-3760
Fax: 408-924-3775

Susan Meyers
Connie L. Lurie College of Education
1 Washington Square
San Jose State University
San Jose, CA 95192-0071
E-mail: susan.meyers@sjsu.edu
Telephone: 408-924-3600
Fax: 408-924-3613