

2010 – 2011 Center for Teaching Excellence Annual Report

Submitted by Donna M. Qualters, Ph.D., Director

I. Past Objectives

A: Objectives

The CTE has once again continued to grow over the past academic year. Our work is driven by the mission statement developed by the faculty in all three colleges of the University which states:

The Center for Teaching Excellence embodies Suffolk University's long tradition and belief in the practice and scholarship of learning and teaching. The CTE is committed to creating an environment that values and rewards teaching as a noble endeavor.

This year's data reflects that growth. For the 2010-2011 academic year, 224 individual faculty and staff attended at least one CTE function. This is a 24% increase over last year. Overall, CTE had 436 visits from faculty and staff, illustrating that several individuals attend multiple CTE events. This overall number is a 6% increase over last year.

Below are the objectives the CTE staff and advisory board set for the past academic year:

1. Successfully hire a second professional position at the Assistant Director level to develop new programming to support the CTE's continued growth
2. Facilitate the scholarship of teaching and learning and provide opportunities for faculty to work together to increase publications in this area
3. Begin to outreach and develop programming for our part-time lecturer population and growing number of graduate student teaching assistants
4. Foster continuing innovation in teaching excellence

B. Assessment of Objectives

Objective 1: Hire a second professional position

CTE, with the close involvement and input of the Advisory Board, conducted a successful national search and in January hired Dr. Katie Linder as our new Assistant Director. Dr. Linder comes to us from The Ohio State University where she was a doctoral intern in the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT). Dr. Linder has brought new ideas and energy to the CTE as can be seen by the number of new programming CTE was able to develop this year. One respondent to our annual survey noted, “Katie is making the CTE a place that people really want to visit – she is professional and knowledgeable, as well as warm, welcoming and fun. It’s nice to have her here.”

Objective 2: Facilitate the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

This has been a topic of the Board for the past two academic years. SoTL is an important contribution to higher education teaching and learning. However, here at Suffolk, as well as many institutions, there is mixed value that discipline-based departments place on this type of research. We have found departments, such as Psychology, who will support as a research contribution an article about the “teaching of psychology” and these departments serve as the exemplars to promote this research within and across colleges departments. A strong argument can be made that Suffolk IS a teaching institution, that students come here for the high quality of our classroom experience and that SoTL scholarship is one way to continue to strengthen our teacher-scholar model. Since most of the teaching journals in the disciplines are often very competitive, we feel that working slowly with those faculty and departments who embrace this scholarship will begin the process of socialization so that PTR committees at the department and college level will begin to incorporate this into their guidelines.

Besides identifying faculty and departments who have agreed to SoTL, the CTE has begun conversations with the Deans to educate them on the value of SoTL as research; we have also begun an interdisciplinary writing series for faculty interested in SoTL that has been well received. Our hope is that this group begins to generate the type of high quality publications that are presented at conferences and peer reviewed journals. Our plan is to showcase the results of this group (and subsequent others) next year to keep the momentum going toward a culture of SoTL. Progress forward is being made and the CTE will continue to build on this foundation.

Objective 3: Outreach to Part-Time Lecturers and Graduate Teaching Assistants

Suffolk has a very dedicated, devoted group of part-time lecturers who facilitate a number of critical courses in the disciplines. With the addition of another professional staff member, the CTE has been able to grow and develop this segment of our programming. From modest beginnings, we now have a series of workshops geared specifically to part-time lecturers; we have invited a part-time lecturer to sit on our advisory board; we have developed a newsletter geared specifically to part-time lecturer concerns (See appendix A for Part-time Lecturer Newsletter); and we have updated our website to provide more resources for part-time lecturers (and all faculty), but especially for those who may not be available to come to campus other than their teaching times. Our data shows that an increasing number of part-time lecturers have been taking part in CTE functions from last year.

Like our lecturer population, Suffolk has a developing Teaching Assistant population with the growing Ph.D. programs. Last year we piloted two workshops in areas of interest to TAs. The workshops were very highly rated; a qualitative review by the TA supervisor of last year's offerings demonstrated that students found additional work on teaching and learning very valuable. Therefore we are working closely with Ph.D. TA supervisors to continue to build on

last year's success and develop additional TA resources. We will continue to develop at least two seminars a semester in the next academic year to incrementally grow this program as well as expand our website.

