Leveraging Institutional Support

Gay and John Stewart
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
PhysTEC Primary Program Institution
Arkansas Model

- University of Arkansas, one of the first PhysTEC sites
- Two "champions" – moral support and reinforcement
- Not just faculty ideas, willing to listen to voices from the field
- Identify the barriers to sustainability early, and build in plans to overcome them, so you don’t first encounter them as the funding runs out!
  - everyone is a potential teacher
Why did I get invited to talk to you?

The University of Arkansas Success Story

Dramatic increase in majors enabled a large increase in physics teachers

PhysTEC funding starts

PhysTEC funding ends; program sustained locally
gained strong institutional support

- Institutional buy-in may be easier to get than departmental support:
  - APLU or similar societies
  - Broader mission supported
- Make sure the department understands the value of teacher preparation – nice career path, bigger pool
institutional motivation and commitment

Big deal for the physics department, but the institution was the entity that got excited (provost in particular)

- DFW rate was >50% in physics, now ~ 10%
- DFW rate still >50% for math, but less than 60%, usually
- Same students 2*more likely to pass math if in physics, success rate in subsequent courses greatly increased

You have to become a spokesman...and a news op!
institutional motivation and commitment

The key to departmental buy-in has always been the appeal of improvements to things traditionally important to the department

• an improved undergraduate program
• significant positive attention from administration
Thank you!

Questions and discussion...

(gbstewart@mail.wvu.edu)