University College of the Fraser Valley

Post-Secondary Centres for Teaching and Learning: A Canadian Perspective

Dr. Emilio Landolfi
University College of the Fraser Valley
September 2007

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Chapter 1- The Need for Teacher Development

Introduction

Teaching and learning are inextricably amalgamated; so closely related that they are ostensibly incapable of being separated effectively (Bruner, 1966; Ramsden, 1992). “Learning and teaching are constantly interchanging activities” (Eble, 1988. p. 9). By its very nature, teaching expounds the imparting of knowledge for the purpose of helping others learn. The Oxford English Dictionary (2002) defines teaching as showing someone (a class or pupil) how to do something; make someone realize, understand. While the paramount intention or goal is to transmit knowledge, teaching involves considerably more than simply conveying facts and information (Jacobs, 1996). Successfully educating students’ takes much more than a strong background in subject matter and a keen willingness to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In addition to possessing at least a robust working knowledge of the subject matter they are expected to cover through the curriculum, teachers must also be able to draw from a deep understanding of how students learn, of educational aims, of student motivation, and of general pedagogical issues (Grossman, 1989). Leinhardt and Greeno (1986) maintain that teaching is an elaborate cognitive process in which educators are expected to draw on knowledge from multiple domains. Barnett and Hodson (2001, p. 430) express similar views: “Teaching is not just a matter of applying knowledge and skills. Rather, it is a matter of deploying, criticizing-in-action, and developing-in-action a complex and unique framework of personal professional understanding.”
McKeachie (1979) describes teaching at the post-secondary level as complex and
dynamic. Hence, teaching should by no means be conceived of as a relatively
straightforward or uncomplicated activity (Little, 1999). Clearly, it is much more
multifaceted than one would initially be led to believe. Indeed, teaching typically occurs
in an intricate social setting (namely the classroom), which encompasses numerous
distinctive elements. These include: multidimensionality (the large quantity of events and
tasks which occur in classrooms); simultaneity (the fact that many things happen at the
same time); immediacy (the quick nature of classroom events); unpredictability (the fact
that classroom events often take unexpected turns); publicness (the public nature of
classrooms whereby events are typically observed by a large number of students); history
(classes meet for a period of time and consequently amass shared experiences which
establish a basis for conduct) (Doyle, 1986). Consequently, effective teaching is quite
possibly the most difficult occupation there is in society (Glasser, 1990).

This report will examine the need for teaching and learning centres in higher
education. It will begin with an overview of the challenges facing instructors in colleges
and universities today. The nature and purpose of teaching and learning centres will then
be explored, along with a review of some of the more significant post-secondary centres
for teaching and learning – primarily from a Canadian perspective. Lastly, suggestions
will be proposed for developing a teaching and learning centre at University College of
the Fraser Valley (UCFV) with a specific focus on the immediate needs for supporting
teaching and learning excellence at UCFV.
Challenges Facing Post-Secondary Instructors

With over 30,000,000 educators internationally, teaching is undoubtedly the world’s largest profession (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2002). Although teachers in colleges and universities represent the smallest group, their work is by no means insignificant (Ramsden, 1992). “The effectiveness of any system of higher education is contingent in some considerable measure on the quality of the teaching enterprise” (Bess, 1997, p. ix). Institutions of higher learning, however, have customarily been more concerned with research as teaching has traditionally subsisted as a subordinate responsibility (Dornbusch, 1979; Cook, Kinnetz, & Owens-Misner, 1990). This position is perpetuated by the fact that a post-secondary institutions value is typically predicated on its research reputation – not its commitment to teaching (Bethune, 2006). This sentiment was recently articulated by the University of Nebraska administrators when its teaching and learning centre was eliminated to allocate more of its financial resources toward becoming a premier research institution (Bartlett, 2002). Furthermore, the perception of teaching as a less significant activity by faculty and administrators in post-secondary institutions is quite long-standing. Shulman (President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) describes a historical meeting in the San Francisco Bay area of the Association of American Universities in 1906 (then consisting of 12 institutions) whereby the entire day of their discussions focused on whether professors at research universities should actually be required to teach (Shulman, 2006). Shulman jokingly insinuated that “God’s punishment for asking that question was the big earthquake a month later” (Shulman, 2006, p. 1). Closer to the twentieth century, a report authorized
by the Ford Foundation concluded that even amongst some of the most prestigious
schools of education, faculty were inclined to distance themselves from the disparaging
task of teaching (Judge, 1982). Consequently, issues of teaching and learning generally
receive little or no attention in colleges and universities today (Huber & Hutchings,
2005).

