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Report of the Dean's Task Force on Teaching and Learning Centers

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Report of the Dean's Task Force on Teaching and Learning Centers

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College of St. Benedict and St. John's University

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Introduction

As the landscape of higher education changes, faculty members at small, liberal arts colleges face a series of challenges and opportunities, including new and emerging technology, the changing demographics of the student body, the expectation of interdisciplinary knowledge, and pressure to make the liberal arts relevant to a skeptical public (Davidson 2017; Sorcinelli 2007; Sorcinelli 2014). In this environment, student learning and success has emerged as a clear priority, and several colleges and universities have responded with faculty development programs to help faculty members stay current with innovations in pedagogy. According to a three-year study conducted by Carleton College and Washington State University, such investments in faculty development result in enhanced student learning, with tangible benefits of student retention and improved graduation rates. Importantly, faculty development also aids in the recruitment and retention of talented faculty who contribute to an institution-wide culture of teaching excellence (Condon et. al. 2016).

A teaching and learning center coordinates and facilitates programming to improve faculty teaching. A center provides training, mentoring, and networking to faculty and staff, performing a vital aspect of the colleges' mission to support teachers, enhance learning, and build community. All members of the community benefit from this work, especially the students through enhanced learning developed as a result of improved pedagogical practices.

This is a crucial moment to develop a teaching and learning center at CSB/SJU. The colleges have recently invested in a network for student success including a first-year experience course, and the faculty have adopted a new general education Integrations Curriculum. In addition, the Mellon-funded "Becoming Community" initiative is engaging faculty in conversations on diversity, inclusion and equity issues. While these are significant and positive changes, the "shortcoming of too many of these discussions focused on student learning, however, is that faculty—and the role that faculty play—is often an afterthought," according to Michael Reder in an issue of *Peer Review* devoted to faculty development. "In order to affect any kind of widespread change in student learning," he says, "we need to offer specific pedagogical support to faculty who will play an essential role in that change" (Reder 2007).

At the fall 2018 Faculty Workshop, faculty were invited to provide feedback on the kinds of services they desired from a teaching and learning center. Faculty members responded that they wanted opportunities to connect with their colleagues in other disciplines and learn how they teach and engage students. They envisioned the center being a place where they could access up-to-date information on the scholarship of teaching and learning and current best practices in pedagogy and learn how to teach to a diverse student audience. Following the workshop, the dean of the faculty and the executive assistant to the dean of the faculty reviewed the services and structures of teaching and learning centers at peer and aspirant institutions and conducted a review of the literature on the topic. The dean of the faculty participated in a discussion with members of the Faculty Development and Research Committee (FDRC) on Charlene D'Avanzo's article, "Supporting Faculty through a New Teaching and Learning Center"; attended a workshop on "Developing Educational Development: Guidelines for Creating or Revitalizing a Center for Teaching and Learning," sponsored by the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education, held in the spring semester 2019; participated in a March 2019 Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) webinar on "The evolving contributions of teaching centers in rewriting the value narrative of education"; and conducted focus groups with faculty in spring 2019 on mentoring experiences at CSB/SJU.

In fall 2019, the dean of the faculty convened a task force to make recommendations for establishing a teaching & learning center at CSB/SJU. In addition to reviewing research on the topic, members of the task force had an opportunity to meet in person with Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli, the former associate provost for faculty development at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, previous president of the POD Network, and a nationally known scholar on faculty development, faculty mentoring, and teaching and learning centers. Following Dr. Sorcinelli's campus visit, the dean of the faculty attended the POD national conference in fall 2019 which included multiple sessions on starting new programs.

