

DRS. BEATRICE S. AND DAVID I. MILLER
EDUCATION SEMINAR SERIES
INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

PRESENTS

Barbara L. McCombs

Senior Researcher

University of Denver Research Institute

Wednesday, October 1, 2003
7:00 PM

School of Education Auditorium
Reception Prior to Lecture, 6:30 PM, in the Atrium

"Implications of a Learner-Centered Model for School Reform and a Seamless K-20 Educational System"

This lecture will explore a variety of implications of a Learner-Centered Model (LCM) based on the *Learner-Centered Psychological Principles* disseminated by the American Psychological Association (APA, 1997). Work in this realm has as its basis the concept of schools as "living systems" – systems that are in service to learners, including all people associated with the school system. Building on the living systems concept, proponents of this LCM contend that education and schooling must concern itself with how to provide the most supportive learning context for diverse students – a context that ideally is co-created by teachers in partnership with students. The teacher's attitude is paramount toward valuing student perspectives and understanding the rich array of individual differences and needs presented by students. To support these concepts, new models for teacher and student learning provide for technology-based emerging learning communities that can provide a seamless K-20 educational system. Participants of this lecture will have the opportunity to see examples of tools for accomplishing the school reform goals of a LCM situated within living system framework. These self-assessment surveys and reflection tools, the "Assessment of Learner-Centered Practices" (ALCPs), help teachers identify areas of beliefs and practices that can facilitate the creation of caring learning communities that provide academic challenge and meaning to students. Sharing information from the ALCP surveys with their professional colleagues becomes a vehicle for building K-20 connections and surfacing shared values and success stories. As these values and successes are shared, new meaning and purpose are derived from the teaching experience. Educators are both revitalized and empowered to fulfill their deeper goals of making a difference in the teaching and learning process. Educational reform then emerges naturally rather than from mandates and sanctions.

Dr. McCombs' expertise is in the area of motivational and self-development training programs for empowering youth and adults. She currently directs a new Human Motivation, Learning and Development Center at the Denver Research Institute, which focuses on Professional Development of Educators, School Violence Prevention, Systemic Educational Reform, and Personal and Organizational Change. Her current research is directed at new models of teaching and learning, including the use of technology as a primary tool for empowering youth. This research focuses on applying learner-centered principles to teacher education via emerging e-learning technologies and to violence prevention via school-based professional development strategies. She is the author of numerous book chapters and journal articles. She is also the primary author of the *Learner-Centered Psychological Principles: Guidelines for School Redesign and Reform*. Her concept of a K-20 seamless professional development model is described in her 1997 book, entitled, *The Learner-Centered Classroom and School: Strategies for Enhancing Student Motivation and Achievement*.

Discussion: Thursday, October 2, 2003
10:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Room 2277, School of Education