The cost of placing diminished emphasis on teaching has been quite significant,
as stakeholders in post-secondary education are now demanding that colleges and
universities educate their students better (Shaw, 1989; Readings, 1996; Cook &
Sorcinelli, 2002b). This increasing emphasis on improving teaching in the post-secondary
system is a direct response by institutions to public demands for accountability (Mayhew,
Ford & Hubbard, 1990; Boyer Commission, 1998; Huber & Hutchings, 2005; Shulman,
2006). “The last twenty years have seen calls for greater accountability by higher
education” (McCormick, 2006. p.1). This sentiment is supported by numerous leading
authorities in the field of higher learning (Huber & Hutchings, 2005). Although there is
much that is and has been exceptional in higher education, the quality of teaching must be
ameliorated. “It has needed to improve for a long time as there is a great deal that has
always been bad” (Ramsden, 1992. p. 3). Experiences in large lecture rooms which
provided little or no opportunity for interaction with the professor not only resulted in
students’ feeling alienated, but also became a “popular emblem for whatever people
deemed wrong with higher education” (Huber & Hutchings, 2005. p. 10). Robaire (the
first recipient of the Canadian Association of University Teachers Award, as well as past
president of the McGill Association of University Teachers) also contends that the role of
teaching in higher education must change. Students (particularly with respect to their expectations, inquisitiveness and knowledge base) have changed, and post-secondary educators must respond (Robaire, 2006). Today’s faculty must deal with an unprecedented range of backgrounds, capabilities, and motivation levels amongst their students; they can no longer rely primarily on their expert knowledge of subject matter, but are now required to be exceptional teachers (Ramsden, 1992). Hutchings, Huber, and Golde (2006) ascertain that post-secondary teachers now require a more comprehensive knowledge of pedagogy. “The academy that faculty are entering today is not the one their predecessors joined. The work involved in teaching requires a new and larger set of abilities and skills” (Hutchings, Huber & Golde, 2006. p. 1). Instructors that stand at the front of a classroom with chalk-in-hand are rapidly turning into a thing of the past. A faculty survey completed by the Higher Education Research Institute indicated that use of “extensive lecturing” has decreased in percentage from 55.7 in 1989-90, to 48.5 in 1995-96, to 46.9 in 2001-2002 (Huber & Hutchings, 2005). Carl Wieman (2001 Nobel Prize physicist, 2004 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching – U.S. Professor of the Year, and 2007 Oersted Medal winner from the American Association of Physics Teachers) concurs that the traditional stand-and-deliver or command style of teaching is terribly antiquated. “That method was developed in the absence of the printing press. There’s a complete mismatch between the standard lecture format and everything we know about how to change thinking in the human brain” (Backhouse, 2007. p. 18). An enormous amount of research confirms that student success is optimized through the use of teaching strategies such as in-class discussion, brainstorming sessions, and other methods which encourage critical thinking and active learning (Bethune, 2006).
Consequently, improving and ensuring student learning in post-secondary institutions has become a leading issue in contemporary education-based research (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b).

While Hargreaves (2001) contends that anyone interested in improving learning should simply improve their teaching, the barriers to enhancing classroom practice are often quite complex and undeniably specific to a learning institution. Notwithstanding, perhaps the most universal impediment to advancing teaching and learning – irrespective of the specific challenges confronting a particular school – is **funding** (Lanier & Little, 1986). Although colleges and universities have experienced considerable growth with respect to student enrolment across Canada, the vast majority of funding is directed at developing new research laboratories (Schmidt, 2005). The current imbalance in financial allocations implores whether teaching is, for the most part, being forced to take a back seat when new research space typically outnumbers teaching space by a ratio of eight to one (Schmidt, 2005). While laboratories may certainly be used to enhance student learning, what is needed is a greater dedication to supporting teaching and learning across “all” disciplines. There must be a corresponding commitment to providing adequate resources for teaching and learning – including the allocation of sufficient space. Teachers do not work in isolation. Faculty must be supported if they are to respond to the current demands by stakeholders that colleges and universities educate their students better (Shulman, 2006)!
Improvement requires intervention, and the development of a centre aimed specifically at enhancing teaching and learning is quite possibly the most significant contribution a college or university could make to improving education (Shulman, 2006). These types of facilities typically occupy a distinct position in schools due to the fact that their sole purpose involves attending to the concerns and demands of all those interested in improving their teaching practice (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b). Furthermore, teaching and learning centres play a central role in formulating a culture which merits good teaching campus-wide (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002a). Mann, Arnold, Binder, Cytrynbaum, Newman, Ringwald and Rosenwein (1970), Feiman-Nemser, and Floden (1986), and Landolfi (2003) suggest that the institutional culture has a tremendous effect on motivating faculty to devote themselves wholeheartedly to teaching. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching also endorses this view through their work on cultures of teaching and learning (Carnegie Foundation, 2007). Incidentally, shifting one’s paradigm to accommodate the current demands being placed on post-secondary educators requires an enormous investment in time, work and energy (Bess, 1997; Robaire, 2006). Enhancing one’s teaching is never easy, but quite often tedious and always labour intensive (Ramsden, 1992). However, centres mandated to address the needs and interests of teaching and learning have the potential to incite faculty to higher quality instruction (Nord, 1997; Shulman, 2006).

Collaborative and interdisciplinary work is particularly important in today’s academy which requires greater knowledge of pedagogy (Bartlett, 2002; Hutchings, Huber & Golde, 2006). Clearly, faculty confronted with the type of challenges involved
in changing the quality of teaching and learning could flourish in an institutional culture which promotes collegial dialogue while encouraging teaching and learning excellence (Fink, 1990; McKeachie, 1997). Cook and Sorcinelli (2002b) substantiate the role of teaching and learning centres in creating opportunities for collaboration. “Getting to know other faculty members and sharing ideas about teaching is often described as one of the primary benefits of participation in teaching centre activities” (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b, p. 1). Learning and instructional development centres definitely help support interdisciplinary work as faculty from a range of departments and specialties network, exchange ideas, and discuss teaching strategies (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b). Harvard physicist Eric Mazur, for example, relied exclusively on the traditional lecture style in his teaching for many years. Professor Mazur’s student achievement rate was relatively low, and his classes had always been considered mediocre. His teaching was greatly enhanced, however, after reading a study by pedagogical specialists which suggested breaking hour-long lectures into 10-15 minute chunks and allowing students discussion time in small groups. Results were outstanding! By implementing one relatively simple technique (the use of discussion groups during his lectures) Mazur’s students were able to understand scientific concepts much better – as evidenced in their test scores (Bethune, 2006). Accordingly, faculty’s increasing commitment to pedagogy has resulted in greater convergence on “engaging students, listening to them, and involving them in their own learning” (Huber & Hutchings, 2005, p. 12).
Chapter 2 - Teaching and Learning Centres