The task force focused its attention on evidence-based practices that have worked at small liberal arts colleges (SLACs). The task force found particularly helpful the work of Mary Deane Sorcinelli, who has roots in and has consulted with liberal arts colleges on teaching & learning centers, and Michael Reder, who has written several articles and book chapters on teaching centers in the context of small, liberal arts colleges. In addition, Vicki L. Baker, Laura Gail Lunsford, and Meghan J. Pifer's book, *Developing Faculty in Liberal Arts Colleges*, published in 2017, proved quite helpful, as the authors conducted a mixed-methods study of faculty development programs and experiences at thirteen liberal arts colleges that constitute the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA). Finally, Andrea Beach, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Ann E. Austin, and Jaclyn K. Rivard's book, *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence*, published in 2016, provided a useful summary of program services and practices based on an extensive national survey of faculty developers.

The task force decided to author this white paper with its recommendations as a step recommended by Douglas L. Robertson in his chapter, "Establishing An Educational Development Program," in *A Guide to Faculty Development* (2010). Robertson argues that a task force report can garner support and contribute to the "establishment and ultimate success" of a program. In fact, Robertson points to a growing phenomenon in higher education that our institutions can relate to-- "a once functioning program that for whatever reason disappeared or was significantly diminished but now is being reincarnated" (p. 35).

History of Faculty Development at CSB/SJU

The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University have had campus-based programs of faculty development focused on teaching since the mid-1970s. In 1974, SJU received a Hill Foundation grant to open its Learning Resources Center "to aid faculty members in the use of both traditional and innovative teaching methods." Dr. Norman James served as its first director followed by Dr. Michael Clark. Faculty development activity was reported as a fundraising priority over capital campaigns in the 1980s and 1990s, and faculty had opportunity to participate in targeted development activities, such as a 1985 FIPSE-funded program focused on gender studies. In 1990 CSB/SJU were awarded a Bush Foundation grant to establish the Learning Enhancement Service (LES). Dr. Tom Creed was the founding director of LES, located in Clemens Library, and CSB/SJU continue to recognize his commitment to effective pedagogy with its Tom Creed Memorial Award. In 1997, Dr. Ken Jones accepted the position of LES Director. While other faculty members have provided leadership and assistance to LES, including Professors Wendy Klepetar, Virginia Arthur, and Kathy Twohy, it has been Dr. Jones's long association with the program that has underlaid its ongoing mission of "enhancing student learning by providing opportunities for good teachers to become even better at their craft." However, over the past decade financial support for LES has diminished such that the program cannot provide the range of services that educational developers argue in the literature are needed.

In 2015, CSB/SJU received twin, two-year grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation "to support professional development for faculty teaching an increasingly diverse student body." The CSB grant targeted humanities faculty, and the SJU grant focused on faculty who taught in the First-Year Seminar Program (Hinton and Hemesath, 2017). Members of the Mellon cohort attended workshops on inclusive teaching and advising with a range of experts and worked to implement strategies to make the courses they were teaching more inclusive for students. Participating faculty members experimented with five different types of inclusivity in their courses: curricular diversity; inclusivity as explicit attention to good teaching methods for greater engagement; inclusivity as cultural competency; inclusivity as funds of knowledge or asset-based pedagogical approach; and inclusivity as facilitating difficult conversations.

This was followed by a second successful Mellon Foundation grant, known as the Becoming Community Initiative, which according to its website "aims to create transformative inclusion among faculty, staff, monastics, students, alumni, and community partners at the College of Saint Benedict (CSB) and Saint John's University (SJU)." The initiative has led to a Workshop Series & Certificate Program, as well as the development of Dialogue Groups, which are steady groups that meet together regularly through fall. 2020. However, while each dialogue group has its own "distinct focus topic related to transformative inclusion," most do not address teaching or pedagogy specifically. Further, the Mellon-funded initiative will conclude its work after the fall 2020 semester. The Becoming Community administrative team has met with the dean of the faculty to explore ways that a proposed teaching and learning center could continue some of the work on diversity, inclusion, and justice pedagogy once the Mellon grant period expires.

Faculty Feedback

At the faculty workshop in August 2018, faculty members were asked to reflect on the following questions:

- How might a teaching, learning, and research center help you?
- What should be the most urgent goals of a teaching, learning, and research center?
- If resources are limited, what are the most important services and activities that a teaching and learning center could provide?

