UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

TEACHING EXCELLENCE TASK FORCE

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

CHARGE FROM THE FACULTY SENATE

Investigate best practices and successful models for faculty development for teaching excellence at urban commuter universities, including comprehensive Teaching and Learning Centers, and make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate regarding best practice models to be implemented at UHD.

In order to address the charge, the task force defined action sub-groups to examine the research on faculty development models, the best practices and successful models at urban commuter universities, and the best practices for teaching excellence that are occurring presently at the University of Houston – Downtown.

Note: We presented an interim report to the Faculty Senate on March 6, 2012. At the conclusion of the presentation the task force received feedback and suggestions from the Faculty Senate members. Our work for the second half of the semester consisted of the following:

Contact representatives from the five universities we named as exemplifying best practices and successful models for faculty development for teaching excellence at urban universities: Austin Peay State University, California State University at San Bernardino, University of Central Oklahoma, University of Texas – Brownsville, and William Paterson University of New Jersey.

Examine the goals and objectives that are measured by centers that have grants.

Examine the grant funding available for centers.

Use our examination of the faculty responses to the High Impact Practices Survey and/or faculty identified through other means by college to create focus groups on the following topics; teaching excellence at UHD, articulation of the institution's culture with regard to teaching excellence and faculty development, what type of program structure would faculty envision as useful and productive at UHD, and best practices that faculty would like to investigate further.

METHODS

REVIEW OF BOOKS, BIBLIOGRAPHIES, AND PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON TEACHING EXCELLENCE

We conducted an initial review of the research literature of instructional development in higher education, concentrating the search on texts that reported faculty development, instructional and organizational development, principles of good practice in creating and sustaining teaching and learning centers, strategies for developing instructional effectiveness, institutional cultures, organizational structures to promote change, and promotion of informed and scholarly dialogue.

We conducted a second preliminary review of some of the research on teaching excellence. We identified 12 publications, from non-profit research councils and organizations and researchers in higher education and the scholarship of teaching and learning. We summarized their general findings pertinent to our charge as follows: What characterizes teaching excellence? How do teaching centers and universities promote teaching excellence? How is teaching excellence evaluated?

SURVEY OF OTHER UNIVERSITIES

In looking at best practices and successful models for faculty development for teaching excellence at urban commuter universities, we began with the 2009 integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems Data Feedback Report for UHD. The task force condensed the list by assessing schools that most resembled UHD's "urban" and "commuter" campus. The task force reviewed the resulting data and chose five schools as representative of the best, those being Austin Peay State University, California State University at San Bernardino, University of Central Oklahoma, University of Texas – Brownsville, and William Paterson University of New Jersey.

We sent the following questions via email to the directors of centers at Austin Peay State University (APSU) and California State University-San Bernadino (CSUSB):

> *1) What kind of advice might you have for building a center such as yours? Are there tips, recommendations, or words of caution?*
>
> *2) How have you measured the success of your programs? What kinds of metrics are used to demonstrate that you've met your goals/outcomes?*
>
> *3) What is the most successful or useful program to come from your Center and why?*
>
> *4) Do you have any advice for securing funds to support a center?*
>
> *5) UHD faculty teach a 4/3 load and often take on a tremendous responsibilities with service in addition to producing our scholarship. How might we sustain faculty interest and participation?*

We then conducted phone conversations with the directors. The conversations revolved around these questions. Directors also forwarded questions to others vital to their center's operations.

We gathered two sets of data to determine current attitudes and practices regarding teaching excellence at UHD. First, we conducted focus groups comprised of faculty members from each college. Second, we reviewed the findings from the High Impact Practices (HIP) Faculty Survey.

College Level Focus Groups:

In an effort to investigate the best practices here at UHD and to understand the needs of the faculty as articulated by them, the members of the Teaching Excellence Task Force hosted Focus Groups for each of the colleges at the University of Houston – Downtown: College of Business, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Public Service, College of Sciences and Technology, and University College. These focus groups were held during the week of April 2, 2012. The members of the Task Force were assisted by Lea Campbell, Director of Academic Assessment, in documenting the focus groups through audio recording and transcription.

The members of the task force developed a protocol that provided key background information, core questions, and follow-up probes in order to ensure that each focus group was conducted in a consistent manner. (See Appendix A)

Separate idea to note: There is an ongoing concern about teaching evaluations – student opinion surveys but that is the work of another group. In other words, we believe this is outside the scope of this effort.

HIP Survey Results:

In an attempt to make the best use of work currently in progress and our contacts on other university committees where we are also serving, we made a proposal to Dr. Gene Preuss, the Chair of the High Impact Practices Committee. We asked for permission to examine the faculty responses to the survey of High Impact Practices. In doing so we made a connection between best practices and high impact practices. This connection is relevant as history shows us that the two have many common elements and have, at times, been referred to as a single element of good teaching. We understand that there may be other best practices in teaching here at UHD that those who completed the survey might not have self-defined as "high impact." At the University of Houston – Downtown we define High Impact Practices (HIPs) based upon the 2009 UHD Presidential Leadership Committee vision statement and associated work:

High-Impact Practices are active learning strategies that have had documented results in encouraging students to engage in their education through investing more time and energy into their studies, increased interaction with faculty, staff and peers, exposing them to diversity, and have led to increased student retention and persistence. Examples include student research, capstone courses, learning communities, internships, service learning, collaborative projects, first-year seminars, and writing intensive courses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

REVIEW OF BOOKS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The thirty-page bibliography that is an addendum to this report offers a recent collection of materials on promoting effective instruction in higher education and establishing an effective program to foster that development. It is offered here as an example of the research available. It comes from the 2010 edition of *A Guide to Faculty Development,* eds. Kay J. Gillespie and Douglas L. Robertson, originally published in 2002 and significantly updated in the current edition. That text is a publication originally sponsored by the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education which is an association of higher education professionals who focus on issues related to teaching and learning (podnetwork.org). *A Guide to Faculty Development* is a comprehensive collection of articles divided into three sections, one of which, "Establishing and Sustaining a Faculty Development Program" would be especially useful to any successful effort at establishing a program for teaching excellence.

Other collections include *Improving College Teaching: Strategies for Developing Instructional Effectiveness* by Maryellen Weimer, published in 1990. Weimer has published numerous collections on teaching in higher education, with her most recent publication, Inspired College Teaching : a Career-long Resource for Professional Growth, appearing in 2010. *Improving Teaching and Learning: A Whole Institution Approach* by Vaneeta-marie D'andrea and David Gosling offers similar material to the collections listed above; the similarities and differences are instructive, however, because these authors are based in the UK and thus, offer an interesting trans-national perspective.