Specialized preparation for teaching has traditionally been neglected in the post-secondary educational system (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 2003). Professional training, typically via the completion of specific coursework and practical experience in the classroom, has historically been directed at preparing educators to meet the demands of teaching in elementary and secondary school classrooms. As Derek Bok (former Harvard University President) states: “Unlike, say, a Grade 1 teacher, an aspiring academic receives no instruction in how to teach” (Bethune, 2006. p. 37). Such has been the case since the earliest teacher training institute was founded in France by St. John Baptist De La Salle in 1685 (Chernow & Vallasi, 1993). Until quite recently, pedagogy-specific courses were generally unavailable to those teaching in colleges and universities. Furthermore, the general lack of formal training in higher education has been propagated by the very nature of faculty hiring; with the essential requirement being the completion of graduate training (typically an earned Doctorate). There is little or no emphasis in pedagogy-specific coursework or experience in teaching at the post-secondary level. The assumption has conventionally been that expertise in a particular subject matter satisfies the requirements for teaching it (Shulman, 2006). This inadequacy in appropriate pedagogical training undoubtedly leaves faculty unprepared (Bess, 1997; Hutchings, Huber & Golde, 2006). “It’s astonishing, a major failing, that the universities do not teach their future teachers. Academia is the only professional system that doesn’t instruct its newcomers in how to do what they will spend most of their time doing” (Derek Bok as cited in Bethune, 2006. p. 37). As a result, teaching in higher education has customarily
been an amateur affair – and this must change! Ramsden (1992, p. 8) states that a “professional approach to teaching should be seen in the same light as a professional approach to law, medicine, or engineering”.

During a Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Colloquium which addressed the complex issues involved in improving teaching and learning in higher education, Lyall (2006) strongly recommended that each institution make a priority of training and developing their professors as teaching professionals. Furthermore, there must be a commitment to providing professional development opportunities on a continuing basis if the training is to be effective (Phillips, 2002; Hutchings, Huber, & Golde, 2006). A strong dedication to ongoing professional development also has the “institutional memory to provide continuity in teaching support services as department chairs, deans and provosts come and go” (Cook and Sorcinelli, 2002a, p. B 21). Colleges and universities could provide the type of support required to achieve this goal by assigning teacher development to professionals (Lanier & Little, 1986). Devaney (1977), as well as Nemser and Applegate (1983) describe this focus on advancing pedagogical skills as the teacher center movement. Incidentally, skilled consultants are now being utilized for enhancing teaching skills amongst faculty in many post-secondary institutions (McKeachie, 1997; Province of British Columbia, 2002). R.L. Pardy (a biology professor at the University of Nebraska) describes how a teaching and learning centre helped early in his career when he had little experience and was asked to teach large classes. “Instructional consultants videotaped his lectures, surveyed his students, and encouraged him to write down his thoughts on his courses so he could
reflect on his teaching style. Improvements didn’t happen overnight, but with their assistance he was able to figure out what wasn’t working and what was – it made all the difference in the world” (Bartlett, 2002. p. A 11)! Indeed, investing in teaching for higher education today will encourage faculty to take ownership of the challenges they face in the contemporary learning institution tomorrow and beyond!

Teacher Development Centres Across The Nation

Shulman (2006) proposed several recommendations which institutions could adopt for teacher development during a series of meetings aimed at enhancing teaching and learning. The primary question during the meetings, which were sponsored by the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) and the American Association for Higher Education, was: “How can teaching find a right and dignified place in the research university setting” (Shulman, 2006. p. 1)? Shulman’s essential response was that post-secondary institutions must create places (he referred to them as teaching academies) which “support, preserve, and enhance the scholarly work of teaching and learning; a combination of support structures and sanctuaries where faculty whose scholarly interests include teaching and learning can find safety and even colleagueship for doing good work” (Shulman, 2006. p. 1). Teaching centres should base their professional development on “research and best practice; supported by policy and practice by all stakeholders; and reflect a vision of schools as professional learning communities whose prime purpose is to enhance student learning” (Phillips, 2002, p. 72).
Many colleges and universities have established teaching and learning centres since the mid-1980’s – although some were developed much earlier – as teacher unions strongly support the concept of professional development (Bartlett, 2002; Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b; Phillips, 2002). The University of Kansas’ Center for Teaching Excellence web-site currently lists 25 formally established academies at universities and two at colleges across Canada, with many more related centres internationally. While centres mandated to address the pedagogical needs of faculty and students could be referred to from amongst a variety of names such as: teaching academies; teaching services; teaching centres; teacher development centres; centres for teaching excellence; teaching and learning centres; learning and instructional development centres, etc … they undoubtedly all share a common denominator in their goal of making teachers more effective (Landolfi, 2002).