In the following small group conversations, faculty members identified ways that they envisioned a teaching and learning center helping them. These included:

Fostering connections between colleagues across the institutions around best teaching practices. Faculty members wanted opportunities to connect with their colleagues in other disciplines and learn how they teach and engage students. They thought a teaching and learning center could be a place where these connections could be made in an organized and institutionally supported way.

Providing opportunities for faculty members to learn from each other, whether through discussion groups, workshops, mentoring, observation, or collaboration. Faculty members were enthusiastic about the possibility of learning from their fellow colleagues. One group explained, "Faculty peers are most useful because their information comes from concrete experience." They envisioned this learning taking place in a variety of settings, such as structured discussions about teaching, peer-to-peer mentoring, classroom observation, faculty retreats, and collaborative workshops about teaching strategies.

Being a resource for innovative pedagogical techniques and best practices, as well as a place for collaboration on teaching ideas and strategies. Beyond programming, faculty members envisioned the center being place where they could access up-to-date information on the scholarship of teaching and learning and current best practices in pedagogy. One suggestion was that the center maintain a library of teaching strategies and assignments developed by faculty members that fellow colleagues could draw on.

Helping faculty adopt inclusive teaching methods for increasingly diverse classrooms. Faculty members hoped that a teaching and learning center could help them better understand and meet the diverse needs of their students. They expressed interest in learning and adopting more inclusive and culturally-responsive teaching strategies and knowing more about creating learning experiences out of difficult conversations.

Educating faculty on how to effectively use and integrate technology in the classroom. Faculty members expressed a desire to know and meet the needs of 21st century learners, and they wanted a teaching and learning center to assist them in learning about and better integrating technology in their classrooms.

Demonstrating institutional support for faculty creativity. Faculty members stressed that the adoption of thoughtful, innovative pedagogy across the campuses needed strong institutional support. They suggested grants, release time, financial support for a teaching and learning center, and incentives for trying new teaching strategies as some of the ways to demonstrate this support.

Goals: Three potential goals for the proposed teaching and learning center emerged out of the faculty members' conversations, specifically, to help faculty: 1) Know and meet the needs of the students; 2) Improve and reinvigorate teaching; and 3) Foster connections across disciplines and create a culture of shared learning among colleagues.

In the feedback provided at the workshop, faculty indicated that they wanted a center that was a visible institutional priority and had a significant presence and identity on campus. Faculty indicated they wanted the center to focus on enhancement of teaching, expressing interest in pedagogy workshops where faculty peers would share ideas and practical strategies with their colleagues; individual consultations and classroom observations to help faculty members assess the effectiveness of their teaching and develop and implement new teaching strategies; and grants to attend pedagogical conferences where they could gain knowledge about the most current scholarship and practices in teaching and learning.

Faculty members wanted to see a more robust mentoring program, one less centered on senior faculty members imparting wisdom to younger colleagues and more based on a peer-to-peer or cohort model. They envisioned formal and informal mechanisms that would encourage faculty members at all career stages to engage with and learn from each other. One suggestion was forming faculty focus groups and learning communities where faculty could meet in small groups to read books, share teaching experiences and discuss current best practices in teaching.

Faculty hoped that the center for teaching and learning would provide training and feedback for faculty at all levels of experience: new faculty programs including orientation, training on the basics of pedagogy, and multiple avenues for feedback over the first three years; workshops for mid-career faculty, post-tenure mentoring, and support for reimagining existing courses; late career faculty cohorts and programs to "help faculty stay fresh." Faculty also asked for resources, time, and support for course design and implementing new pedagogy, such as inclusive and culturally sensitive teaching, and other best practices in the classroom.

In reviewing the feedback from the fall faculty workshop, the task force noticed that the suggestions focused on teaching improvement. While this should not come as a surprise, it was noted that the dean of the faculty had suggested a range of possible services for a center (including research support), but the feedback emphasized the importance of pedagogy enhancement and collaborations and conversations about teaching. While research and creative work are important aspects of faculty development at CSB/SJU, faculty currently receive support for these activities through the Academic Travel Fund administered by the dean of the faculty, as well as grants administered by the Faculty Development and Research Committee (FDRC). Therefore, the task force recommends that the focus of the teaching and learning center be on teaching and student learning, although the center may offer support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).

