

Annual Report
Center for Teaching Excellence
Suffolk University
2007-2008

Submitted by: Donna Qualters, Ph.D.
Director/Associate Professor

I. Objectives

a. Program Objectives 2007-2008

This has been an exciting and hectic year for the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)! This is the first year that the CTE has had dedicated space at 73 Tremont Street and a full time director.

The objectives for the first year were as follows:

- Establish the presence of the Center in the minds and hearts of faculty as part of the Suffolk experience
- Work with a dedicated advisory board to continue the successful programming of the past two years
- Add new programming to establish a state of the art teaching center

The initial vision that created the CTE in 2005 was to “create a world-class teaching and learning environment at Suffolk University”. The MISSION of the CTE is as follows:

The Center for Teaching Excellence embodies Suffolk University’s long tradition, practice, and belief in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The Center is committed to creating an environment that values and rewards teaching as a noble endeavor. The primary goal of the Center is facilitating excellent teaching by disseminating pedagogical information and methodologies, and by promoting interaction among member of the academic community that focuses on sharing teaching ideas.

In order to fulfill this vision and mission, the Advisory Board and the Director designed an initial faculty needs survey (see Appendix A) which was sent to all teaching personnel during

the summer of '07. Because of the timing the results were not as robust as hoped for, but we did have fifty-two (52) faculty responding: 34 from CAS (including 1 from NESAD), 13 from SBS and 5 from the Law School. Twenty one (21) departments responded: 14 from CAS, 1 from NESAD, 4 from SBS and 2 from Law. This survey not only served to advertise the Center's presence on campus but also provided a baseline of topics and activities the faculty were interested in pursuing to guide our programming.

b. Measure of Success in Meeting Objectives:

i. ***Overall Attendance*** – The CTE has had a very strong start in interacting with members of the Suffolk community. We have seen a total of 189 faculty/staff individual contacts in the 2007-08 academic year. This represents approximately 21% of the Suffolk instructors who have had contact with the CTE. This is a significant first year number and is a solid foundation on which to continue to build the CTE. The complete breakdown by Schools, rank, and years teaching is included in Appendix B.

ii. ***CTE Assessment*** – to continue to track CTE usage, we have established an electronic contact data base using FileMaker Pro thanks to the generous support of SBS who provided us with a very talented graduate assistant, Elizabeth Reifman. The database gives us the opportunity to track usage of the CTE and its programs by a variety of means.

Appendix D contains multiple reports of CTE usage generated by the database.

We have also conducted a usage survey by faculty, also contained in the Appendix C; this survey represents 22% of faculty who have used the CTE this year with their feedback.

Not only did we receive feedback on faculty feelings about the CTE but the most

encouraging statistic has been the number of faculty who have actually tried something different because of a CTE activity.

- c. **Challenges of Meeting Objectives** - This year there have been some institutional challenges in establishing the Center for Teaching Excellence presence on campus.
- i. **Scheduling** – scheduling times for activities is difficult. We have recorded and uploaded our workshops to our CTE web site to accommodate faculty who wanted to attend but could not make the scheduled time. However there are other activities in which finding the “right” time to service as many faculty as possible has been an on-going challenge and cannot be recorded. Lack of a central university calendar has made it difficult to schedule activities at times that may be less scheduled for faculty. This was particularly noticeable in trying to establish the Teaching Circles. We will look at some alternative models of scheduling for next year to see if we can be more successful in finding convenient times
 - ii. **Communication** – though the campus is small, many faculty are often unaware of programs that are occurring. While we try to advertise on the web, via e-mail, with personal mailing, and listing activities in University publications we still need to find ways to advertise our programming without barraging faculty with notices.
 - iii. **Signage** – it would be beneficial to include the Center in the signage in the elevator area to make it part of the floor. The current signage does not stand out and make the CTE an established department on the floor. We will pursue this option with facilities management.
 - iv. **Staffing** – because of staffing limitations, it has been difficult at times to provide faculty with the some services they request such as mid-term feedback and more programming for

adjunct faculty. We hope to continue to have the services of a graduate assistant which should alleviate some of the pressure in technical and administrative areas.

- d. **Program Objectives for 2008-2009** - *Our main objective is to solidify the identity of the Center on the Campus and to work closely with the schools to continue the work begun this year.*

However, it is also important that the CTE continue to grow and meet faculty needs. Our survey and continued consultations with the board have led to some new ideas we will implement next year depending on resources.