Numerous for-profit entities have emerged in the past decade and offer resources and assistance to institutions. These companies have proliferated as assessment efforts and other political dynamics have made universities willing to spend funds on instructional development. These entities can offer useful support and suggestions for institutions; however, they should be thoroughly vetted before engaging. Some, such as POD Network, are not exactly "for-profit" and offer many genuine services for individual faculty and institutions. Others, such as Faculty Development Associates (developfaculty.com) make clear that their goal is to serve clients "with an array of services to improve the accountability outcomes of their instructional programs." While the apparent leader of that entity has published several useful books on and for adjunct instructors, (adjunctsuccess.net; *Best Practices for Supporting Adjunct Faculty; Success Strategies for Adjunct Faculty)* the "resources" listed on the webpage appear to be a random and somewhat outdated list of superficial tips for teaching. This is in juxtaposition to the extensive list of more credible sources available through the PODNetwork. All serious research on faculty development programs warns readers of problems with credibility when "accountability" is the primary aim of any consultant, program, or institution as it is with entities such as Faculty Development Associates. For example, see Argyris, Chris. "Double-Loop Learning, Teaching, and Research." *Academy of Management, Learning and Education* 1.2 (2002); Elmore, Richard. "The Problem of Capacity in the (Re)Design of Educational Accountability Systems." Rebell and Wolff eds. *NCLB at the Crossroads: Reexamining the Federal Effort to Close the Achievement Gap*; and "The Problem of Stakes in Performance-Based Accountability Systems." Fuhrman and Elmore. *Redesigning Accountability Systems for Education.*

Professional organizations such as the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), American Association of Colleges and Universities, (AAC&U), the Texas Faculty Development Network (texasfdn.org), Texas Learning Object Repository (txlor.org), and the professional

development modules supported by Texas Professional Development (txprodev.org), a service of The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, offer useful information and access to important research as well.

Given the large amount of research available, what follows is a brief list of some of the themes that emerged in our review of this research.

Program Development

- Repeatedly, one reads that a successful teaching excellence program is run by faculty for purposes articulated by them. While all stakeholders should be consulted, the goals and structure of any program must be a result of extensive deliberations with faculty. It is the faculty who should "own" such a program.

- Decisions for a particular form of faculty development programs must be based on an institution's culture. Steps should be taken to articulate that culture in order to give the program an opportunity to succeed.

- Faculty advisory groups can be a part of any structural option. These groups can be structured in different ways and appointed by different bodies. The structure and the appointment should be governed by the specific institution's culture and a guided by efforts to increase the group's credibility with faculty.

- Funding is, of course, an important issue. The range of funding for programs varies widely across the country. Significantly, expectations for specific outcomes must be commensurate with funding levels.

Program Structure

- Much of the research literature is discipline specific. A consistent theme in many articles is the importance of disciplinarity in instructional development.

- Part-time faculty need to be a part of any institutional program and they can have different needs than full-time faculty.

- One of the most common forms of faculty development seems to be a college teaching seminar for new instructors that lasts for one semester.

Role of Research

- Instructional development is a field of study and any attempt at faculty development in instruction must engage the field seriously.

- Our colleagues in the UK and Canada seem to be very active in establishing institutional efforts to promote teaching effectiveness and their work has a lot to offer us.

PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Though our charge was not to articulate teaching excellence we conducted a preliminary review of the research on teaching excellence. This should not be construed as comprehensive, only as something to build on as we continue with this project. We identified 12 publications, from non-profit research councils and organizations and researchers in higher education and the scholarship of teaching and learning. We summarized their general findings pertinent to our charge below:

What characterizes teaching excellence?

Definitions of teaching excellence were drawn from psychological theories of teaching and learning that account for social, political and economic contexts of higher education.

- ***Preparedness:*** Teaching excellence requires using problem-solving and transferable skills such, as both strategies for pedagogy and as a skills for students to practice in your classes; (Skelton et al., 2002; Skelton 2007). The literature stresses being well-prepared and –versed in the subject matter (Wygal and Stout, 2011).

- ***Clear Standards:*** Teaching excellence includes setting high standards and clear, fairly difficult but achievable expectations for students to stretch toward and achieve; providing meaningful learning assistance without providing answers (Wygal and Stout, 2011). Clarity—unambiguous presentation skills, high quality explanations—is key (Allan, Clarke and Jopling, 2009).

  Dimensions of setting solid academic expectations include focusing on high standards of output, communication of expected outcomes, clarity in standards and assessment, appropriate workload level, activity that challenge and exercise critical thinking (Allan, Clarke and Jopling, 2009).

- ***Real-World Connections:*** The literature recommends making lessons relevant to the real world by using actual applications such as case studies; engaging students' critical and creative thinking skills; revising teaching approach to help improve student development and learning (Wygal and Stout, 2011).

  Other literature recommends establishing relevance of lessons to real-life; challenging students to deal with misconceptions; encouraging group interaction; developing curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field; and participating in scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching (Devlin and Samarawickrema, 2010).

- ***Self Reflection:*** The literature discussed the importance of teachers monitoring and assessing their own present and past performance. They disseminate their knowledge to others, and they invite others to review their performance and share in their knowledge of teaching practices (Wygal and Stout, 2011).

- ***Materials and Methods:*** Teaching quality management includes focus on teachers' individual qualities, quality of teaching materials and classroom and environmental support, and teaching processes (Chen et al., 2012). Valuing and using new technology where appropriate in teaching also emerged as a theme (Skelton et al., 2002; Skelton 2007). Excellent teaching is the result of both planning in the beginning of a course and dynamic adjustments of teaching content as you teach the course (Chen et al., 2012).

Scaffolding learning is encouraged. Dimensions of scaffolding include providing varied ways to teach content, anticipating misconceptions, appropriate pacing, high level of engagement, well organized and structured sessions, effective and timely feedback, encouragement of independent learning, encouragement of active learning, effective and sympathetic guidance (Allan, Clarke and Jopling, 2009).

Other literature recommends displaying enthusiasm about subject matter and providing active classroom activity; designing classes where activities and assessment are consistent with and necessary for achieving learning outcomes; planning lessons and providing feedback; monitoring student workload; covering fundamentals, even if less content is covered; valuing learning; and providing a variety of learning tasks to engage students (Devlin and Samarawickrema, 2010).

- ***Individual and Cultural Support:*** Excellent teachers are attuned to multinational and multicultural dynamics of the classroom. Sensitivity includes reviewing, analyzing and incorporating information about cultural, ethnic and educational circumstances of all groups; encouraging that students participate in self-reflection exercises; and using strategies to enhance engagement and participation on the part of international or diverse cultural groups in the class (Henderson et al. 2010, Chen et al., 2012).

  Some literature defines teaching excellence as involving reflection on and meeting the individual needs of students; understanding each student's strengths and weaknesses, and building from their baseline, encouraging them to adopt an active approach to learning (Skelton et al., 2002; Skelton 2007). Excellent teachers value communication with students and being available for students (Skelton et al., 2002; Skelton 2007).

  Dimensions of a supportive learning environment include intellectual excitement, subject knowledge, respect for and interest in students, approachability, and recognition of diversity (Allan, Clarke and Jopling, 2009).

  Other literature recommends teaching and curriculum designed that are focused on meeting students' needs; building empathetic relationships with students; providing assessment and feedback that foster independent learning; and respecting and supporting for the development of students as individuals (Devlin and Samarawickrema, 2010).

- ***Relationship to Student Success:*** Teaching excellence can be one in a combination of different dimensions in student learning and success, including support for learning from professionals other professionals such as librarians, advisors, technicians (Little and Locke 2008). Other factors also play a part, such as high entry standards, funding for programs, advising and facilities, and low student-to-staff ratio. Furthermore, research has shown that student learning and success may not require excellent teaching.

How do teaching centers and universities promote teaching excellence?

