Report of the Centre for Teaching and Learning to Senate
April 2009

At the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) we believe that teaching, and the development of teaching, is a scholarly activity and a professional responsibility of all academics. Our vision is to serve as an agent for influencing good teaching policies and practices across the university. Our primary goal is to enhance the quality of student learning and to support all who are engaged in a teaching role at Queen's University. Since its last report to Senate in January 2007, the CTL has continued to provide educational leadership and to offer a wide range of programs, services, and resources to support the development activities of individuals and academic units and to help them create environments that engage students and promote learning. This report provides highlights of selected CTL activities from January 2007 to April 2009.

Needs Assessment
In 2008, the CTL conducted a comprehensive needs assessment. Given our limited resources, conducting the needs assessment necessitated suspending most of our regular programs, except for those targeting graduate students and new faculty. We examined ten different sources of data including an online survey of faculty, interviews with faculty and administrators, a survey of graduate students, and several existing sources such as online Internal Academic Review reports, publicly available aggregate results of the University Survey of Student Assessment of Teaching (USAT), exit polls from 2003 to 2007, and the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

A total of 315 individuals responded to the faculty survey, representing approximately 40% of all full-time faculty members at Queen's. A total of 559 graduate students responded to the Academic Support Services Survey, and twelve administrators were interviewed.

The data provided a wealth of information, but the following major themes emerged from the analysis of the faculty survey.

- Heavy workload: Faculty reported wanting to make use of professional development opportunities offered by the CTL, but their increased workload and lack of time seriously inhibited their ability to participate.
- There is a strong perception that teaching is insufficiently valued or recognized.
- Discipline-specific professional development: Although individuals appreciate the value of "generic" workshops, many also feel a need for more discipline-based programs.
- Curriculum development: Faculty expressed the need to work together for better curriculum alignment among courses.
- Integration of technology: Respondents emphasized the need for pedagogically sound approaches to integrating technology into their courses.

The CTL's Response to the Needs Assessment
In response to these findings, the CTL made several programmatic and structural changes.

- We began to provide several online programs to help faculty benefit from some of our professional development activities on their own time and at their own pace. For example, in a revised version of our very popular "Meet the Teacher" series, faculty are now able to view streaming videos of successful colleagues, many of them teaching award winners, who have generously agreed to allow us into their classrooms to film them in action. These colleagues also respond to questions about why they teach the way they do, and the challenges and successes they have encountered in their classrooms.

- We reorganized our workshop schedule into one-day programs that can be completed at the beginning of a term or in between the end of classes and the start of exams each term. This new format allows us to schedule concurrent sessions on a wide range of teaching and learning topics from which faculty may choose those that best suit their interests and needs. The first of these, entitled "*Teaching and Learning Symposium: Shaping the Future through Teaching*" was held on December 2, 2008. Other one-day programs included "*Focus on Diversity"* (January 16, 2009) and "*Focus on Graduate Supervision*" (April 7, 2009).
- Using the slogan "meeting you where you teach", we are trying to work more closely with faculty in their departments. We are encouraging more department-based discussions about teaching and learning, CTL-led workshops at the departmental level, and collegial, peer feedback on teaching. To facilitate increased departmental-based programming, especially around curriculum development issues, the CTL is inviting every department to name a Teaching and Learning Liaison (TLL) who will work closely with the CTL to ensure that the teaching and curriculum development needs of the department are met.

Help with Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (UDLEs)
We have collaborated with departments undergoing internal academic reviews to assist them in integrating into their self-study the framework of Undergraduate Degree-Level Expectations (UDLEs) developed by the Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) and approved by the Council of Ontario Universities. Since June 2008, all existing undergraduate programs in Ontario are expected to demonstrate in their program reviews how they are aligned with the OCAV UDLEs which consist of six generic graduate attributes.

Course Design and Teaching Workshop
We introduced this week-long, intensive workshop to help Queen's University teachers to design a new course or redesign an old one. The workshop helps participants to ensure that their learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment strategies are aligned and support student learning. New faculty members may also choose to participate in additional activities as part of a research project conducted in collaboration with McGill University, with funding from the Max Bell Foundation. These additional activities include teaching (in another term) the course designed during the workshop, being observed by a CTL educational developer, and receiving feedback.