Notwithstanding, there are no simple answers to the question of what makes teachers’ more effective (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986). In addition to being unique to a particular learning environment, the set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes required for effective teaching is quite varied and diverse (Carter & Doyle, 1987; Wilson, Shulman & Richert, 1987; Fenstermacher, 1994). Phillips (2002, p. 61) concurs: “Agreement on what comprises this set of knowledge and skills is not universal.” Furthermore, as teaching is a complex and fluid activity which utilizes an extensive and wide-ranging store of knowledge, effective teachers draw on a wide repertoire of skills and strategies to transform their knowledge of subject matter into the content of instruction (Shulman, 1986; Landolfi, 2002). Consequently, Ramsden (1992) maintains
that there is no evidence of a particular best way to enhance teaching in higher education. Unquestionably, this is why “teaching support is most effective when it operates out of a teaching center (sic) with a comprehensive program of services – services of many types to reach faculty with varied interest and needs” (Cook & Sorcinellie, 2002b, pg. 2). Various programs could be provided, such as: “grants for faculty development projects; workshops and seminars; microteaching and mini-courses; and concept-based training using protocols of teaching incidents” (Dunkin & Barnes, 1986, p. 772). While certainly not an exhaustive list, these are at least some of the types of services which could potentially be utilized by a centre for teaching and learning in higher education.

Phillips (2002, p. 71) suggests that teaching and learning centres should incorporate the following features in responding to the needs of an academic institution: inclusiveness by serving all members of the educational community; organizing a wide variety of activities for the purpose of continually improving instruction; serving as a safe haven for individual and collective risk-taking; making use of the leadership skills that teachers acquire at various stages in their career; building bridges between what is mandated, what teachers and administrators say they need, and what is best practice; helping negotiate shifts in mandates; generating work that leads to better policies and helping legislatures frame productive, research-based mandates; a place for the exchange of high-quality professional development; exist as the broker or matchmaker between teaching and learning-based needs and resources; providing a long-term focus on changes in knowledge and practice; ensuring the presence of qualified building-based teacher
mentors/coaches with few or no other duties, as well as setting the criteria for these positions and training the incumbents.

While it would be extremely challenging to include all of the recommended features in every teaching and learning centre, many of these characteristics are embraced by the facilities examined in this report. The ensuing list is a concise compendium of some of the more salient centres for teaching and learning in Canada, along with a few select American centres. Note that in addition to the various programs and services listed, many of the centres also sponsor guest speakers, host conferences, recognize good teaching through awards, and provide funding opportunities through in-house grants for those wishing to pursue scholarship in the area of teaching and learning. In addition, all services provided offer an assurance of confidentiality. This is of particular importance to instructors as they are the ones who are most likely to directly influence the quality of a student’s learning experience. Consequently, faculty should form a favourable view of the centre as a resource which is non-threatening and supportive verses antagonistic and evaluative (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b). Instructors must feel they have a place where they could obtain assistance with their teaching on an anonymous basis (Bartlett, 2002).
Teaching and Learning Centres

1. University of Alberta Academic Technologies for Learning (www.atl.ualberta.ca)

Although currently listed under the Academic Technologies for Learning website, this centre (which operates on a fee-for-service basis) was re-named the “Faculty of Extension Learning Solutions” on July 1, 2005. While they offer consultation, support in research, as well as dissemination of findings, their primary services include: the development and redevelopment of curriculum and courses (large-scale initiatives, as well as specific projects); needs assessment support for courses and curriculum; formative and summative evaluation strategies for program enhancement; encouragement, evaluation, planning and support for pilot projects; developing a community of practice among faculty interested in pursuing instructional and learning issues with clients; developing a repository for relevant knowledge and experiences that can be easily shared; and providing professional development where required.

2. University of Alberta University Teaching Services (www.ualberta.ca/~uts)

This centre provides a diverse range of services and programs aimed at supporting teaching, learning and scholarship. Some of their programs include: New Professor Orientation; New Professor Teaching Program (a pilot “2006-2007” project) comprised
of eight sessions which address teaching and learning issues identified by new faculty; Sessional Instructor Development – essentially an opportunity to explore diverse approaches to teaching and learning; Teaching and Learning Effectiveness Sessions to enhance instructional skills as well as discuss and try out new techniques (e.g., Teaching and Learning Basics; Encouraging a Respectful Environment for Class Discussion; PowerPoint – Text and Pictures); and Instructional Skills whereby participants receive a certificate upon completion of three components – pedagogy, microteaching, and teaching dossier. The centre also provides the following services: course planning consultations; mentor program; peer consultations; and teaching dossier consultations. Lastly, a variety of pedagogy-related resources and publications are available to those who teach at the University of Alberta.

3. University of British Columbia Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth

(www.tag.ubc.ca)

The Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth has been an integral part of UBC since 1987 and offers the following services: Instructional Skills for faculty; Teaching and Learning with Technology Series; Electronic Learning Institutes in the form of workshops and seminars which cover the use of WebCT and other online teaching resources; Support for New Faculty sessions such: as beginning of semester orientations, tenure information sessions, individual mentoring, online material, and other special events; Teaching Portfolios; Mentoring Lunches and Dinners; TAG Communities
of Practice Groups which include connections to networks and teams structured around teaching and learning topics such as problem-based learning, community service-learning, global citizenship and related themes; Teaching and Learning Resources including newsletters, evaluation tools, relevant online journals and course packages. The Centre also offers a Faculty Certificate Program on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

4. Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning – Harvard University

(http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page11800)