Mission and Goals

Tara Gray and Susan E. Shadle, in their article, "Launching or Revitalizing a Teaching Center: Principles and Portraits of Practice," published in the May 2009 issue of the *Journal of Faculty Development*, argue, "It is important to have a clearly articulated mission statement and goals, as these will help to define the scope of your activities and focus your work" (p. 6). Realizing that the incoming director of the CTL will play a significant role in shaping mission and defining programming, the task force decided not to draft its own mission statement. We envision one of the first tasks of the new director will be to consult with an advisory board and write a mission statement that coincides with common expectations of such centers and our unique institutional context.

The task force reviewed the statements from centers at numerous liberal arts institutions, focusing particularly on peer and regional institutions. Most statements provide a clear sense of direction and purpose for the center. For example, the statement of the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA) at St. Olaf College reads: "The past couple of decades have brought dramatic changes in the ways we structure knowledge, in what we have come to understand about effective teaching and learning, and in the possibilities afforded by new technologies for improving teaching and learning. The Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts (CILA) was founded to provide support for St. Olaf College faculty working to meet the challenges posed by these changes. On the premise that the liberal arts colleges are ideal laboratories for pedagogical innovation and reform, CILA seeks to provide time and space for conversations and collaboration among faculty about learning, teaching, and scholarship."

Similarly, the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning at Gustavus Adolphus College has a statement that outlines the purpose of the center: "The John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning supports faculty in achieving their potential as teachers and scholars. Responsive to the professional needs and interests of each faculty member, the Kendall Center includes support for teaching initiatives and faculty research, scholarship, and creativity, and provides on-campus opportunities for focused conversation on pedagogy, assessment of student learning, and collaboration among colleagues. Through its support of such opportunities, the Kendall Center fosters the pursuit of teaching and scholarly excellence throughout all stages of each faculty member's career and for all Gustavus students."

Some colleges have shorter statements, and then elaborate on services elsewhere on their web pages. For example, Luther College established a teaching & learning center just in the past year, and explains its purpose succinctly: "The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching promotes student success by supporting faculty and staff in the reflective practice of innovative and inclusive pedagogy, and by providing a space for interdisciplinary collaboration and professional development grounded in the latest research on learning and teaching."

During her campus visit to CSB/SJU in the fall semester 2019, Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli pointed to Smith College as a model of success of a teaching & learning center at a small liberal arts college. The webpage for the Sherrerd Center for Teaching & Learning states, "The center enables the academic success of all Smith students through faculty development efforts that support teaching and learning at the college." The webpage then has a separate link to the goals of the center, which are described as follows:

1. Create opportunities for faculty to engage in a continuous discourse about student learning.
2. Support new faculty as they develop into excellent teachers.
3. Disseminate knowledge of the craft of teaching to support ongoing faculty professional development.
4. Provide opportunities for faculty to learn from one another by sharing innovative teaching practices and strategies for improving student learning.
5. Build synergy between faculty development efforts and student academic support services (e.g. Jacobson Center, Educational Technology Services, Spinelli Center, Disability Services, Libraries, etc.)

6. Enable the academic success of students from diverse backgrounds by promoting best practices for inclusive teaching, investigating achievement gaps in student learning, and supporting strategies for overcoming such gaps.

7. Enhance Smith's efforts towards creating a culture of purposeful inquiry among students.

8. Ensure that consideration of teaching and learning inform campus decision making.

9. Improve measures of teaching performance so that they provide information useful to the teachers themselves and can serve as reasonable indicators of teaching performance for the purposes of re-appointment, tenure, and promotion.