- i. *Monthly faculty luncheon* – with the CTE space finally close to being finished, we will institute a series of informal monthly lunches where faculty across the University can come together for lunch to discuss teaching and common research agendas.
- ii. *Journal club* – we will institute an open monthly pedagogical journal club which will bring faculty together to explore scholarly articles on the scholarship of teaching and learning by some of the leading experts in the field.
- iii. *Examining Teaching through Film* – the CTE will sponsor a series of discussions around films that have an educational theme such as “Dead Poet Society” and “Good Will Hunting”
- iv. *Networking* – the CTE staff and board will network more intensely with the different departments throughout the university to offer departmental programming and services such as our work with Engineering in CAS and Peer Mentoring in SBS.

II. Review of On-going activities

a. Staff Accomplishments – Donna Qualters, Director

- i. *Teaching*- this year the CTE Director, who is a member of the Education and Human Services Department, redesigned and taught the spring section of Curriculum and

Pedagogy Course for 9 students (1 withdrew because of personal issues). Student feedback was very positive:

1. Relevance	9 A
2. Instructor Knowledge	9 A
3. Course syllabus	9 A
4. Assignments, text	7A 2B
5. Evaluation	9 A

The Learning Feedback Form was particularly encouraging as students identified scores of 4.7/4.8 on eight parameters of their perceptions of their learning in the course.

ii. Service for Director:

1. **Executive Board** – Massachusetts American Council of Education – National Women’s Leader Network
2. **Executive Board** – New England Faculty Development Consortium
3. **Journal Reviewer** – To Improve the Academy – top journal for faculty development
4. **Conference Reviewer** – Professional Organization and Development Network in Higher Education
5. **National Science Foundation:** invited panel reviewer for new education grant in the undergraduate engineering directorate

c. New Program Developments – in order to build on the success of previous programs and using the theoretical model of Prochaska, DiClemente, and Norcross’s (In Search of How People Change, 1992), the CTE staff and advisory board developed programming to provide a variety of venues to appeal to different faculty needs. Below is a brief description of the programs offered this academic year.

1. **Book Groups** – six books groups were conducted this year. Three in each semester. The groups met for a minimum of three times per semester and participants received a copy of the book. In the fall, three groups were convened using the following texts:

- a. The Case of the Missing Professor: An Academic Mystery / Informal Case Studies / Discussion Stories for Faculty Development, New Faculty Orientation and Campus Conversations by Thomas B. Jones, Ph.D. (facilitator: Donna Qualters)
- b. Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses by Dee Fink, Ph.D. in preparation for our spring speaker (facilitator: Rich Miller, English)
- c. Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law by Sullivan, Colby, Wegner, Bond & Shulman - an innovative look at redesigning legal education. (facilitator, Andy Beckerman-Rodau: Law)

spring:

- a. Creating Significant Learning Experiences - group continued
- b. Generation Me: Why today's young Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled, and more miserable than ever before by Jean M. Twenge, Ph.D. – because of the popularity of this book two sections of 12 members were conducted (facilitators: Donna Qualters & Felicia Wilkes)
- c. The Skillful Teacher by Stephen D. Brookfield, Ph.D. was used by the book group established at NESAD. (facilitator: Nancy Hackett, Interior Design)

2. **Small Group Instructional Diagnosis** - CTE staff conducted mid-term evaluations for faculty. This involved attending a class, soliciting teaching feedback from students, creating reports and meeting with faculty to discuss the feedback. This proved to be our most popular program. Because of the intensity of the activity and the small CTE staffing we had to limit the number of SGIDs to 10 each semester. Both semesters resulted in a waiting list.

3. **Teaching Circles** - Teaching circles allow faculty to come together in a concentrated time frame to discuss topic (s) of interest in a scholarly fashion. An introductory Circle was offered in the spring semester.
4. **Confidential Consultations** – these took many forms this semester. Some were classroom observations, some were individual meetings, some were reassuring telephone conversations, and some took place over e-mail.
5. **Video Taping** - while we have not greatly promoted this service, we have had a request to video tape and review a course.
6. **Lending Library** - CTE is slowly acquiring a selection of some of the best books on teaching and learning which are available to faculty on loan. Currently we have 70 books in our collection. For a full listing see Appendix H.
7. **Teaching Professor Newsletter** - the CTE has provided free access to all teaching personnel of the highly acclaimed Teaching Professor. This is a monthly publication which presents original articles as well as excerpts from top articles in the field.