This facility is named after former Harvard president (1971 to 1991) Derek Bok, and was established for the purpose of improving teaching in colleges and universities through a national grant the Danforth Foundation in 1975. Stanford University received a similar grant – also in 1975. It is the first of two American teaching and learning centres included in this report due to its internationally esteemed status amongst teaching development academies. The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning provides the following range of services: Practice Teaching Sessions (aptly referred to as microteaching) whereby participants provide a brief (5 or 10 minute) presentation (typically before classes begin in the semester) which is videotaped and discussed with a Bok Center staff member if so desired; Videotaped Classes, Consultations, and Classroom Observations; Student Evaluations; Individual and Group Consultations; Course Consultations; Departmental Training. Advice is also available for: syllabus
planning; lecturing; leading discussions; classroom dynamics; planning the semester; creating assignments and exams; grading and feedback; course assessment; interpreting evaluations; diversity; professional conduct; teaching with technology; letters of recommendation; teaching portfolios. In addition, the Center provides comprehensive teaching-related resources ranging from books, periodicals and videos to tip-sheets for dealing with relevant pedagogical issues. Faculty are also encouraged to attend Discussion Seminars, Mini Workshops, Lunch Lecture Series and Teaching Fellow Dinners – all sponsored by the Derek Bok Center.

5. University of Guelph Teaching Support Services (www.tss.uoguelph.ca)

This is a uniquely versatile centre which provides support for three crucial areas: Classroom Technical Support (e.g., classroom design and technology); Learning Technologies and Courseware Innovation (e.g., WebCT, PowerPoint, learning objectives); Instructional Development (e.g., curriculum/course design, instructional practice). Classroom technical support provides a diverse range of services concerning the most appropriate presentation technology to implement in your classroom, as well as the loan, rental, maintenance and repair of equipment. The learning technologies and courseware innovation’s primary directive is to support the effective use of technology for teaching and learning while fostering the development of innovative and effective learning environments. This is accomplished primarily through their expertise in courseware design, digital media, and web technology. The main function of the
instructional development unit is to create opportunities for the ongoing development of teaching-related knowledge, skills and attitudes by providing access to pedagogical theories and models, instructional design expertise, and peer interaction.

The Teaching Support Services also provide new faculty orientations, faculty peer consultation programs, credit courses which faculty could take via audit (such as UNIV 6800 – University Teaching: Theory and Practice), customized support and resources on a broad range of teaching and learning related issues, as well as a teaching resource centre which provides books, newsletters, periodicals, handbooks, course packages and workshop handouts, as well as workshops and seminars.

6. University of Manitoba Centre for Higher Education Research and Development (http://umanitoba.ca/centres/cherd/)

The Centre for Higher Education Research and Development was established in 1987, and is considered Canada's foremost institution dedicated to the professional development of faculty and administrators in colleges and universities. In addition to conducting research, as well as providing professional development courses and seminars, the Centre’s other functions include graduate preparation and publication in higher education. The Centre provides regional, national and international courses, as well as seminars and symposia. Some of the research monographs and papers in higher education produced through the Centre include: A Review of Achievement, Motivation
and Performance in College Students (1992); Tenure and Pay Structures in Canadian Universities (1998); University Teaching and Learning in the New Millennium: Challenges and Opportunities (2000); Advances and Challenges in eLearning at Canadian Research Universities (2005).

7. University of Manitoba University Teaching Services (http://umanitoba.ca/uts/)

In addition to the Centre for Higher Education Research and Development (CHERD), the University of Manitoba also houses the University Teaching Services facility for teaching and learning development. Interestingly, this Centre is a coordinating institution of the prestigious Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Stanford, California. As a coordinating institution, it is strongly committed to the scholarship of teaching and learning through engagement in activities which support and recognize evidence-based enhancement of student learning. Unlike CHERD however, which focuses largely on development for administrators in colleges and universities, the University Teaching Services works more closely with faculty to help enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the University of Manitoba. One of the services they provide is a Certificate in Higher Education Teaching Program which is offered only to graduate students. The University Teaching Services also offers a Seminar in Post-Secondary Instruction: Teaching and Learning Issues in Higher Education (EDUA 7450), as well as a non-credit course in Higher Education and Teaching. While the seminar and the non-credit course are only available to students,
faculty may enroll in the Peer Consultation Program which provides an opportunity to work collaboratively with a highly skilled consultant to enhance their teaching. Mentoring programs, seminars and workshops, as well as on-line and text resources are available on a range of teaching related topics. Lastly, faculty also have access to Web Portals such as MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resources for Learning and Online Teaching), POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education), UNC Professional Development Portal, STLHE (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education), and TLT Group (Teaching, Learning and Technology Group).

8. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

(www.oise.utoronto.ca/depts/ctd/index.php)

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) is one of the largest and most research-intensive faculties of education in North America, as well as one of the world’s premier institutions to study education. Their Centre for Teacher Development provides no formal support for faculty, but fosters and conducts research and development projects relevant to teaching. Faculty interests include: teacher development and in-service teacher education; new teacher induction and mentoring; teachers’ lives and careers; professional and teacher knowledge; holistic approaches to and teacher development; socially constructed learning; improving classroom practice; equity and gender issues; women in education; and, multiculturalism. Furthermore, the Centre is dedicated to a diverse range of research methodologies.
including narrative inquiry, action research, arts-based inquiry and other traditions of qualitative and quantitative research.