10. Support the scholarship of teaching and learning among faculty from diverse disciplines ("Goals of the Center").

The center director and advisory board can use the vision statement and goals from Smith College's Sherrerd Center and others as models when they write the vision statement and goals for the center at CSB/SJU, and then communicate them to the faculty. In her article, "Ten Principles of Good Practice in Creating and Sustaining Teaching and Learning Centers," Mary Deane Sorcinelli writes, "it is important that the rationale and goals of the center be laid out clearly and communicated regularly to the institution (e.g., through an annual report, a program brochure, a unit plan)" (p. 14). A vision statement, articulated on the center website, will also help to prioritize the work of the center. This is vital since the task force has read many articles stating the importance of starting with manageable tasks.

Programming and Services

The literature on teaching and learning centers outline a wide array of services that centers offer. In particular, Andrea Beach, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Ann E. Austin, and Jaclyn K. Rivard's chapters on "Services We Focus On" and "Our Approaches to Faculty Development" from *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence*, as well as chapters and articles such as Virginia S. Lee's article on "Program Types and Prototypes" in *A Guide to Faculty Development*, are especially helpful. Centers provide services ranging from new faculty orientation, mentoring programs for faculty at all career stages, individual consultations, classroom observations, SGIDs, pedagogy workshops, teaching circles, faculty learning communities, maintaining a resource library and web page, grant support, integrating technology into teaching, diversity and inclusion related to teaching, active learning techniques, course and curriculum reform, scholarship of teaching & learning (SoTL), peer review of teaching, leadership development, and other activities and topics.

Teaching and learning centers at peer institutions offer a wide variety of programs for faculty members. For example, the Kendall Center at Gustavus Adolphus College has funds available for programming, allowing it to offer more frequent and more intensive events, such as day-long and multi-day retreats. But even centers with smaller budgets can offer a significant range of programming, as longtime faculty developer Todd Zakrajsek points out: "'Lack of adequate budget' should not impact what is accomplished" (2013, p. 123). The majority of teaching and learning centers at peer institutions offer variations on the following programs: Twice monthly lunch sessions to provide faculty opportunities to exchange ideas around teaching and learning with each other and with outside experts; Learning communities to bring faculty together to read, discuss, and strategize on topics of teaching and learning; New faculty programs including orientation day, ongoing seminars for new faculty, and a mentoring program; and small grants to support pedagogical

innovation and experiment, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning research, and pedagogy travel grants. Some centers get creative with their programming. For example, the Teaching and Learning Institute at Ursinus College operates a Student Consultant Program. In the program, a faculty member is paired with a trained student observer who is passionate about teaching over the course of a semester. The student consultants then observe their partner faculty member's course, meet with them regularly, and "develop a dialogue in the interest of improving the course."

The list of potential activities offered by a center and managed by its director can be quite long, which means two things: First, a new center should think big but start small. As Mary Deane Sorcinelli points out, "It is important not to raise expectations that the teaching center can do anything and everything" (p. 15). Similarly, Michael Reder writes in "Effective Practices in the Context of Small Colleges, that "The key to building a vital and effective program is to start small and grow carefully. It is best to start with one program and do it well and then the faculty demand for additional programming will naturally increase" (p. 304). Second, the director needs to have the time to be able to organize and facilitate the services provided by the center (more on this below).

While the incoming director and advisory board can determine specific programming, it's widely expected that teaching & learning centers develop quality programs for new faculty, which introduce them to specifics of teaching at CSB/SJU and the resources available to help them launch a successful teaching career on our campuses. New faculty orientation also offers the opportunity to welcome new faculty to CSB/SJU Benedictine values and traditions, and to embrace new faculty as part of the established faculty community. Throughout new faculty orientation, the center should offer a safe space for new faculty to ask questions (instructional, institutional, and other) to support a positive transition to the CSB/SJU community.