Breakdown of participant numbers are available in Appendix D.

d. Department Hires

- i. Through the Graduate Fellow program the Sawyer Business School placed Elizabeth Reifman, a graduate student, with the Center. Her main responsibility was to create an information database with FileMaker Pro to document attendance to CTE events. This

program allows us to create various reports to analyze results and improve upon current programs and services.

e. Service within the University

- i. Mentoring* – the CTE has been involved in mentoring in both CAS and SBS. For CAS, CTE collaborated with the associate dean to develop a new mentoring program and set of activities for pre-tenure faculty. In SBS, CTE is working with a committee of chairs to develop a formative peer observation program to provide teaching feedback to faculty. This involves developing materials, arranging training, and conducting assessment on the effectiveness of the program.
- ii. Course Evaluation* – CTE has provided consultation to two departments that wish to revise their student course evaluation forms.
- iii. Teaching and Technology* – the CTE has collaborated with Bob Dugan (Sawyer Library) and Tom Dellicicchi (CAS) to present workshops to help faculty increase their usage of technology in teaching in a sound pedagogical manner.
- iv. TA Training* - CTE has worked with the Economics department to develop an initial training program for Ph.D. students to provide them with teaching skills. This involved selecting a text, working with the instructor to develop a syllabus, presenting an opening lecture and providing feedback on TA micro-teaching exercises.

- v. ***SU 101*** – CTE has worked with the SU 101 program providing an introductory workshop on the Millennial Student to the instructors and student assistants as well as providing monthly seminars on topic chosen by the faculty/students teaching the course on topics such as challenging situations, cheating, and active learning.

- vi. ***Law School Faculty Development Forum*** – participated in the Law School faculty development forums offering two presentations: The Millennial Student in Law School and Learning Theory – What it means for Legal Education.

- vii. ***Ballotti Learning Center presentation*** – presentation to the BLC graduate tutor staff on “Where students get stuck: dealing with student math anxiety”.

- viii. ***SBS – Department of Management:*** - participated in MGT 330 final assessment of student skills in providing feedback.

f. Service Outside the University

i. Administration

- 1. ***Younna Hinnaw (Director Study Abroad Programs, SBS)*** – Brought visitor Assia Rolls from SBS affiliate in London, England - European Business School to meet and discuss establishing a center at her institution.

ii. Teaching Center Consulting – Colleges have been in contact asking guidance in starting or improving their teaching and learning centers.

- 1. Mount Ida College (Newton, MA)
- 2. Salem State College (Salem, MA)

3. Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (Boston, MA)
4. University of Nagasaki (Siebold, Japan)

g. Publications

i. Research

Peer reviewed journals:

1. **Qualters, D.**, Sheahan, T, *Navick*, D., Mason, M. and Dixon, M. (January, 2008) *Improving Learning in First Year Engineering through Interdisciplinary collaborative Assessment*. Journal of Engineering Education 97(1), 37-46.
2. Cohen, P. and **D. Qualters**, (July-December, 2007). *Ethical Leadership: The AIR Model Empowers Moral Agency*. Journal of Human Values 13(2), 107-113. (Cited as 34 on the list of 50 most frequently read articles).
3. Van Amburgh, J., Devlin, J., Kirwin, J., and **Qualters, D.** (December, 2007) *Development of a Valid and Reliable Tool to Quantify Active Learning in Large Turn-taught Courses*. American Journal of Pharmacy Education 71(5), 85-97.
4. **Qualters, D.** (Jan. 2008). *Right and Wrong in the College Classroom: Ethical Issues in Postsecondary Teaching* by Jordy Rocheleau and Bruce W. Speck: Anker Pub. In The National Teaching and Learning Forum.
<http://www.ntlf.com/html/lib/reviewindex.htm>.

ii. Articles - in press in peer reviewed journals

1. **Qualters, D.**, Dolinsky, B., and Woodnick, M. (in press). *Searching for Meaning on College Campuses: Nurturing the Spirit*. To Improve the Academy.
2. **Qualters, D.** (in press). *Creating a Pathway for Teacher Change*. Journal of Faculty Development.
3. **Qualters, D.**, Isaacs, J., Cullinane, T., Laird, J., McDonald, A., Corriere, J. (in press). *Shortfall: A Game Approach to Teach Environmentally Benign Manufacturing in Supply Chain*. International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

h. Presentations and Talks

iii. Presentations

1. *Creating Pathways for Faculty Change*, 3rd International CDIO Conference: Gordon Engineering Leadership Conference, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.
2. *Assessing Experiential Education: Bringing the Outside In*. Professional Organizational and Development Network in Higher Education (POD) 32nd Annual Conference. Pittsburgh, PA.
3. *Using Ethical Inquiry across Disciplines to Improve Student Learning*. International Society for Exploring Teaching and Learning (ISETL), 37th Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
4. *ALIT: Active Learning Inventory Tool to Measure Active Learning in the Classroom*. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACCP) Annual Meeting. Orlando, FL
5. *AEM Learning: Active Engaged and Measured*. New England Faculty Development Consortium annual meeting. Worcester, MA

