Background: In this initial year of the NAU Teaching Academy, nine members (including the Board made up of the three President's Distinguished Teaching Fellows) met twice during fall semester and opted to meet monthly during spring semester. The Board held additional meetings to plan Academy direction. This brief Summary of Engagement synthesizes Academy members’ annual reports about their involvement during '08-'09.

Major Academy Activities: Academy members began by exploring the contexts of teaching at NAU (reviews of university mission and strategic plan, examination of the NSSE data) and purposes of the Academy (information on reasons for founding the NAU Academy, and reviews of Academy structures and goals at other universities). The Academy then moved through a series of clarifying discussions to the development of a vision/mission/goals statement to frame the Academy work. Simultaneously, the group hosted visiting speakers (and invited colleagues) to conversations with Carl Wieman, Jean Twenge, and Tara Gray. These working sessions led to conversations about the Academy directions, members’ teaching and research, and their interactions with departmental colleagues. Fellows provided teaching insights at the new faculty orientation, members led sessions with graduate teaching assistants, prepared for faculty book discussions, moderated sessions on teaching, and led workshops. Members formulated a survey being sent to first and second year faculty in order to gain insights into their experiences and needs. The Academy concluded the year with a comprehensive plan to develop a series of podcasts on teaching over the summer to be available beginning Fall '09.

Professional Impact of Academy Activities: Members did conference presentations on teaching (at local and national conferences), published papers on teaching, talked with departmental colleagues about Academy work (which members reported served as a catalyst for these interactions), implemented new approaches in their teaching, reflected critically on the relationship between student learning and faculty teaching, worked to develop a scholarly agenda around teaching, and received additional recognition for their teaching from students.

Personal Reflections: Academy members cited “meaningful interactions,” “inspiring discussions,” “clarifying conversations,” and “rewarding interdisciplinary insights” as contributing to their ongoing commitment to the Academy: “It is inspiring to work with talented, dedicated professionals”; “I am grateful for the opportunity to learn from others outside my discipline”; “I am thrilled to be a part of a cohort committed to strengthening teaching.”

Resource Stipend Use: Members used stipends for professional conference support, purchase of student and instructional materials, teaching resources (books, professional journals, professional memberships), and electronic equipment.

Plans for ’09-'10: Monthly meetings with discussions on “business” and teaching, new faculty support (based on new faculty survey results), podcast program and related electronic Q/A, classroom windows project, monograph development, workshop leadership for faculty and teaching assistants. Possible speaker sponsorship, possible meet-the-Academy-members podcasts (to be expanded to meet-the-faculty podcasts), and a possible departmental teaching day.

The activities are meant to have a purposeful impact on campus guided by the Academy mission, vision, and goals.