Center Programming: Centers use various methods to disseminate best practices (including workshops, guest speakers, conferences, etc.) (Skelton et al., 2002). Centers can offer assistance in identifying course scope, establishing and maintaining a course plan, developing course requirements, sharing strategies for maintaining those requirements, managing the classroom atmosphere, preparing and conducting evaluations, collecting improvement information, establishing teaching assets such as

libraries of portfolios and other resources, encouraging and sharing teaching innovations, and suggesting how to track results of changes (Chen et al. 2012).

Universities can also encourage teaching excellence by improving the quality and variety of teaching evaluation; making teachers a priority by increasing commitment of resources and funds and demonstrating respect for faculty; protecting faculty time by increasing the size of faculty or decreasing course loads; supporting faculty development activities including faculty-run teaching centers; improving the infrastructure for teaching such as state-of-the-art technology and resources for more faculty-faculty and faculty-student interaction; providing effective rewards for teaching; understanding the responsibility of students (such as expecting more by way of attendance, community participation, university-wide grade standards, and student responsibility in learning); recognizing teaching as a multifaceted activity; supporting intellectual community; and clarifying the institutional mission and educational goals in terms of rank and promotion guidelines and institutional mission (Frost and Teodorescu, 2001).

Rewarding Excellence: Centers of Teaching Excellence in higher education offer teaching fellowships, grants for research (mostly practical, action research) (Skelton et al., 2002). Institutions are encouraged to reward teaching excellence (Hammer et al. 2010), including awards where alumni nominate candidates, where faculty nominate candidates, and where students award candidates (Hammer et al. 2010). The reviews listed awards based on type of teaching (lab, writing, lecture, etc.), longevity of tenure (an award for junior faculty, an award for senior faculty, etc.) and other means by which to aid in retention, promotion of best practices, and morale. Reviews also described funding for awards coming from a variety of sources, including department, colleges, programs, university.

Funding: Teaching excellence initiatives, including centers, must enjoy consistent, sustained support in order to thrive and effect change (Chen et al. 2012). They should provide abstractions of teaching practices and leave implementation details to instructors. They should provide roadmaps with clear steps to help teachers understand teaching excellence and implement these practices toward excellence.

Centers of Teaching Excellence in higher education can seek and earn local and national grants from departments of education and foundations with education as foci. Most of these grants are framed as research grants, thereby requiring a higher standard of data collection from and assessment of resulting programming. These granting bodies recommend not only tracking participation levels and satisfaction with center programming, but also efforts to elevate and advance higher education teaching and learning practice and research as a field (Skelton et al., 2002).

How is teaching excellence evaluated?

Teaching portfolios have been used to help improving teaching practices (Murphy and MacLaren, 2009). The strength of portfolios lies in their ability to keep accounting of a broad archive of data over a longer period of pedagogical practices. Portfolios yield variations of "high quality teaching" across disciplines; they can help interpret teaching practices in context. Debates linger as to whether they can be used for summative purposes such as tenure and promotion without detracting from their potential to stimulate reflection about teaching in formative assessment. Portfolio assessments should allow teachers the freedom to learn from weaknesses and experiment in their teaching. Portfolios should encourage critical reflexivity on what you teach and how you teach it.

Peer review has also been used as a means of formative and summative assessment (Hubball and Clarke, 2011; Hammer et al. 2010). Peer review encompasses everything from class visitation to examination of course syllabi and lecture plans. Here, again, care must be taken to prevent the

potential misuse, misunderstanding, tensions and conflation between formative and summative approaches. Peer review requires appropriate resourcing, including recognition for a faculty reviewer's time, expertise and training costs; explicit procedures, including rationale, objectives, guiding principles and a clear sense of criteria (such as scholarship, accuracy, integrity, transparency, diversity, credibility, usefulness, command of subject matter, representativeness of recent developments in the field, preparedness, relationship between goals / objectives, student engagement strategies, among others). Peer review also brings with it scheduling difficulties. Technology such as intranet software, video conferencing, and email can help facilitate peer review. Both enlisting internal and external reviewers comes with difficulties, including unfamiliarity with particular challenges of teaching at a given institution or within a particular discipline; politics and power differentials between evaluators and instructors; disruptions and negative influence on professional relationships; and limitations of the accuracy and scope of singular course visitations.

Student evaulations can be an indication, but research suggests it should not be the only or primary measure of teaching effectiveness. Guidelines for using them include using identical evaluations for every course or faculty member, providing guidance to faculty for interpreting the results, ensuring that administration understands the limitations and proper use of evaluations, ensuring that students understand the importance and use of evaluations, following prescribe routines for administering the evaluations, and limiting how much of teaching assessment that student evaluations constitute (alongside teaching portfolios and peer review) (Hammer et al. 2010).

SURVEY OF OTHER UNIVERSITIES

We contacted five universities and only two gave a complete response that we were able to include. The directors at Austin Peay State University and California State University at San Bernardino were enthusiastically responsive and could be considered as a resource as we proceed. Both indicated that they wanted to keep in touch with UHD. Representatives at University of Central Oklahoma, University of Texas – Brownsville, and William Paterson University of New Jersey did not respond to our queries, but should be contacted again as we move forward.

AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY

The answers below are written per the flow of conversation and grouped by question topic.

I. Dr. Loretta Griffy, director of the Title III Center for Teaching and Learning at APSU

1) What kind of advice might you have for building a center such as yours? Are there tips, recommendations, or words of caution?

A center must couch all of its offers in terms of service and support to the faculty. The center at APSU is extremely receptive to every request they receive from faculty. The center partners with individuals, departments, and colleges. If a dean does ask a faculty member to attend events at the center to strengthen her or his pedagogy, the center works to make it as positive an experience as possible, allowing the person to pick from their services and assuring the faculty that they can accommodate any needs a professor might have.

2) How have you measured the success of your programs? What kinds of metrics are used to demonstrate that you've met your goals/outcomes?

Dr. Griffy wishes they had an official transcripting system. Such a system would allow the center to create an e-dossier for a faculty's tenure file, it would help with SACS reaffirmation (push one button and produce what SACS wants).

4) Do you have any advice for securing funds to support a center?

Regarding how the center came to be: An APSU administrator hired a consulting firm, Munzel & Associates, and paid them a lot of money to apply for the Department of Education's Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant. The team secured the grant, which is a five-year grant at 2 million dollars. The grant pays for the Center. Dr. Griffy has a "mixed reaction" to Munzel & Associates.

When the grant runs out, Dr. Griffy will lobby to continue it and have it funded just as well by the university's administration.

3) What is the most successful or useful program to come from your Center and why?

The center runs a very successful Revitalize Academic Success Initiative (RASI) that financially compensates faculty (~$4400.00) for redesigning courses that traditionally have low student success. The faculty propose how they will redesign the courses and submit them to a selection committee that comes out of the Faculty Senate. Dr. Griffy maintains that faculty should own the decision making process on which proposals will be implemented. The center provides the rubric and the committee added to it and made its own selection. Winners evaluate their success by looking at grade distributions and generating a report. There are two objectives of RASI grants: to improve what goes on inside of classrooms and to improve **how** students succeed. The faculty work to make courses more receptive to students.