iv. Invited Talks

1. **Universidad de Las Americas**, Santiago de Chile. *Becoming an Expert Professor*. video conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
2. **Purdue University at Calumet**. Indiana. *The Experiential Education Continuum: Why students need it all; Herding Cats: Engaging faculty in experiential education*
3. **Learning Assistance Association of New England (LAANE)**. 32nd Annual Regional Conference, Keynote Speaker – Building Bridges to Learning: The Millennial Student. Wellesley, MA
4. **Merrimack College**, North Andover, MA. *Assessing Experiential Education*
5. **University of Texas at Arlington**, Arlington Texas. *Measuring Student Engagement and Teaching : Active Learning Inventory Tool*

6. **Northeastern University**, Boston, MA. *Assessing Service-Learning*

i. Grants

i. Innovative Teaching Grants – working with each school, the CTE has provided funding and support for encouraging innovation in teaching.

1. *CAS* - has initiated the Afriterrra Map project – this project involves seven CAS faculty who designed innovative ways to use the Afriterrra Map collection in the undergraduate curriculum. The project will continue next year with the goal of expanding the usage of the Map collection in CAS.
2. *SBS* – has created the TEALIG grants which provided funding to faculty to develop innovative courses using technology or attendance at teaching excellence conferences followed by presentations to peers about new and innovative ideas. A portion of the funding was used to honor Colette Dumas for ongoing innovation in teaching.
3. *Law* – has used the funding to create the Personal Response System SOTL project in which three faculty will use PRS in their classes and develop a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project to measure the effectiveness of this new model of teaching in legal education with the outcome of producing an article suitable for publication.

ii. Other Grant Activity – the CTE has worked with the Grants office and the IRB board to help develop faculty friendly policies to encourage grant funding for the University. We have also contributed to that initiative in the following way:

1. Submission of a Teagle Grant for Institutional measurement of learning – unfunded but positive reviews.

2. Submission, with pre-tenure faculty from Chemistry, a NSF CCLI (Course, Curriculum, and Laboratory Improvement) grant for \$350,000. The CTE director will serve as Co-PI on the grant.
3. Currently working with Electrical Engineering Department on an innovative educational project to promote learning and retention of students in engineering. We will be finalizing the program and writing a grant to Keck Foundation for funding.
4. Working with faculty in the Sciences to review NSF grants and to help craft the required educational portion of these proposals.

j. Guest Speakers, special events, conferences:

- i. Great Teaching Luncheon* – in the tradition of this very popular and well attended luncheon, the CTE once again brought a national figure in teaching excellence to campus. Dee Fink, author of *Significant Learning*, discussed the “joy of teaching” with over 65 faculty and staff and conducted a leadership workshop for administration on promoting teaching excellence at the university.
- ii. End of the Year Celebration* – in keeping with its mission to provide a community setting for exchange of ideas, the CTE hosted a end of the year gathering for faculty on grade due day. The CTE sponsored a continental breakfast for faculty from all three schools to come and celebrate their end of the academic year accomplishments. Over 30 faculty attended.

k. Other

Continued Programming- Building off the previous success of the CTE we continued three programs from previous years. Please reference Appendix D for the breakdown of events.

1. **Workshops** – using the survey and the input from the board we continued the Great Teaching Series. A complete list of topics offered and facilitators is in Appendix F. Total attendance at workshops was: 31 for the fall and 40 for the spring.

2. **Afternoon Tea Discussions** – introduced in the spring semester, this is one of the CTE's most popular programs and brings faculty together in a relaxed atmosphere to openly discuss topic and issues around teaching. See appendix F for a complete listing. Total attendance at teas was: 16 for the spring.

3. **New Faculty Orientation** – CTE advisory board and staff hosted the first all university new faculty orientation this year. The day long event included a welcome by the Deans, a panel of pre-tenure faculty discussion issues with their newest colleagues, a series of meetings with important areas of the university, teaching workshops and a social hour for meeting and greeting. Evaluation of the program by new faculty participants was extremely positive.
 - a. **New Faculty Year book** – as part of the orientation the CTE produced a new faculty yearbook. This fun and informative publication provides information about our newest colleagues and is an important tool for tracking faculty careers and encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration around teaching and research.