9. University of Ottawa Centre for University Teaching

(www.saea.uottawa.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=26&Itemid=157&lang=en)

The Centre for University Teaching offers a broad list of services, including seminars, workshops, publications and relevant instructional resources, as well as individual and group consultation on teaching. The list of instructional workshops includes: Part-time Teaching; Community Service Learning; Active Learning with PowerPoint; Survey Tools in Large Classrooms; Teaching Portfolio Dossier; Using Collaborative Learning Techniques; Teaching Practices for Distance Courses; Assessment for Learning; Teaching for Critical Thinking; Learning Communities and Communities of Practice – Supporting the University Mission; Grading Supervision; Active Learning. Other workshops (namely on writing Research Grant Proposals) are offered, as well as workshops on technology (such as using WebCT). Faculty may also register in special courses such as ESG 5300 – Theory and Practice of Undergraduate Teaching, or ESG 8300 – Practicum in University Teaching. While registration for university credit in these courses is restricted to graduate students and post-doctoral fellows, faculty could participate through audit without receiving a final grade. There is also support for developing on-line courses
10. University of Saskatchewan Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching Effectiveness

(http://www.usask.ca/gmcte/)

The University of Saskatchewan’s Gwenna Moss Centre provides the following professional development programs: Teacher Development Days (workshops for enhancing teaching); Faculty Peer Consultation (open to all teachers and involves classroom observation); and Transforming Teaching (a reflective process which involves a series of questions and activities to help recognize teaching strengths as well as areas possibly requiring attention). There are also a number of services geared specifically toward graduate students. These include: Introduction to University Teaching (GSR 989); The Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Program (workshops held by faculty to help graduate students develop their teaching); Graduate Student Development Days (workshops for graduate student teachers); and Graduate Peer Consultation (a program specifically for teaching assistants, tutorial leaders, and lab instructors, and involves classroom observation). Lastly, the Gwenna Moss Centre for Teacher Effectiveness provides various teaching resources such as: Teaching and Learning Guides; Teaching Portfolio Guides; Teaching & Learning Bridges Journal; and On-line Journals licensed by the Centre.
11. Stanford University’s Center for Teaching and Learning (http://ctl.stanford.edu/)

This is the second of two American teaching and learning centres included in this report and, like the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University, has been included primarily due to its internationally esteemed status amongst teacher development centres. The Stanford Center for Teaching and Learning was created for the purpose of enhancing teaching in higher education with funding from a Danforth Foundation national grant (similar to the Derek Bok Center at Harvard) in 1975. Support was also to be provided to teaching assistants through this grant. In 1996 the Center added a Program in Oral Communication for faculty interested in developing their public speaking skills. More recently there has been an increasing focus on assisting faculty in their integration and use of technology in the classroom. The specific services offered to faculty include: Faculty Workshops; Junior Faculty Assistance (answering questions regarding students, teaching on the Stanford quarter system, or curriculum development); Midquarter Evaluations; Teaching Consultation, Evaluation, and Improvement; Technology Assistance; DVD Recording of Classes; Instructional Design Working Groups; Conferences and Speakers on Teaching; and a variety of relevant books, journals, videotapes and handouts. Services for Teaching Assistants include: TA Orientations; TA Training Workshops; Midquarter Evaluations; DVD Recording of Classes; Consultations and Liaisons; and various books, journals, videotapes and handouts related to teaching. Resources for students include Peer Tutoring, as well as Learning Skills and Academic Coaching. Lastly, the Center also sponsors “Tomorrow’s
Professor Listserv” where like-minded individuals are able to discuss teaching and learning issues on-line.

12. University of Toronto Office of Teaching Advancement (www.utoronto.ca/ota)

The University of Toronto is one of the premier research universities in the world. With an enrolment of over 60,000 students per year in its programs, it has recently (established in January, 2002) developed an Office of Teaching Advancement to help foster excellence in teaching. The Office offers a series of events (such as the New Faculty Orientation series) that are geared toward new instructors. Topics typically include: Beginning Teaching and Research; and Orientation Program for Partners and Spouses of New Faculty. The Office of Teaching Advancement also offers a “Teaching in The Canadian Classroom Program” for faculty new to the Canadian educational environment, and adjusting to the demands of teaching in an unfamiliar culture. They also provide unlimited use of “Turnitin.com” – a computerized program which aids in exposing and deterring plagiarism. Furthermore, the Office provides a comprehensive list of resources dealing with teaching issues ranging from academic integrity to teaching strategies, tips and learning styles. Lastly, E-Journals, Online articles, Online Journals, and useful electronic links are also made available.
University of Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Centre is aimed at improving teaching amongst faculty and teaching assistants, as well as fostering a culture supportive of the scholarship of teaching and learning through relevant research and innovative strategies in higher education. They offer: Orientations and Events for New Faculty; Resources for Teaching; Technology User Services; and a Personal Well-Being Program which provides counselling for areas not necessarily related to teaching (such as family concerns, alcohol and drug dependencies, life transitions, etc.). Resources available to faculty, sessional instructors and teaching assistants include: Teaching Development Conferences; Teaching Resource Materials; Teaching Dossier Kits; Videotaping to Improve Teaching; Learning Through Technology; Problem-Based Learning; Critical Pedagogy; Individual Consultations for Enhancing Teaching; Annual TA Training Event; Credit Course in Higher Learning for Graduate Students (EDCI 560); Publications Related to Teaching; Links to Other Useful Websites; and access to Critical Incidents Videotapes ("case study" teaching-based scenarios which depict various challenges in teaching and learning in colleges and universities, along with a discussion guidebook).
14. York University Centre for the Support of Teaching (http://www.yorku.ca/cst/)