A Faculty Leadership Program, to which faculty apply and are selected into by the Dean's Council, exposes faculty to all parts of the campus and teaches them about how the campus works. The goal of this program is to create a better-informed faculty who can lead more effectively from a position they already hold. It improves faculty service. Nine faculty members participate each semester. The cohort meets all day, every Tuesday. They receive one course-release. They are exposed to distance education, accounting, finance, legislature, governing boards, student groups, financial aid, etc. Again, the goal is to really learn about the campus. The president holds a kick-off lunch at the beginning of the semester and the cohort becomes the president's support team. It teaches faculty how to develop programs and it teaches them to be mindful of bureaucracy. The faculty love it.

Similar to this is the Faculty Teaching Program (selected by a standing committee of faculty members) that brings together a cohort of faculty for a semester to target and select ten teaching and learning strategies. Participants develop and run a workshop for other faculty on their chosen strategy. The first meeting faculty bring their teaching philosophies and, at the end of the program, produce new ones. Participants receive a course release.

5) UHD faculty teach a 4/3 load and often take on a tremendous responsibilities with service in addition to producing our scholarship. How might we sustain faculty interest and participation?

Dr. Griffy stresses that the process of trying to improve is what is most valuable.

Dr. Griffy has been most often frustrated when the center holds a campus workshop run by a paid speaker and very few faculty attend. Her solution to this is to offer stipends to colleges to come up with what faculty want and when they want it and then the Center manages the details. Rather than have the Center decide what faculty might be interested in, she suggests having faculty generate their own kinds of events, speakers, and workshops.

II. Dr. Gray Kane, the Faculty Development Analyst for the Center, APSU

1) What kind of advice might you have for building a center such as yours? Are there tips, recommendations, or words of caution?

From the start, our course-redesign and faculty-development initiatives have been voluntary, but we've had to emphasize our center's presence, and the faculty needed a sense of ownership in order to develop trust. To increase the faculty's familiarity with our center and staff, we co-sponsor with other campus organizations whenever possible, predominantly by contributing manpower.

3) What is the most successful or useful program to come from your Center and why?

Through Academic Affairs, we conduct New Faculty Workshops to build relations with new faculty. To improve faculty buy-in, we created the RASI Senate Committee to select course-redesign proposals for funding, as well as the Faculty Development Planning Committee, under whose advisement we devise the ten teaching strategies that faculty-development events target each year. These tactics helped us achieve enough campus buy-in to roll out the first faculty-development program, the Faculty Leadership Program (FLP), which Academic Affairs and Distance and Extended Education co-sponsor.

I do believe the prestige of and word-of-mouth from the FLP have developed campus interest in our next program, the Faculty Teaching Program, which we plan to alternate each year with a Faculty Advising Program.

2) How have you measured the success of your programs? What kinds of metrics are used to demonstrate that you've met your goals/outcomes?

As for our assessments: We measure the success of course redesigns predominantly on the rate of D's, F's, and W's; the success of faculty-development events via pre-/post-tests, annual number of faculty attendees, and our ability to address all ten teaching strategies; and the success of the Faculty Leadership Program through a pre-/post-program assessment and an evaluation of each day's activities (we additionally plan to track FLP graduates' initiatives and other leadership activities). I suspect we'll assess the Faculty Teaching Program via a hybrid of the course-redesign and FLP's assessment strategies: the participants' DFW rates, a pre-/post-program assessment, and evaluation of each day's activities.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AT SAN BERNARDINO

III. Dr. Kim Costino, Director of the Teaching Resource Center at CSUSB

Dr. Costino is in her first year as the director of the center, and her remarks are followed by the text of an email sent from Dr. Rowena Santiago who directed the center for 9 years)

1) What kind of advice might you have for building a center such as yours? Are there tips, recommendations, or words of caution?

A center must be faculty-driven. This is the most important aspect of developing a center. The center must answer to Faculty Senate. It should not be seen as a remedial teaching center and it should not be an arm of the administration. It should have an advisory board of cross-disciplinary faculty.

Faculty Senate created their center and the Provost uses state funds to fund it. The director of the center works with provost and faculty senate.

The center should be seen as a space to have conversations and to mobilize faculty.

The center must get build new faculty orientation into the center.

The director must be seen as an ally of the faculty.

2) How have you measured the success of your programs? What kinds of metrics are used to demonstrate that you've met your goals/outcomes?

Their center has no systematic evaluations. They conduct needs assessments to find out what faculty want more of.

5) UHD faculty teach a 4/3 load and often take on a tremendous responsibilities with service in addition to producing our scholarship. How might we sustain faculty interest and participation?

The center should provide faculty with course buy outs (course releases) and provide stipends to travel to any conference that has panels or workshops on teaching.

The center should send thank yous to all who come to any event.

The provost, deans, and departmental chairs should advocate for participation in the center's programs and activities. The center should be seen as a valuable tool that helps lead to tenure.

IV. Dr. Rowena Santiago, the first director of CSUSB's Teaching Resource Center:

1) What kind of advice might you have for building a center such as yours? Are there tips, recommendations, or words of caution?

What helped greatly when the Center got started were the following:

- Prior to opening, a needs assessment survey of faculty was conducted at department meetings (got a response rate of 70+%, faculty gave input on how they teach their particular discipline, established visibility for the center)

- Provost attended the first workshops and opening events, cancelled all administrative meeting on that day so that deans, chairs and faculty could attend

- Align programs with the campus' strategic goals, and develop a conceptual framework for Center's programs (why are you offering these programs? where do they lead to? what meaning will it give to faculty who participate in these programs? how will it help develop one's teaching agenda, as junior faculty, as mid-career faculty, as senior faculty?) The conceptual framework for TRC was to support teaching improvement and innovation by providing programs that will take faculty from good teaching to teaching excellence, to scholarly teaching and finally to scholarship of teaching and learning. (See http://trc.csusb.edu/pdf/TchgStages03.pdf.)

2) How have you measured the success of your programs? What kinds of metrics are used to demonstrate that you've met your goals/outcomes?

Surveys were conducted as part of WASC accreditation

Participation in TRC programs were reported by faculty in RPT documents

Best measure of success: faculty oral dissemination of their teaching innovations, projects, etc. (public reporting)

3) What is the most successful or useful program to come from your Center and why?

Teaching grants – generates a very "live" teaching culture. Faculty gets stipend or release time, faculty learn more about their own teaching and their understanding of how students learn, dissemination (through poster presentations , or newsletter, or web posting) supports scholarship and accountability, getting a teaching grant is valued for RPT - a win-win situation for all.

4) Do you have any advice for securing funds to support a center?

When the Provost saw the impact of the Center on faculty and academics, he increased the budget without being asked.

Securing funding should not be part of the mission of the Center. Else, this will imply that it is not important because there is no funding. How (and how much) a center is funded speaks volume on what kind of priority and value the campus gives to teaching, its teaching culture, and faculty development.

5) UHD faculty teach a 4/3 load and often take on a tremendous responsibilities with service in addition to producing our scholarship. How might we sustain faculty interest and participation?