Objective 4: Continue fostering and promoting teaching excellence.

See below for a list of new initiatives this year to foster excellence.

II. New CTE Initiatives

As is the CTE custom, we continually grow and add programming to meet the needs of our ever expanding faculty and staff population. This academic year we initiated:

1. **Teaching with Technology Symposium** –in an effort to provide more technology based pedagogy as well as establish closer working relationships with the instructional designers from all three schools, the CTE undertook the lead to establish a new collaborative venture called “Teaching with Technology”. Through an ad hoc working group the CTE established, an all day symposium was created with Christopher Dede, a national recognized expert in teaching with technology, as our guest speaker. (See Appendix B for a copy of the agenda for the day)

Assessment and review of the symposium established it as a successful venture. We had over 86 faculty/staff attend the day. We also had over 20 faculty from all three colleges collaboratively presenting models and techniques of teaching with technology. Some of the feedback stated:

- “This was absolutely wonderful. It will help me greatly in my online teaching.”
- “Excellent day! Providing opportunities to continue discussions started today and supporting folks who want to try to use these technologies (e.g. how do I edit a podcast)”

- “Great job. Lots of range and tone. I feel I can do this and know how to get help.”
- “Very interesting to hear about faculty experience with online ed – especially the variety of software.”

Overall Averages across sessions:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1) This session gave me new ideas and techniques to try	1	2	3	4.42	5
2) This session stimulated me to think differently about my teaching	1	2	3	4.13	5
3) The presentations in this session were well-prepared and thoughtful	1	2	3	4.6	5
4) This session met my expectations based on the description offered in the program	1	2	3	4.26	5

Because of the success of this initiative, we plan to make this an annual event. At our last meeting, all three schools enthusiastically endorsed this idea and the working group will begin in the fall to plan for next year.

2. **Focus on Part-Time Lecturers** - As part of the CTE strategic plan, the board decided to place more emphasis on providing teaching enhancement for our part-time lecturer population. We have been able to begin to strategically focus on this issue. Beginning with a needs assessment survey, we have begun the following programming: (a) workshops and afternoon teas designed for AND facilitated by part-time lectures; (b) a newsletter offshoot of the CTE newsletter specifically geared for part-time lecturers; (c) an invitation to a dedicated and interested part-time lecturer to join the CTE board to provide on-going input to the needs of part-time faculty; (d) updating our website to

provide more on-line resources for part-time lecturers who may not have access to regularly scheduled programming.

3. **Course Design Institute** - CTE has begun a series of course design institutes for faculty.

The goal of the institute is to assist faculty in redesigning (or designing from scratch) courses using the Wiggins and McTigue Backward Design Model. This is a proven curriculum method that focuses on assessment based, student-centered learning. Using this model, faculty design courses that meet and assess student learning along pre-determined course goals and learning objectives. Our summer pilot was very successful. Faculty who attended had the following to say:

- “I enjoyed speaking with faculty about teaching... it helped me articulate to myself goals and objectives I act on but do not always say aloud.”
- “I feel already that I am going to have a better course—and become a better teacher.”
- “Best workshop on teaching I’ve ever done!”
- “Wonderful exchange of ideas! It was great to have colleagues from all the colleges.”
- “This met a need I had in my teaching.”
- “This course has truly made me think a lot more about what a student entering our profession would need. I think that my approach in the past had been based mostly on what I could teach in the most exciting way. But now I am thinking that I should teach what the students need and make that exciting.”

We have a second institute running this summer which is already full, and CTE will be offering institutes periodically throughout the next academic year (see appendix C for 2011-2012 Course Design Institute advertisement).