- b. Survey* – sent out to New Faculty to get feedback and suggestions to improve the upcoming New Faculty Orientation. The results were used to develop the New Faculty Orientation for 2008.
- c. Adjunct Get Together* – The CTE hosted an evening event for adjunct faculty which comprised of two discussions and dinner. Approximately 50 adjuncts attended from all three schools.
- i. Creating the CTE space* – with input from the board and expert advice from Marge Dion (Facilities and NESAD) the CTE space is 90% complete. Located on the 12th floor of 73 Tremont we now have a welcoming environment for faculty. (See Appendix E). The space is being utilized for CTE activities, departmental activities (such as the graduate seminar presentations), and university department when available (Student Affairs). The space contains formal meeting/presentation space, informal sections to meet and talk; a coffee machine and stools to engage with a colleague, and a small computer space in which to conduct workshops. The space is wireless and faculty can drop in and have coffee, chat with colleagues, or work in a quiet space.
- ii. CTE Communication-* the CTE has developed an extensive collection of materials to advertise our services to the Suffolk community. We have also advertised our programming and participated in a number of university publications including articles in The SUN and a monthly column in the Student Retention Newsletter. We have also created a series of publicity materials to advertise the CTE and its programming (see Appendix G).
- iii. CTE Website:* Under the direction of Christina DiRico, we have begun the expansion and continued development of a CTE website; <http://www.suffolk.edu/research/CTE.html>.

Currently the site holds information about programming, list of materials available, video clips of presentations for those who cannot attend the workshops, connection to the free Teaching Professor site, consultation information, list of useful links, and the beginnings of university links of interest to faculty.

- iv. CTE Advisory Board* - The CTE has had a challenging and exciting year. A very special thank you goes to the Advisory Board. It is through their efforts and hard work that the CTE is able to offer as much programming as it has. They have been tireless in volunteering to present and participate, encouraging their colleagues to come, and continually support the CTE with guidance, innovative ideas and wisdom. This year we expanded the board with new addition faculty members from CAS & SBS

Center for Teaching Excellence Staff:

Donna M. Qualters, Ph.D. – Director

Christina DiRico – Assistant to the Director

Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Board:

Andrew Beckerman-Rodau, Professor, Law School

Craig Christensen, Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering,
CAS

Thomas Dellicicchi, Director, Academic Computing, CAS

Eric Dewar, Assistant Professor, Biology, CAS

Bob Dugan, Director, Sawyer Library

Janet Fisher, Associate Professor, Law School

Jennifer Fuchel, Associate Professor of Graphic Design, NESAD,
CAS

Vicki Karns, Associate Professor, Communications & Journalism,
CAS

Magid Mazen, Professor, Management, SBS

Lydia Segal, Associate Professor, Business Law & Ethics, SBS

Susan Clark Thayer, Associate Professor & Associate Dean, CAS

Lauri Umansky, Associate Dean, CAS

III. Recommendations:

- a. As the CTE continues to grow and expand and become part of the culture of Suffolk University, additional staffing will be needed. The creation of the position of Assistant Director will provide the CTE with an additional professionally trained Ph.D. to provide expanded service the teaching community. Currently we are limited in the number of book groups, consultations, mid-term feedbacks, and departmental assistance we can provide, an additional full time professional will fulfill this need. An Assistant Director will also allow the CTE to expand its assessment mission, helping departments across the university meet their national accreditation standards, but more importantly, provide ideas and services to departments to better understand student learning outcomes. An additional professional will also provide support to faculty pursuing federal and private foundation grants as granting agencies are increasingly asking principal investigators to develop a comprehensive educational and assessment plan as part of the grant proposal. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, an additional professional will help the University in the areas of scholarship of teaching. Suffolk is dedicated to the scholar-teacher model and increasing the production of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) publications will enhance the reputation and continue to increase the quality of education at Suffolk.

- b. To continue to build the CTE as a central resource for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and as a vehicle for increased visibility and reward for excellent teaching, the CTE

would like to explore the creation of a Senior Scholars Teaching Academy within the CTE with Administration. Senior faculty would be selected from the three schools to work with the CTE to develop additional programming for faculty peers, provide mentoring to junior colleagues, advance their own professional development, and work as published scholars in the area of teaching and learning. Support from all three schools will be critical to make this happen. The result of the Academy will be a robust cadre of senior faculty who are not only recognized and rewarded for their dedication to educational mission of the institution, but also create a national presence for Suffolk University in the SoTL literature.

- c. In conjunction with the above, the creation of a University Wide Teaching Award would also highlight and reward the importance of teaching at Suffolk. A bi-partisan committee appointed by each of the three schools, under the auspice of the CTE, could design the model for Suffolk's teaching award. There are many models, ideas, and examples in top universities that could provide the initial framework from which Suffolk could design a model that will fit the culture of the institution.