- Have programs for junior faculty, for mid-career faculty and senior faculty and for all

- Be aware of teaching needs and be on the cutting edge regarding teaching trends

- Whenever possible and without sacrificing quality, make it easy for faculty to participate in Center programs (for example, develop templates for reports, provide refreshments so they don't have to worry about stopping by the store to get something to eat which in turn will require extra time or make them change their minds about going to the workshop or the event)

- take time to acknowledge faculty participation (letters of thanks, letters of grant awards, cc chairs/deans)

CANVAS OF UHD FACULTY: A CONCISE SUMMATION

COLLEGE LEVEL FOCUS GROUPS

Short of providing a verbatim list of faculty responses, we cannot do justice to the range of ideas, levels of concern, and profound engagement of faculty at the focus groups. Each college had active, sometimes impassioned discussions on teaching methods, a teaching program and improving student success at UHD. The commitment was impressive. The ideas noted below may have emerged in the respondents' discussion of one or more of the questions. We included the idea under the question where it appeared the most frequently.

Question 1: What should be the goals of a teaching development program?

Levels of interaction and support
Take into consideration the university as a whole, but also the needs of the colleges and disciplines; whatever development program we have needs to consider these three levels; university, colleges, and disciplines. In effect, this idea recognizes that as faculty we have commonalities, but we also have needs in our areas of specialization.

Incentives
Will there be some recognition for faculty for their participation in high level activities related to best practices in teaching, i.e. those who share their practices in seminars, those who re-design course curriculum, and so on? General idea – within the best teaching practices program do we offer incentives such as grants to support faculty?

Acclimation
We need orientation for new faculty on managing relationships, managing classroom, managing system, university, college/discipline, and professional commitments; optional peer observation; information and ideas to help us address the needs of our non-traditional students (see university definition); information and ideas about how to address different class modalities (It is understood that we have the TTLC; the best practices program could help faculty with issues related to content and understanding and teaching strategies.); information and ideas about distance learning – online and hybrid related to best practices and specific teaching and learning strategies.

We need to gather information on new best practices relevant to both traditional and distance modes of learning. This should be a place where faculty can reflect on what worked and what did not work. We need to develop university-wide understanding and share information and ideas about maintaining academic rigor within a culture of student success

Some specifics on what should be offered in a best practices teaching program

Cross discipline collaborations

Development of appropriate assessment tools

Workshops on best pedagogical strategies

Mentorship - a non-judgmental forum

A place to seek help/ideas/feedback

Looking forward – opportunities for national recognition

Host symposiums on issues related to best practices in teaching

Base for research and data collection for projects and studies on teaching

Produce a newsletter/journal

Question 2: What teaching/learning issues would faculty most like to explore with colleagues?

Active learning
Faculty expressed a desire to explore ways to incorporate active learning and experiential activities into their curriculum design in order to engage students. They wanted to learn ways to help students think about and practice what they have learned. (See Appendix C for definition)

Critical thinking
Faculty expressed a desire to learn more about critical thinking, noting that critical thinking would be a part of our core components and linking the idea of critical thinking with that of active learning. (See Appendix C for definition)

Individuation/Differentiation
Faculty expressed a need to learn ways to accommodate students who are diverse in their intellectual preparedness or capability within a single class group, to meet the needs of students while upholding the standards of the institution, to develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity as it relates to academic behavior, and to provide a platform so students who excel academically may demonstrate their expertise. (See Appendix C for definition)

Motivational Strategies
Faculty expressed a desire to learn how to best motivate students and to help students identify what sort of effort might be needed by them in order to be successful in a particular course. (See Appendix C for definition)

Cross Disciplinary Pedagogical Issues
Faculty wanted a forum for sharing ideas within and across disciplines about pedagogical issues, to gain new perspectives on teaching from one another, and to contribute to and/or use a data-base of best practices that includes specific examples. (See Appendix C for definition)

Question 3: What type of structure would faculty be most comfortable with?

The center or program should be faculty driven but there needs to be a structure used to manage the center

Although not directly stated it seems that there is a need for the program to have a designated director; someone in a leadership role

The center should be faculty driven and the structure used to manage the center should preserve faculty oversight; however the center should receive an appropriate level of support to ensure its effectiveness and success

We must make effective use of human resources

Faculty are highly motivated to investigate best practices and to share ideas about best practices with one another and with the profession through publication; there is concern that this be made a priority and that time devoted to these efforts should be respected and considered as part of the work of the faculty.

Question 4: Do you have anything you have experienced or you can identify as a best teaching practice?

Consensus that faculty want to learn from one another and share *(See examples from HIP survey, below.)*

Associated with this program/center should be a repository or database of best practices and faculty connections to practices.

Faculty want to be able to conduct searches for particular practices and then to discuss and/or collaborate with others who have the same interest or who have some knowledge to share.

Question 5: What do you wish we had here at UHD to support or improve your teaching?

Structure – ability to re-structure a classroom to meet best practice models, i.e. for seminar discussion, small group work, and so on

Showcase of faculty and student projects

Database of potential grants for teaching tools

Database of faculty and area of research interest, teaching expertise, resources

HIP SURVEY RESULTS

Pertinent Ideas from the HIP Faculty Survey

As we began to look at the data from the faculty responses to the HIP survey we sought information about the best practices that are currently being used by the faculty at UHD. (See Appendix B for complete list of items of importance from the HIP Faculty Survey.) Here are our impressions of the most important ideas and issues that emerged from short answer responses by faculty:

- There are a large number of responses on writing intensive experiences. Faculty who provided these short answer responses wrote about planning, verbal, written, structured, and peer feedback, opportunities for revision, proof writing assignments, rubrics, primary and

secondary sources, writing portfolios, and various genres of writing, including observation, description, reflection, analysis, synthesis, meta-cognitive essays, and critical research. For the most part these responses do not elaborate on the teaching aspect of the writing intensive experience or the affect upon students. It would be interesting to look at the teaching in writing intensive experiences here at UHD.

- There are a large number of responses about student collaboration. Faculty who provided these short answer responses wrote about students working together to prepare group reports, conduct case studies, to research a topic and present the results to peers and/or members of the industry or profession, to develop various types of discipline-specific plans, to engage in a role play or simulation experience, to conduct a risk assessment, to form a company, to lead class discussions, and to engage in problem solving. It would be interesting to look at ways that faculty at UHD design collaborative experiences: how the students engage with one another, how the expectations are conveyed to students, and how the student work is assessed – individually and collaboratively.

- There are a large number of responses about students engaged in service learning experiences that appear to be specifically designed to help them think further about the discipline. Faculty who provided these short answer responses wrote about students engaged in service learning by providing communication audits for non-profit organizations, assisting at service centers or schools for homeless and indigent individuals, working for an institution and writing about the experience, creating and donating goods to an agency, tutoring or providing support for a special needs child in a school or community setting, and contributing a specified number of hours to working in the community. It would be interesting to know more about how faculty conceive of and organize these discipline-based service learning experiences and how they help students reflect upon these experiences.

We can begin to identify some ideas in terms of specific teaching practices being used by faculty at UHD. They are:

- Create opportunities for students to apply what they are learning through the design of guided observations and case study experiences

- Enable students to learn/experience the processes used by those who practice in the discipline

- Set up situations in which students role play or engage in simulations (Note, this is done face-to-face and online in courses here at UHD)

- Engage students in the work associated with the profession

- Enhance the cultural awareness of students

- Create situations in which students work to refine and practice various means of communicating

- Establish the relevancy of the action or practice through authentic experiences or other means

- Design research and/or writing experiences that reflect course objectives and/or practices of the profession

- Create experiences in which students interact/network with members of the community who are practicing in a particular field

- Assist students in creating a body of work and reflecting on that work

- Design scaffolded experiences for students so they engage in a sequence of learning events that are both recursive and additive in terms of the level of difficulty.