This Centre started in 1989 primarily as a forum for exchange of information and ideas related to teaching amongst faculty. Today it has expanded to provide a range of programs, services and resources for professional growth. With the “enhancement of teaching and learning” at its core, the Centre offers the following programs: New Faculty Teaching; Teaching and Learning One-Day Symposia; Faculty Workshops and Seminars; Two-Day Course Design Institute (for new as well as revised courses); Technology in Teaching and Learning Conference; Arts do Tel (enhancing face-to-face courses via web-based technology); and Consultation and Ad Hoc Services (e.g., teaching feedback, development initiative, peer support, technology support). For Teaching Assistants and Graduate Students, the Centre provides: University Teaching Practicum (a self-directed program of Professional Development for teaching in higher education); Annual TA Day (conference for teaching development directed specifically at graduate students); Teaching Assistant Workshops and Seminars; Teaching Development Graduate Assistant (TDGA) Program (peer support from graduate students for teacher development); Teaching Assistant Teaching Tools (on-line resources specifically for graduate students); University Teaching and Learning (UTAL 5000.03 – a graduate course in Higher Education Teaching and Learning); and Consultation and Ad Hoc Services (e.g., specific feedback on teaching, micro-teaching sessions, technology support, etc.). Lastly, there are numerous resources for professional growth including: Journals and On-line Journals; CST Resource Centre; CORE Newsletter; and Technology-Enhanced Learning.
Chapter 3 – Recommendations for Developing a Teaching and Learning Centre at UCFV

One of the enduring themes expressed throughout this report is the need to respond to contemporary demands being placed on faculty in a changing academy. As Hutchings, Huber, and Golde (2006, p. 1) state: “The academic profession is nearing a moment of great change.” Stakeholders in higher education, ranging from parents to taxpayers to business leaders to legislators, are demanding that “colleges and universities educate their students better” (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b, p. 1). In response to recent public outcry, the fundamental challenge to colleges and universities will involve enhancing teaching and learning through supporting pedagogy at the institutional level (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b; Huber & Hutchings, 2005; McCormick, 2006; Shulman, 2006). As teaching in today’s academy requires a new and larger set of abilities and skills, the development of a teaching and learning centre will undoubtedly play an instrumental role in assisting post-secondary educators meet prevailing responsibilities (Cook & Sorcinelli, 2002b; Hutchings, Huber & Golde, 2006). Indeed, investing in teaching for higher education today will encourage faculty to take ownership of the challenges they face in the contemporary learning institution tomorrow and beyond!

In the fall of 2006, UCFV welcomed Dr. Dianne Common as its new Vice-President Academic (replacing Dr. Wayne Welsh). Dr Common (former Vice-President Academic at the University of Saskatchewan), being a strong advocate for teaching and learning in higher education, met with the Teaching and Learning Advisory Council on September 22, 2006 to discuss the requirements for supporting teaching excellence at the
institution. As the Teaching and Learning Advisory Council provides advice to the senior administrator responsible for supporting teaching and learning at UCFV (that would be Dr. Common), the Council strongly recommended the idea of integrating a learning and instructional development centre within the existing Learning Commons. Later in the academic year, Dr. Common organized a one-day session (April 27, 2007) titled: “Building a Centre for Academic Enrichment and Excellence at UCFV: A Learning Commons Blueprint.” One of the highlights of the day’s activities included a talk by Dr. Nancy Schmidt – Director of the Learning Commons Programs at the University of Guelph. Dr. Schmidt’s presentation “Setting the Stage for Academic Enrichment and Excellence” afforded participants the opportunity to provide input regarding what the Learning Commons at UCFV should achieve. Dr. Schmidt facilitated small group discussions, and the following are some of the more pertinent suggestions forwarded during the session:

- help generate student spirit as well as a sense of community
- provide a supportive learning environment outside the classroom as a great deal of learning occurs outside of the classroom
- respond to the multiple ways students learn
- celebrate student learning and development
- promote social knowledge-making as well as individual learning
- integrate students within the broader UCFV community – opportunity for relationships
- encourage student success
- promote access to learning
• create vibrancy and energy for faculty, staff and students
• establish a social space to learn, network, study, etc. (for faculty, staff & students)
• create communities of practice that are useful and productive
• provide opportunities for experimentation, creativity and mutual learning
• supply pedagogical resources as many faculty are not educational specialists
• house course resources
• make instructional support available, including media and adaptive technology
• impart a place to learn about and practice use of technologies in the classroom
• establish a central space for learning services
• provide help with designing and implementing course assignments
• encourage interdisciplinary opportunities
• promote opportunities for collaboration and shared expertise
• offer collegial support in interdisciplinary ways to construct assignments, as well as ways to advance one's own learning needs
• allow access to knowledge and skills from other experts
• provide opportunities to connect with educational experts and librarians
• develop information literacy skills and training for lifelong skills
• establish common ground in terms of pedagogical approaches and theoretical frameworks
• support opportunities to experience a range of pedagogical approaches
• foster social comforts and community
• provide a non-threatening and welcoming environment
• endow a social hub for the campus and as well as a sense of belonging and community
• allow access to collaborative pedagogical discussions, as well as self-reflection
• integrate relevant and accessible academic services
• make mentorship opportunities available
• provide integrated, ongoing support in a respectful and safe environment which also provides an opportunity to meet and work with colleagues academically
• house resources for research in teaching and learning
• promote access to collaborative research initiatives and methodologies concerning teaching and learning