4. **Writing Workshop-** to help facilitate our goal of promoting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the University goal of increasing faculty scholarship, the CTE has begun to offer an interdisciplinary writing program for tenured and tenure-track faculty. This program uses a 14 week model to facilitate group interaction, discussion, and motivation. It is our hope that faculty will have a completed (or near complete) article by the end of the series. Next academic year, we will highlight the accomplishments of this group as well as continue to form new on-going writing groups for publication and presentations. (See appendix D for Writing Workshop advertisement)
5. **Development of a Recognition Plan-** as the CTE enters its 4th year of full-time programming, the advisory board and CTE staff have realized that there are a number of faculty who have taken teaching development seriously. These dedicated faculty have attended multiple programs, done presentations for colleagues, joined our board, participated in surveys and so forth. With the input and approval of the CTE Advisory Board we have developed a recognition plan (see appendix E). This plan does NOT certify excellence in teaching but rather recognizes that these are teachers who continually work to improve their own teaching and volunteer to assist and mentor their colleagues.
6. **New Media Outreach-** the CTE has created its own Facebook and Twitter accounts to create a new way of marketing our events and programming. This has also helped us to connect with other centers and faculty development professionals; currently on Twitter we have 40 followers from all over the country. (See appendix F for Facebook and Twitter examples)

III: Review of On-Going Activities (Please see appendix G for a list of 2010-2011 programs and events)

1. **Book Groups** – 7 books groups were conducted this year, five in fall and two in the spring semester. The groups met for a minimum of three times per semester and participants received a copy of the book. In the spring, two groups were convened using the following texts:

- *Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* by John Bean
- *The Hemingses of Monticello* by Annette Gordon-Reed

The Hemingses of Monticello was one of the more popular book groups with 10 faculty and staff participating throughout the semester. Some individual comments include:

- *“The diverse views of the group have impacted me in a positive manner, I am now more open to views and perspectives I was not aware of”*
- *“It was great to be with a group of people from different departments and to hear different points of view.”*

2. **Small Group Instructional Diagnosis** - CTE staff and faculty volunteers conducted mid-term evaluations for classes in the fall and spring semester. This involved attending a class, soliciting teaching feedback from students, creating reports and meeting with faculty to discuss the feedback. This service continues to be a popular program. This year faculty requested SGID, involving feedback from over 306 students in all levels from Freshmen to Graduate Students.

3. **Afternoon Tea Discussions** – these informal get-togethers to discuss and process issues around teaching and learning have become a very popular way to quickly

address topics that arise during the semester. This year we hosted 9 afternoon teas on topics ranging from *Fostering Creativity in Your Students* to *Engaging the Quiet Learner*. One particularly noteworthy use of the tea was a follow-up discussion on multiple intelligences after Howard Gardner's Talk. This was hosted by our Advisory Board Member Magid Mazen and allowed faculty from all three schools to process more deeply Gardner's discussion of using multiple intelligences in preparing classes.

4. ***Confidential Consultations*** – Part of CTE's on-going mission is to provide support in a confidential, time-responsive manner to faculty. Consultations have increased in their popularity as the reputation and trust of the CTE has risen over the last three years. As teaching has changed so has consultations; while the face-to-face is still the most common, other forms have developed. Some were classroom observations, some were reassuring telephone conversations, and some took place over e-mail.
5. ***Lending Library*** - CTE is continuing to acquire a selection of some of the best books on teaching and learning that are available to faculty on loan. Currently we have over 260 books in our collection. We also added a Kindle last year loaded with educational books, though we do need to advertise this in a more aggressive way. This year, we broadened the lending library to include several DVDs on teaching excellence.
6. ***Workshops***- CTE workshops and those wishing to present on teaching issues to their colleagues is continually growing to the point where we often have to begin a wait list for future semesters. The workshops have also increased beyond just teaching to

areas of importance to faculty life such as “balance” and “FERPA”. Administrative staff who interact with faculty such as the Ballotti Learning Center and Diversity Services are finding the CTE an important way to disseminate information to faculty.

7. ***Spring Speaker Event*** – in the tradition of this very popular and well-attended luncheon, the CTE once again brought a national figure in teaching excellence to campus. Howard Gardner, author of *The Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Implications for Teaching*, discussed the educational implications of multiple intelligences with over 112 faculty and staff in attendance. (See appendix H for speaker invitation).