- Engage students in faculty/student collaboration – research, service, publication, other

- Design guidelines and provide feedback to students which will enable students to achieve self-efficacy, a high level of understanding and/or quality of work

- Design rubrics which help students understand how their product has been viewed and how they may assess their own work

- Use questioning in the classroom and/or help students self-question to enhance understanding and guide observations

- Design learning and reporting experiences so students may segment larger projects into manageable units

Notable findings from the HIP Survey

- HIPs are currently taking place at UHD across all colleges and most departments

- HIPs are occurring every semester (Fall, 2010 to present Spring, 2012) with small increases over time, excluding summer when fewer courses were offered

- HIPs are occurring in all delivery modes with approximately three-quarters in the face-to-face mode

- Persons conducting HIPs report positive outcomes (i.e., all means above 4.0 on 5 point scale) for students including investing more time and effort, experiencing meaningful interactions, engaging people different from themselves, increasing achievement of course/program outcomes and retention

- Respondents indicate that approximately 7,557 students participated in HIPs from Fall 2010 to Spring 2012. It is important to note that this number may count the same student(s) across multiple courses and/or semesters

EXTERNAL FUNDING POSSIBILITIES

Opportunity Name	Description	Grant Amounts	Deadlines
NEA Foundation Grants	For public school educators to enhance teaching and learning. Learning and Leadership grants to support high quality professional development. For practicing K-12 public school teachers, higher education faculty and staff at public colleges and universities. Requires close measurement / assessment of outcomes. Apply online. May not be used to pursue degrees, pay indirect costs, grant administration fees or salaries, travel costs or conference fees for more than one person, stipends, lobbying , or religious purposes.	$5000 for groups (must include partner information)	February 1 June 1 October 1
Frees Foundation Grant	Awards grants in the field of community service, education, health and housing. Emphasis on program and organizations benefiting women, children, youth, and families. Info online.	None indicated	September 1, 2012
Department of Education: Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP)	Help institutions of higher education (IHEs) become self sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen institution's academic quality, institutional management and fiscal stability. Priorities include increasing postsecondary success, technology, improving productivity. Would require center to conduct research. Requires close measurement / assessment of outcomes. Info online.	$400,000 max	April 23, 2012
Brown Foundation	Distributes funds for public charitable purposes, principally for support, encouragement and assistance to education, the arts	None indicated 2011 grantees ranged from	Four months before funds are required.

Opportunity Name	Description	Grant Amounts	Deadlines
	and community service. Info online.	$3,000 to $600,000	
Dell Foundation Human Capital Grant	Seeks to increase the number of exceptional educators, administrators and specialized district support staff through investments in programs that attract, retain, develop and manage talent in the education sector. Info online. Requires close measurement / assessment of outcomes. Might require collaboration with and willingness to train secondary educators.	None specified	January 15 Online submission
Lumina Foundation	Seeks to increase awareness of the benefits of higher education, improve student access to and preparedness for college, improve student success in college, and improve productivity across the higher education system. Info online.	$50,000-$250,000	Letters of inquiry through the end of September
Ed Rachal Foundation	For the benefit of charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes within the state of Texas.	Under $1,000,000	None indicated Online application
Cullen Foundation	Supports programs in Texas, primarily in Houston area. Supports a wide variety of charitable activities, including education, health, arts, and public service programs. Info online.	None specified	None
Andrews Foundation	Offers philanthropic support and development in child and family welfare, higher education, and other target areas. Info online.	None specified	October 1 to December 31
Alkek Foundation	Provides support for charitable, religious, scientific (medical), cultural and educational organizations and programs serving the people of the state of Texas. Preferences for research and education-related projects that will pay lasting dividends in terms of new discoveries and improved quality of life. Info online.	$1,000 to $6,250, 000 for prior grantees	No deadlines Rolling

Opportunity Name	Description	Grant Amounts	Deadlines
Herzstein Foundation	Supports charitable efforts that offer individuals opportunities for advancement through education and enrichment of the human spirit, and contribute to the quality of life in our society. Info online.	$2,500 to $1,000,000 for prior grantees	None specified
Kemper Trust	support and promote quality education and human services programming for underserved populations. Special consideration is given to charitable organizations that serve the people of Grayson County, Texas. Info online.	None specified	March 1 June 1 September 1 December 1
Lubrizol Foundation	Awards financial support to educational institutions and charitable organizations in communities primarily within the United States where Lubrizol operates major facilities. Info online.	None specified	None Rolling
Owen Family Foundation	Primary interest include education, health, huma services and Christian/Judeo religions. Info online.	None specified	January 5 May 1
McKee Foundation	Aids, provides, furthers, assists and makes contributions, gifts, grants, or other forms of financial assistance exclusively to charitable corporations, organizations or associations organized and operating within the United States in the categories of civic, cultural and religion; education, literature, and science; hospitals; medical, medical research and mental health; rehabilitation and welfare; youth activities; and community funds. Awards contributions, gifts and grants in education, literature, science, civic, cultural and religious organizations, hospitals, youth activities, and community funds, to name a few. Info online.	$3,000 to $60,000 for prior grantees	December 15
Priddy Foundation	Supports programs in human services, education, the arts, and health, which offer significant potential for individual	$1500 to $1,300,000 for prior grantees	None specified

Opportunity Name	Description	Grant Amounts	Deadlines
	development and community improvement. Info online.		
Richardson Foundation	Supports educational, health, human service, and cultural organizations. Info online.	None specified	January 15
Powell Foundation	Places priority on organizations and programs that serve residents in Harris, Travis and Walker counties, principally in the fields of education, the arts, health and conservation. Info online.	None specified	Board meets twice a year in the spring and in the fall. Submission required at least two months prior to a meeting for consideration.
Hamman Foundation	Gives assistance to students in the pursuit of higher education through scholarships; to promote the arts; to fund qualified institutions in the furtherance and development of scientific projects; to aid churches, associations and conventions of churches in the advancement of religion; to aid colleges and universities in both operating and capital needs; to provide aid for the needy; and to assist hospitals, medical colleges and research institutions for the study, treatment and cure of disease. Info online.	$3000 to $100,000 for prior grantees	None specified
Elkins Foundation	Has sponsored programs at UHD in prior years. Address online	None specified	None specified

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for program structure:

The following recommendations for the structure of a teaching excellence program at UHD are based on the research this task force has performed, focus groups in each of UHD's academic colleges, and our knowledge of UHD's institutional culture. While we have attempted to be thoughtful and thorough, we recognize that the details of structuring such a program are legion. *Thus, we recommend that a committee of the Faculty Senate be charged with reviewing this report and, in the fall 2012 semester, take the first steps to establish such a program.* An advisory board (described below) could then be constituted by spring 2013. Decisions for revising the structure of this program should, at least in the first two years of a program rest exclusively with the Faculty Senate.