Community Service Learning
The CTL's partnership with Student Affairs to support Community Service Learning (CSL) initiatives at Queen's has met with tremendous success. The incumbent in the shared position of CSL Coordinator has been available for consultations with individuals and departments who are interested in developing new CSL courses, or incorporating elements of CSL into their current courses as a means of simultaneously promoting student learning and "engaging the world". One example of a successful new course using CSL pedagogy is Writing 235 which teaches students writing skills that are then used in undertaking community projects for a dozen not-for-profit agencies throughout Kingston. The connection of course content with actual experience, and community involvement with structured writing and reflection, benefits both the community and students.

Cross-Faculty Teaching Forum (CFTF)
The last CFTF, held in 2007, was titled "*Embracing Inquiry*" and was offered in partnership with Information Technology Services and the Queen's Library. It was designed to help anyone who teaches at Queen's to learn about yet another effective approach of engaging students in learning. The keynote speakers were a team of five faculty members from McMaster University which has been using inquiry-

based learning as a "signature pedagogy" for all first-year students since 2001. The team shared their experiences in teaching inquiry in a wide range of disciplinary contexts.

The 2009 CFTF, titled "*Global Perspectives: Practical Approaches to Internationalizing the Curriculum*", is designed to help faculty explore various strategies for incorporating an international dimension into their courses and for creating learning environments that would allow students to gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become responsible global citizens. The keynote speaker is Dr Michael Paige, Professor of International and Intercultural Education in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota, and co-founder of the Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE) program.

Professional Development Day for Teaching Assistants
This day-long conference continues to be one of our most popular events for graduate students, with approximately 450 registrants each year. It provides an opportunity for all teaching assistants to learn about new and interesting developments in teaching and learning. It promotes effective teaching practice, inspires further professional development, and emphasizes the role TAs play in undergraduate education at Queen's. Typically, the Vice Principal (Academic) and the Associate Vice-Principal and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research both address the participants and the newest Queen's University Chair in Teaching and Learning delivers the keynote address. Faculty, staff and experienced teaching assistants from across the university facilitate concurrent sessions on a wide range of topics.

Certificate Program in University Teaching and Learning
This self-directed program offers formal recognition to TAs for their participation in training and development activities. Students may earn three separate certificates on "Scholarship", "Practical Experience", and "Professional Development". The CTL continues to hear anecdotes from graduates who attest to the positive impact of these certificates on their job searches. More importantly, we have numerous testimonials from graduates about how much this program has taught them and helped them to grow as teachers.

"English Language Communication Skills for Teaching Purposes" (SGS 802)
Thi**s** graduate non-credit course is expressly designed for International TAs who are non-native speakers of English. It provides students with opportunities to improve their English language and communications skills within the context of their duties as Teaching Assistants. The student feedback on the effectiveness of this course continues to be extremely positive. Regrettably, the budget cuts in the current economic climate have affected the CTL's ability to offer the usual three sections of this course. In 2009-2010, only one section will be offered.

CTL Teaching and Learning Enhancement Grants
Each year, the CTL provides $10,000 for grants to support projects designed to enhance student learning at Queen's. This year, through our partnership with Information Technology Services, the maximum amount available was doubled, allowing us to increase the number of projects supported and to include projects that focused on effectively integrating technology into teaching. Since this initiative was introduced in 2007, the CTL has awarded a total of 18 grants up to a maximum of $5,000.

Community Service Learning Engagement Grants
2008-2009 was the inaugural year of the Community Service Learning Engagement Grant program offered in collaboration with the Office of the Associate Vice-Principal and Dean of Student Affairs. This program is intended to support collaborative service learning projects or activities that occur outside the

classroom that are intentionally designed to enhance student learning. Four rounds of competition were held over the year with a total of $20,000 being available for awards of up to a maximum of $2,500

Internal Partnerships and Collaborations
The CTL continued to play a major role in several university-wide initiatives relevant to enhancing teaching and learning. We partnered with various units including the Information Technology Services, the Queen's Library, Student Affairs, and the School of Graduate Studies and Research. Most recently, the CTL has participated in the Virtualization Task Force which has been exploring ways of building capacity for the effective use of emerging technologies to enhance teaching and learning across campus. CTL faculty also served in various capacities on the Senate Committee on Academic Development, the Internal Academic Review Committee, the Academic Integrity Working Group, the Teaching Assessment Committee, the Teaching Spaces Committee, the Senate Educational Equity Committee, the Teaching Assistants Consultative Committee, the Learning Commons Services Team, the Committee on Graduate Students Academic Support Needs, and adjudication committees for various grants and teaching awards.