"Orientation, the first event in an ongoing onboarding effort, is of particular importance," write Vicki L. Baker, Laura Gail Lunsford, and Meghan J. Pifer, "since new faculty members need to balance institutional and departmental demands, while learning critical policies and processes to enact the various and sometimes conflicting roles they play on a daily basis" (2017, p. 32). Albion College devotes an entire day to new faculty orientation, while Wabash College has a new faculty orientation that lasts four days. Institutions with robust orientation programs will extend activities beyond the period before the start of the semester. For example, Hope College has the Initium program, which consists of a three-day workshop before the beginning of the fall semester, two ninety-minute meetings a month through the first year, a one-day midyear retreat, and a faculty mentoring program that begins in the second semester and continues for two more years. Kenyon College offers topic-specific monthly events for new faculty members and provides all of them with a three-member mentoring committee for their first two years. The College of Wooster organizes regular meetings for new faculty members (once a week for the first six weeks of the term), a mentoring program for new faculty members, a peer teaching network program, a course design workshop at the end of the year, and monthly brown-bag lunches in series called "Teaching Matters" and "Research Matters." (These examples are from the book, *Developing Faculty in Liberal Arts Colleges*, based on the authors' survey of faculty developers.)

A key component of new faculty orientation is allowing time to explore the art and science of teaching. The art of teaching is supported by strong mentorship, connections to master teachers, and collegial relationships with a variety of faculty. The science of teaching is developed through knowledge of the latest research on pedagogical best practices, including scholarship in teaching and

learning, instructional design, and culturally responsive teaching practices. Thinking deeply about teaching leads supports the journey to becoming an excellent, innovative, and responsive teacher.

Currently, the Learning Enhancement Services assigns each new faculty member to a senior colleague from outside of their department, to serve as a mentor. While beneficial in some instances, the literature on faculty mentoring clearly indicates a preference for a network-mentor model in which multiple colleagues serve as mentors (DeZure 2019; Sorcinelli 2019; Rockquemore 2016; Baker, Lunsford, and Pifer, 2017: Sorcinelli, Gray and Birch, 2011). While it is feasible for the director of a teaching and learning center to assign mentors in the old model, a proposed "mutual mentoring network" will require significant oversight and planning, and as a result the task force recommends that such a program be administered outside of the teaching and learning center. (The Dean's Task Force on Faculty Mentoring is issuing a separate report on faculty mentoring with recommendations.)

The Organizational Structure of the Teaching & Learning Center

Based on Mary Deane Sorcinelli's advice and recommendations during her fall 2019 visit to CSB/SJU, the Center for Teaching & Learning should consist of a full-time director, a part-time coordinator, a Faculty Fellows program (with two or more fellows per academic year), and an Advisory Board. The Director will report to the Provost.

During the Center's inaugural year, the primary focus of the Director's work will be to help develop and launch the Center. As such, the task force recommends that the new director should use the Center's first year to: 1) plan and implement a revised program for new faculty orientation; 2) conduct additional needs assessment as necessary; 3) begin to coordinate the work of the Center with other campus units offering professional development; and 4) plan and implement a few key Center events or begin a signature program.

Center Director
In his article on "Establishing An Educational Development Program," Douglas L. Robertson argues that, "Directors…need to have credibility with the key stakeholders, in particular with the specific clients for the educational development program" (p. 42). The director may come into the position with "significant credibility" if the person chosen is a "senior faculty colleague (terminal degree, previously obtained tenure, and rank of at least associate professor) with a solid teaching, research, and service background" (p. 42). Other important skills of a director, according to Robertson, are: Knowledge of pertinent literatures, practices, and technologies; experience with educational development; clinical skills (for example, working confidentially in consulting relationships [and having the trust of faculty]; facilitation skills (for example, facilitating workshops, retreats, meetings, and events); managerial skills; and leadership skills.

Debra Dawson, Judy Britnell and Alicia Hitchcock, in their article, "Developing Competency Models of Faculty Developers," published in the POD journal, *To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development*, identify key responsibilities of a faculty developer. According to these authors, the director "participates in development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of both new and ongoing programs to support teaching and learning excellence at the university" and "collaborates with the faculties and academic units to offer discipline-specific programs as well as instruction in centralized programs offered through the teaching and learning

center." In addition, the director "identifies and develops opportunities for teaching project collaboration between the faculties and the teaching and learning center," "collaborates with faculty on research related to the scholarship of teaching in various disciplines," and "Promotes and supports activities and event that concern the university community on teaching and learning issues" (pp. 20-21).