1. The program should be one entity that serves the entire university. This will be a place where faculty can work at the discipline, college, or university level, as well as across disciplines, departments, and colleges.
2. The program should be housed with the Faculty Senate and responsible to it.
3. An advisory board made up of two faculty members from each college should be constituted by the Faculty Senate and serve as a standing committee of the Senate. This board would work with a program director to establish priorities; communicate with faculty on issues related to the program; participate in the organization of workshops and other events; and investigate sources of funding.
4. For the first two years, the program should be led in-house by a faculty member who in addition, will teach one course per long semester. The Advisory Board would choose this person after soliciting applications for the position. After the initial two-years, an assessment should be made of the program by the Faculty Senate and changes in structure could be considered depending on the development of the program.
5. The program will develop and work through partnerships with both the TTLC and the Library in order to better provide guidance as to the types of resources (i.e. books, software, and expertise) needed to enhance teaching excellence at UHD.
6. The salaries and operating funds for the program, including those of both a director and webmaster, will be provided by the university. Supplemental funds will be sought through grants for additional programming, i.e. workshops and symposia; however, as that will take some time to develop, support for these events should be provided by the university for at least the first two years.
7. The program should model itself as an institute focused on developing a culture centered in the investigation, action, and dissemination of ideas about the best practices in teaching. This will be a place where faculty may collaborate to build upon and/or re-envision current practices in light of what we are learning in our practice and from new research.
8. The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated regularly using multiple points of assessment which should include both student and faculty focus groups.

Recommendations for the work of a teaching excellence program:

1. The program should provide a venue for all instructors at UHD, whether tenured, tenure track, lecturer, or adjunct for growth, collaboration, research, and discussion by offering a range of resources that respect and address differences in teaching styles and disciplinary pedagogy.
2. The activities of the program should be based on expressed faculty priorities communicated through the advisory board and which are commensurate with funding and levels of institutional support.
3. The program should provide enrichment to the initial orientation of new faculty provided by the university.
4. For new and continuing faculty, the program can provide mentoring and support while ensuring that new faculty are directed to resources to help them develop a useful familiarity with the programs, policies, and processes or our institution; discipline specific program outcomes; and the specific challenges of teaching in an urban commuter school with a substantial percentage of underprepared and untraditional students.
5. The program should provide considerable electronic resources, including archives of video presentations and workshops, online resources and articles.
6. The program should attempt to build creatively on already existing faculty expertise to foster collaboration and improve classroom success.
7. The program should strive to establish financial support and release time for faculty to develop new courses, revise old courses, and otherwise engage in specific pedagogical projects.
8. The program should involve faculty in scholarly and creative work based in teaching. This also should occur at all levels and potentially across disciplines, departments, and colleges.
9. The program should assist faculty in disseminating their research on teaching through pre-existing peer reviewed journals, through an in-house newsletter, and eventually, through a journal based here, at the University of Houston – Downtown.
10. Engagement in the work of the institute should be voluntary in nature and should not be mandated as a result of faculty course evaluations or other measures.

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APPENDIX A

Teaching Excellence Task Force Focus Group Protocol

Background information for report

Participants in the focus groups will respond to five questions (see below focus group protocol). It is anticipated the focus groups will take approximately 50 minutes to 1 hour. During the focus groups, two members of the Teaching Excellence Task Force will either act as the facilitator or recorder. This will ensure that we accurately interpret and properly convey what is discussed in the focus groups. However, individual participants' names will not be associated with any comments. Also, the focus groups *will* be recorded electronically. This procedure will allow the records to be maintained anonymously as once the focus group is completed the records will not contain any identifying information. It should also be noted that participants will not be asked to give any information about themselves directly (unless they choose to offer such information). Rather, they will be asked to serve as subject matter experts to help us identify best practices and possible avenues for a teaching and learning center.

Focus group protocol

Thank you for coming today.

[Make Facilitator and Recorder introductions]

Background of Task Force

Our charge from Faculty Senate is to investigate best practices and successful models for faculty development for teaching excellence at urban commuter universities, including comprehensive Teaching and Learning Centers, and make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate regarding best practice models to be implemented at UHD.

In order to address the charge, the task force defined action sub-groups to examine the research on faculty development models, the best practices and successful models at urban commuter universities, and the best practices for teaching excellence that are occurring presently at the University of Houston – Downtown. We are asking you to serve as a subject matter expert on current best practices and to help all of us better understand what teaching-related services would improve teaching excellence at UHD.
In an attempt to make the best use of work currently in progress and of our contacts on other university committees where we are also serving, we examined the faculty responses to the High Impact Practices Survey. In doing so, we make a connection between "best practices" and "high impact" practices. This connection is relevant as history shows us that best practices and high impact practices have common elements and have, at times, been referred to interchangeably. While saying this, we acknowledge that there may be other "best practices" in teaching at UHD that were not included by respondents on the survey of "high impact" practices.

We hope this focus group will help us examine practices currently in place to understand about general elements and possible actions for encouraging teaching excellence.

Ground Rules

Before we begin, we need to set some ground rules. During our time together we will be taking notes and making an audio recording, but we will not be recording any names or other identifying information. The tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet in the Office of Assessment. They will be transcribed without using the names of the participants. For example, we will use a notation such as P1 to denote Participant 1. Furthermore, everything said in this room is confidential. We ask for candor in your responses and therefore it is imperative we respect everybody's confidentiality. Does everyone agree to keep our conversation totally confidential?

The remaining ground rule is that we hear from everyone. To get us started, we will go around the room. Please feel free to comment, especially to elaborate on the comments of others. Therefore, everyone is expected to talk and I ask that you monitor your airtime to make sure that everyone has roughly equal time!

We greatly appreciate you coming out today and sharing your thoughts with us.

Let us begin.

[Go around room for opener question]

Note to facilitator: We have included probes (follow-up questions) for some of the questions below. Probes are optional to ask, but can be helpful to have. They can help if facilitators need to direct (or redirect) the conversation. They can also help further explain the meaning of the main question (if necessary).

Question One
What should be the goals of a teaching development program?

Question Two
What teaching/learning issues would faculty most like to explore with colleagues?

Probe
What areas of improvement in teaching should a teaching development program cover to best meet faculty needs and professional goals?

Question Three
What type of structure, i.e. arrangement of elements or organization, would faculty be most comfortable with (i.e. consultant, committee, staffed program, structured monthly meetings on best practices led by faculty volunteers, or some combination of these?

Question Four
Do you have anything that you have experienced or can identify that could be a best practice?

Follow up: If you don't mind, would you share it for the record so it can become part of the data?

Question Five
What do you wish we had here at UHD to support and/or improve your teaching?
Follow up: Let's brainstorm for a moment; just throw out your ideas.

Probe:
Workshops? Guest speakers? Colloquiums? More teaching awards? Training and seminars on teaching? Resources on the scholarship of teaching and learning? Certificate programs? Informal classroom observations? Course design tutorials?

Closing

Are there any additional comments about anything we have discussed today?

Thank you for participating in this focus group. Your input has been very helpful. And, remember please keep what you have heard today completely confidential.