8. ***CTE Faculty Newsletter – Excellence in Teaching Matters***

CTE produces two newsletter editions, one for all instructors and one for part-time lecturers. The main newsletter includes a letter from the director, a main article on a teaching issue written by a faculty member, a calendar of upcoming events and programs, a book review written by a faculty member of a text available in the CTE lending library, small articles on the previous semester’s events, advertisements for CTE services and annual events, and a faculty profile. The part-time newsletter edition may include some of the previous items with the addition of a faculty profile of an adjunct instructor with a picture, a book review of a text written specifically to an adjunct audience, a main article on a teaching issue written by a part-time lecturer, and event invitations to the various activities on our calendar for the upcoming semester. (See appendix I for faculty newsletter)

Breakdown of participant numbers are available in Appendix J. It is interesting to note not only the general growth of faculty and staff participation, but also the usage by CTE of faculty from all three schools as well as across academic ranks.

IV. Overall Assessment of CTE programming:

Each year CTE surveys participants after each event and at the end of the year to measure faculty participation, satisfaction, and growth as teachers. While the survey asks questions as to how effective the programming was, we have also structured questions to begin to capture faculty growth as teachers across the stages of change (Prochaska, DiClemente and Norcross) that individuals go through in their development. What we are beginning to capture in a snapshot are the numbers of faculty who actually think about making change (first step in real change) to those who have actually tried something new as a result of participation in the CTE. Out of the 78 faculty who responded to the end of the year survey, the results illustrated how faculty are not only *thinking* differently about teaching (92%), but also are actually *implementing* new ideas and techniques (83%).

Concurrent with this assessment, with the addition of another professional staff member and the continued support by CAS of a FRAP and SBS of a graduate assistant, the CTE is beginning to develop a research agenda for the staff. This will allow us to assess not only what is happening at Suffolk, but to be able to contribute at the regional and national level. Current research projects include:

Improving Part-Time Lecturer Teaching Support

PI: Kathryn Linder

Co-PI: Donna Qualters

IRB Approved

Project Description: The Center for Teaching Excellence has started a new part-time lecturer teaching support program for instructors at Suffolk University who are not full-time faculty

members. This research project is meant to provide data for internal use at the Center to gauge the success of our initiative. As there is little in the literature about this area, this project will also provide data for potential research articles on the subject of part-time lecturer teaching support.

Faculty Needs and Faculty Change in a Course Design Institute

PI: Kathryn Linder

Co-PI: Donna Qualters

IRB Application being drafted

Project Description: The goal of our research is to better understand the needs of faculty regarding course design for the university classroom. We are also interested in the changes that take place over the course design institute in faculty reflections on course design.

Faculty Development Professionals' Writing Practices and Expectations

PI: Kathryn Linder

IRB Approved

Project Description: The purpose of this research is to learn more about the writing expectations for and the practices of faculty development professionals. Although research has been conducted on the writing practices of faculty members in the academy, little to no research has looked at the practices of faculty developers who often write about aspects of faculty life (such as teaching). This research project aims to study both the practices that faculty developers use to complete writing projects among their many other job commitments and the perceptions of faculty developers have of writing within their profession.

V. Noteworthy Accomplishments

- Again increased the number of faculty who have taken advantage of the programs and services offered by the CTE. Our attendance increased by 18% over last year. See appendix for details of various programs offered. We are also pleased with the increase in

the number and rank of faculty members from the three colleges who have participated in the CTE as well as increased usage by academic and student affairs of the center.

- Greatly increased our interactions with the individual schools and colleges. This year the CTE has been asked to add their expertise to:
 - CAS Core assessment committee
 - NEASC Self Study
 - SBS Teaching Taskforce
 - CAS Course Evaluation Committee
 - Bias Incident Committee
 - LGBT President's Commission
 - Credit Hour Assessment Taskforce
 - Travel course committee
- CTE has increased its university-wide events to now include a Teaching with Technology Symposium that will become an annual event to add to our Teaching Celebration Day.