External Partnerships, Collaborations and Leadership Activities
The CTL has earned an international reputation as a leader in the field of educational development and frequently attracts national and international visitors. In 2007, a team from Japan spent some time in the Centre observing our work, and an educational developer from the University of Umea in Sweden recently spent the entire month of March for the same purpose. The CTL has also provided leadership in enhancing teaching and learning at the regional, national and international levels. This is evident in the many and varied roles the educational developers in the CTL play as members, chairs, or in elected positions on various committees, task forces, boards, associations, and other groups. A few recent examples are given below.

Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL)
Queen's University, under the leadership of the CTL, and with the support of the Office of the Principal and the Office of the Vice-Principal (Academic), is a member of one of 13 clusters of institutions selected by the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL), to participate in the CASTL Institutional Leadership Program. Our cluster of six institutions is working on the theme "Building Scholarly Communities". Our goal is to build awareness, understanding and support for the practice of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). We are currently researching and documenting the types of SoTL already taking place at Queen's.

The Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents (OCAV) Joint Working Group on Teaching and Learning
The CTL Director participated in this group to design a series of workshops to help universities across Ontario incorporate the OCAV degree level expectations into their programs.

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE)
The CTL encouraged Queen's to become a founding institutional member of STLHE, a national association whose goal is to enhance teaching and learning in higher education. Its members comprise faculty, educational developers, administrators and institutions of higher education across Canada and beyond. Founding institutional membership distinguishes Queen's as an institution committed to teaching excellence and the scholarship of teaching and learning. One of the many benefits of institutional membership is that it allows an unlimited number of individuals from Queen's to join STLHE

at a discounted rate. The CTL leadership was recognized by the election of its Director as President of the STLHE and its Associate Director as Vice-President (Partnerships).

Collaboration with Federal Granting Agencies and CAGS on Professional Development Skills for New Researchers

In July 2007, the CTL Director was invited to coordinate and co-facilitate a think-tank of approximately 50 individuals representing a wide range of stakeholders in graduate education including graduate students, researchers, educational developers, deans of graduate schools, industry and governments. The event was sponsored by the three major federal granting agencies (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council - NSERC, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council - SSHRC, and the Canadian Institute of Health Research - CIHR) and the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) in collaboration with STLHE. Its purpose was to identify the most important professional skills as learning outcomes for graduate programs in Canada. The catalyst for the event was a growing concern that many graduate students often lack an array of generic skills that are essential if they are to use their technical, discipline-specific research skills effectively in professional practice. This collaboration has had several implications for the development of graduate curricula and was a significant step toward enhancing the quality of graduate education in universities across Canada.

HEQCO Symposium

In April 2008, the CTL Director coordinated and co-facilitated a symposium sponsored by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO). Titled "*Taking Stock: Symposium on Teaching and Learning Research in Higher Education*", the symposium sought to identify and synthesize, from multiple research traditions and perspectives, what is already known about teaching practice and student learning in higher education, what we still need to know, and the implications of what is known for improving the quality of education. The ultimate goal was to have more faculty adopt teaching approaches that are consistent with what is known about student learning. The symposium was therefore a precursor to other events and outcomes, including a published account of the papers presented, which is now underway in collaboration with the McGill-Queen's University Press.

Challenges

Like most other units on campus, the CTL has been severely challenged by the need to reduce its operating costs while still maintaining the highest quality of programs and services. These challenges have been exasperated by a dramatic turnover of personnel in 2008 and the current reduction of educational development positions at a time when the CTL is expected to provide even more assistance to other academic units in revitalizing their curricula as one means of addressing the current crisis. Despite these challenges, the CTL faculty and staff are ready to rise to the occasion. We believe that the current situation is an opportunity that our expertise equips us to handle particularly well, and we look forward to assisting the Queen's community in achieving a standard of excellence in teaching and learning.

Respectfully submitted by:
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