APPENDIX B

Pertinent Questions from the HIP Survey

Reviewing responses to "We also welcome information about any HIPs that may not conform to the categories or definitions below." *Responses to this point would enable us to collect data about other best practices at UHD.*

Reviewing responses to "How would you describe this HIP?" and also the descriptions of the category "Other." *Responses to these points will help us see the details of the experience for faculty and students. We may be able to see broad themes in best practices through an examination of this data.*

Reviewing responses to "Please provide a brief description of this HIP and how you believe it affects students." *Responses to these two points will enable us to gather more detailed information about the experience and will let us see how faculty perceive the "affect" of best practices.*

Reviewing responses to "Using the response scale below, please indicate to what extent your HIP meets the following characteristics: example, increases students' retention and persistence to graduation; increases students' engagement and achievement of course and/or program learning outcomes, etc." *Responses to this point may help us determine areas of need with regard to the affect or impact of the best practices currently underway at UHD.*

An examination of these practices may lead us to some understandings about general elements and possible actions for a proposed Center of Teaching Excellence. More specifically:

- What are some practices that a number of us seem to be doing that could be examined further?
- What are the details/specifics of some of the best practices we are identifying, but not clarifying for one another? For example, survey respondents identify writing intensive experiences and student collaboration within a number of courses, but do not include details about how this is accomplished through "teaching"
- What are some best practices that are being used by a number of UHD faculty that might be shared by these faculty in presentations/workshops within a Center of Teaching Excellence?
- Have faculty respondents to the survey indicated best practices that they would like to investigate further?
- Could a proposed center house a database or repository of sorts that helps to catalogue current practices and the faculty leading these efforts in order to foster cross-collaboration.

APPENDIX C

Definition of Terms

Active learning (may also be referred to as student centered) is an approach that engages students in content through reading, writing, talking, listening, and reflecting. Teaching strategies for active learning include group discussion, problem solving, case studies, role plays, journal writing, and structured learning groups. Students may be involved in the learning strategies as an individual, in pairs, small groups, or through cooperative groups. The use of active learning in the classroom does not preclude the lecture format. The two may be used in conjunction with part of the class period being devoted to each aspect, e.g. students may listen to a lecture and then participate in a group discussion, role play, or structured learning group to enable them to reflect on the issues and internalize what they have learned.

Critical thinking involves the ability to thoughtfully consider problems and subjects that are within our realm of experiences through the use of logical reasoning and inquiry skills. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening can all be done critically or uncritically. Core critical thinking skills include observation, interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation, explanation, and meta-cognition (or thinking about thinking). Critical thinking is a systemized way of thinking that can be utilized across academic disciplines to enable individuals to engage intellectually with content ideas and theory and then to effectively apply/use the content ideas and theory in relevant ways.

Individuation/Differentiation is an instructional approach or a way of thinking about teaching and learning rather than a set of strategies. The emphasis in this approach is on creating a balance between course content and the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. Effective differentiated instruction will be most successful when linked with a positive learning environment, well designed curriculum and assessment, and thoughtful classroom management. Teachers using this instructional approach will know both their content and their students. "A key element of differentiation is the modification of four curriculum-related elements – content, process, product, and affect – which are based on three categories of student need and variance – readiness, interest, and learning profile," (Tomlinson and Imbeau, 15). (Full citation: Tomlinson, C.A. & Imbeau, M.B. 2010. *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom.* VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development)

Motivational strategies to enhance academic involvement are meant to help students see the relevance and authenticity of the academic activity and to attain the benefit from the activity. Strategies may be employed to: 1) motivate students to want to attain and maintain academic success, 2) to provide extrinsic motivation for students, 3) to identify and maintain intrinsic motivation for students, and 4) to motivate students to want to learn the content and skills that are being developed.

Pedagogy may be understood as the development of an understanding of instructional strategies. This understanding may occur through the study of the theories of pedagogy by those such as John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Gloria Jean Watkins (bell hooks), Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Maria Montessori, Pierre Bourdieu, and others.

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE REVIEW

	Books and Bibliographies	Reviews
Definition of Teaching Excellence	Faculty-run, faculty-tailored Respect disciplinarity Engage the discipline of instructional design and development	Recognizing students as individuals Setting high standards and clear, challenging-but-achievable expectations Designing courses to scaffold toward goals Communicating and seeking feedback Preparing and knowing subject matter currency Relating lessons to real world Inspiring enthusiasm and Supporting active learning Respecting cultural differences
Center Offerings	Ground programming in institutional culture Include part-time faculty Enlist faculty advisory groups Programming reach and outcomes depend on funding levels	Teaching fellowships Grants Workshops Guest speakers Conferences Course design help Teaching resources Recommendations for improving infrastructure
Assessment		Portfolios Peer review Student input

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES

	Austin Peay State University	**California State University-San Bernadino**
Center Purpose / Definition of Teaching Excellence	Couch all offers in terms of service and support to the faculty	Faculty-focused and faculty-driven
Center Offerings	Revitalize Academic Success Initiative (RASI) that financially compensates faculty for redesigning courses Faculty Leadership Program exposes faculty to all parts of the campus and teaches them about how the campus works Faculty Teaching Program brings together a cohort of faculty for a semester to target and select ten teaching and learning strategies	Teaching grants generate a very "live" teaching culture. Faculty gets stipend or release time, faculty learn more about their own teaching and their understanding of how students learn, dissemination.
Funding	Hired a firm to write grant for the Department of Education's Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant. Lobby administration for permanent funds	Don't seek funding. Administration should support teaching development and excellence as integral part of the university. Provost saw the impact of the Center on faculty and academics and increased the budget without lobbying.
Assessment Advice	Benefit of a transcription system for e-dossiers of faculty's tenure files to help with SACS reaffirmation	Surveys Participation numbers Course redesigns failure and withdrawal rates Faculty pre- and post-tests Annual number of faculty attendees Range of programming and topic coverage
Advice and Tips	Improve is what is most valuable Have faculty generate events, speakers, and workshops. Offer voluntary initiatives Emphasize center's presence	Provide faculty with course releases and stipends to travel to conferences on teaching Conduct a needs assessment survey of faculty to tailor programming accordingly

	UHD Focus Groups	HIP Survey Results
Purpose of Teaching Excellence Center	Provide opportunities for interaction and support at three levels; university, colleges, and disciplines Offer incentives such as grants to support faculty for their participation in high level activities related to developing best practices in teaching Provide acclimation for new faculty Provide a forum for the study strategies for addressing the needs of non-traditional students and maintaining rigor in a culture of student success Provide a forum for the study of best practices relevant to both traditional and distance modes of learning	
Center Offerings	Cross discipline collaborations Development of appropriate assessment tools Mentorship – a non-judgmental forum where faculty can provide and/or seek ideas, assistance, and feedback Workshops and symposiums on best pedagogical strategies hosted by UHD faculty Base for research and data collection for projects and studies on teaching Base for the production of a newsletter and/or journal	

Assessment Suggestions	Use the results of the college level focus groups as a base and then conduct further focus group sessions at periodic intervals. Note: this type of evaluation will likely be required should we be awarded federal or other grants to develop the program	
Emerging Best Practices at UHD	Active learning Critical thinking Individuation/Differentiation Motivational Strategies Cross Disciplinary Pedagogical Issues	Writing intensive experiences Service learning experiences Guided observations Simulations Mentorship, internship, observation, or interaction with the profession Assist students in creating and reflecting on a body of work Faculty/Student collaboration – research, publication, presentation Design of guidelines and rubrics Design of scaffolded experiences for students

End Bibliography
A Guide to Faculty Development (2nd edition), 2010
Kay Gillespie, Douglas L. Robertson, and Associates
San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers

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