D. Service Outside the University

- Executive Committee, Massachusetts ACE Women's Leadership Network
 - Elected Co-chair
 - Chair – Awards Committee
- Professional and Organizational Development Network
 - Chair, Governance Committee, Graduate and Professional Student Development
 - Reviewer, 2011 National Conference Proposals
 - Volunteer Coordinator, 2011 National Conference

E. Publications (books, book chapters, peer reviewed publications and conference papers)

- *Experiential Education: Making the Most of Learning Outside the Classroom* (December, 2010). Jossey-Bass, New Directions in Teaching and Learning Series. Editor. **Donna M. Qualters**
- **Qualters, D.**, and Barr, J. (August 2010). “The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Turning teaching into scholarship”. In What Matters in Teaching and Learning: Application to Pharmacy Education. Eds. Lynn Sylvia and Judith Barr: Bartlett and Jones: London.
- **Qualters, D.** (December 2010). “Bringing the Outside in: Assessment of Experiential Education. In Experiential Education: Making the Most of Learning Outside the Classroom. Ed. Donna Qualters, New Directions in Teaching and Learning Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.
- **Qualters, D.** (December, 2010). “Making the Most of Learning Outside the Classroom”. In Experiential Education: Making the Most of Learning Outside the Classroom. Ed. Donna Qualters, New Directions in Teaching and Learning
- Sheahan, T., E.J. Mason, **D.M. Qualters**, P.V. Poblete, and X. Vargas, (in press), *Cross-national Evaluation of Learning Assessment in First-Year Engineering Students: U.S. Experience Applied to Two Universities in Chile*. International Journal of Engineering Education.
- J.A. Isaacs, **D.M. Qualters**, and B. Dolinsky. “A Computer Game for Teaching the Millennial Generation about Sustainability in the Supply Chain.” Knowledge Collaboration and Learning for Sustainable Innovation, ERSCP-EMSU conference, Delft, Netherlands, October 25-29, 2010.

- **Linder, Kathryn E.** (2011). “Global Competition in a ‘Flat’ World: A Foucauldian Analysis of the Neoliberal Mentalities of *2 Million Minutes*,” *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 32, 3: 443-456.
- **Linder, Kathryn E.,** S. Rohdieck, A. Kalish, T. Johnson, K. Plank, and L. Maynell. “Graduate Student Internships as a Pathway to the Profession of Educational Development,” *To Improve the Academy*, Vol. 30 (2011)

F. National Conference Presentations:

- International Examples of Work Integrated Learning. World Association of Cooperative Education (WACE) 17th Annual World Conference, Philadelphia, PA

G. Grants:

- Strategies: A summer program for Boston Public High School Students to teach STEM featuring LEGO Mindstorm Robotics with Labview Programming. National Science Foundation (DRL-ITEST). \$313,100/3 years. Senior Personnel Assessment. Submitted.

H. Non – Refereed Publications:

- *National Faculty Development Guide*, Magna Publications – Teaching Professor. Series of faculty development guides for Magna Publications national webinars for faculty development

I. Invited Talks:

- **University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia.** (1) *Engaging Students in Their Own Learning*. Presentation for the Office for the Advancement of Engaged Learning. (2) *Engaging Faculty In Experiential Education*. Presentation for the University of Newcastle Senior Leadership,

- **Educational Research Institute (ERIN), Newcastle, Australia.** *Dialogue: Creating a Pathway for Teacher Change by Probing Teacher Assumptions*
- **Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN).** *Reflection: Transforming work experience into Work Integrated Learning*
- **Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia,** *Creating Change in Teaching and Assessment Practices*
- **Purdue University at Calumet. Indiana.** *“Infusing Experiential Learning into Course Design”*
- **Northeastern University, Boston, MA.** *Can Active Learning Really Work?* Presentation to the Bouve College of Health Sciences

J. 2011-2012 Goals:

1. The most important goal will be the transition of CTE Leadership this year to Dr. Katie Linder as Director. This will be accomplished with the full support and advice of the CTE Board.
2. Enhance the mission of the CTE through discussion with the advisory board at annual retreat and revisit our strategic goals.
3. Continue to develop our outreach programs for Part-Time Lecturers and Graduate Teaching Assistants through increased programming and website updates.
4. Strengthen our writing programs for faculty, staff, and administrators through the development of a “Professors as Writers” programming series.
5. Develop a research agenda to contribute to the Faculty Development Literature.
6. Continue to grow faculty, staff, and administration involvement in CTE activities as well as the utilization of CTE to achieve University goals.