In concluding the session, participants forwarded recommendations to help ensure that a Centre for Teaching and Learning would be integrated within the Learning Commons over the 2007/2008 fiscal year at UCFV. Recommendations included: finding an expert to facilitate the planning process; developing a five year plan; creating an operating budget for the initial year; communicating plans with stakeholders; surveying students regarding their wants, needs, and concerns; producing “something” tangible (such as this document on Teaching and Learning Centres) prior to the fall 2007 Welcome Back BBQ; and appointing someone to be accountable for the Learning Commons progress.

Hutchings, Huber and Golde (2006, p. 1) state that: “Higher education’s future depends on the creativity with which it can provide for the professional growth of all faculty, and as their roles and responsibilities expand, a creative, sustained commitment to faculty members’ ongoing learning and growth becomes more important.” One of Hutchings, Huber and Golde’s (2006) key recommendations involves maintaining an
“all-encompassing” view of professional development in fostering long-term planning and preparation for the academy. The section of this report which examined teacher development centres across the nation clearly demonstrated the diverse and wide-ranging nature of services as well as multiplicity of programs which could potentially be offered through centres for teaching and learning. Notwithstanding, while all of the centres are ultimately committed to enhancing teacher effectiveness, the immediate challenge to the constituents at UCFV involves the amalgamation of a teaching and learning centre within the existing learning commons. Currently, the learning commons (Peter Jones Learning Centre) houses a library, teleconference centre, women’s centre, computer lab, student assessment centre, plus math and writing centres – with the possibility of additional facilities and services once the student residence becomes functional in the fall of 2007 (Maclean’s, 2004).

Perhaps the early developmental stages of the centre should focus on establishing a formal “advisor” program whereby more experienced faculty could be assigned mentor-type roles to newer members in their department. This type of program could potentially be embedded within faculty members existing duties and responsibilities relatively easily, and demonstrates a positive first-step in initiating a supportive teaching culture (Menges & Austin, 2001). There is vast consensus amongst educational scholars regarding the difficult nature of one’s early years in teaching (Veenman, 1984; Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay, & Edelfelt, 1989). Consequently, teacher-mentor programs for new instructors could play a crucial role in the adjustment process for novice faculty dealing with the complexity of their initial years (Gratch, 1998). Hargreaves (1992, p. 216)
concurs: “Teachers do not develop entirely by themselves. They learn a great deal from contact with many other people who are knowledgeable about and have experience of teaching and learning.”

Other programs and services which could be implemented relatively problem-free while involving little or no start-up costs include: New Instructor Orientation Programs which focus on the challenges of teaching during the first year; Course Packs which are made easily available to instructors; Course Outlines along with overheads and PowerPoint presentations where applicable; Previous assignments, quizzes, mid-terms, final exams, lab reports and related instructor resource materials along with answer keys; Teaching and Learning with Technology (such as PowerPoint) workshops; E-Learning (use of Web CT and various on-line materials) workshops; On-line Course Development workshops; In-House Guest Speakers and Lunch Series featuring experienced faculty and administrators. In-service workshops could also include topics such as Understanding Policies and Procedures, as well as Student Management Issues. Furthermore, with the eventual allocation of appropriate funding the teacher development centre could invest in books which summarize and recommend various teaching methods, in addition to journals which provide articles on teaching improvement strategies.

The challenges to faculty in today’s colleges and universities are numerous, diverse and immediate. Consequently, UCFV must declare its devotion to enhancing teaching and learning promptly. The institution must commit itself professionally and wholeheartedly! The recommendation to establish a formal “mentoring” program for less
experienced (although not exclusively for less experienced) faculty is highly feasible and comparatively easy to facilitate. To implement this program, senior faculty (with a minimum of three to five years, or more, of teaching experience) should be surveyed during the fall, 2007 semester. Respondents would list what they believe to be their strengths in teaching, as well as their willingness to mentor other faculty (not just novices). Furthermore, experienced faculty could be asked about their interest in “guest speaking” at lunch series and in-service workshops, and UCFV should conduct an “institutional needs” survey (including all faculty and administrators), with the basic premise being to identify what the school is “currently doing” and perhaps “should be doing” to enhance teaching and learning.

Toronto-based “Market Yourself Smarter” and the “Collin Baer Group” conducted a national survey of employees in June, 2006. Respondents were assured anonymity in their comments on employer’s ethics, trust, transparency, and support – without fear of consequences! Out of a total of 69 companies (31 of which were in Western Canada), UCFV was voted the top employer in the West. UCFV president Skip Bassford stated: “UCFV draws top faculty from around the world and, while our beautiful location is an asset, the real draw is our focus on teaching excellence. What matters most is that our students have access to a great learning environment” (Lawrence, 2006). Diane Griffiths (Associate Vice-President of Employee Services) concurred: “When faculty were asked why they chose UCFV, they sensed it was a place they would feel accepted and encouraged to grow as teachers, scholars and individuals” (Lawrence, 2006). Establishing formal mentorship programs (which are essentially non-threatening
and non-evaluative in nature) would be a crucial first step to moving the institution forward in its commitment to supporting teaching and learning excellence!
References