Given the wide range of duties and responsibilities of the director, most authors advise against assigning a director with only a part-time commitment. "Having a half-time faculty appointment does not allow this person to focus on T&L to the level that is needed, particularly at LACs and other small colleges," write Baker, Lunsford, and Pifer, in *Developing Faculty in Liberal Arts Colleges*, and so they suggest "investing in at least a full-time renewable position to support the CTL and manage associated programming" (2017, p. 40). This is supported by Tara Gray and Susan E. Shadle, in their article, "Launching or Revitalizing a Teaching Center: Principles and Portraits of Practice," who argue for a full-time director and at least a half-time assistant. Michael Reder, writing on "Effective Practices in the Context of Small Colleges," contends that the full-time director model "provides continuity and stability and allows the director to get to know faculty members' needs and to become familiar with the research on teaching and learning and the field of faculty development" (p. 301).

Full-time directors can be professional staff trained in educational development, but in the context of SLACs, they are often drawn from the ranks of faculty. The Centers for Teaching and Learning at CSB/SJU's peer and comparable institutions embrace a model of faculty leadership. While the organizational structures of these centers differ, the majority are directed by a faculty member and are supported by a board of faculty colleagues. For example, the Faculty Center for Teaching at Muhlenberg College is led by a full-time faculty director who serves a three-year term. The director is supported by an assistant director who helps with programming, logistics, publicity, and keeping the website up to date, as well as serving on the advisory board. The assistant director receives a stipend equal to one course overload pay/semester for their work. The advisory board is made up of six faculty members (including the assistant director) who come from different academic disciplines and divisions, are at different career stages, and have diverse pedagogical interests. Members of the advisory board serve three-year terms. The Teaching and Learning Institute at Ursinus College employs a similar model, using two co-directors and a six-member advisory board, as does Stonehill College's Center for Teaching and Learning, which has a faculty director and a three-member faculty advisory board. Each of these centers is also supported by a part-time administrative assistant.

Based on the overwhelming conclusions in the literature on centers for teaching & learning, the task force recommends that a new center should be led by a full-time faculty director, who would serve a three-year term. The term can be renewable to ensure continuity but Mary Deane Sorcinelli suggests no more than two consecutive terms, so that other colleagues with different perspectives are allowed to assume the role. The director should have a 10-month appointment, similar to the director of assessment and the director of the Integrations Curriculum, given the substantial planning that will be required during some of the summer. The director will design and implement the Center's programming and offerings for faculty, with the goal of helping them develop pedagogical skills and explore new ideas in teaching and learning. In consultation with the Advisory Board, the director may choose a theme or area of focus for the Center for a period of time (similar to what is done at Smith College, which selects a theme for the center's work every two years). Additional duties of the director include overseeing the Faculty Fellows Program and collaborating with the Faculty Fellows.

There is widespread consensus that a faculty director should teach a course each academic year, to maintain a presence in the classroom. However, the task force recommends that the director is not eligible for sabbatical leave or be allowed to direct a study abroad program during their term, so that their attention is focused exclusively on the administration of the center. In addition, the task force recommends against other service roles for the director that do not directly relate to the center. It is especially important that the director not engage in the summative evaluation of other colleagues, such as submitting letters for third-year, tenure, or promotion files, as these activities may conflict with the confidentiality they are supposed to provide Center clients. In fact, the POD Network has developed guidelines which state, "An important area of potential conflict exists in the case of the summative evaluation of teaching. Departmental faculty and campus administrators (chairs, deans, etc.) are responsible for the assessment of teaching for personnel decisions. Educational developers should not generally be placed in this situation because of the confidentiality requirements noted in the section on Guidelines for Practice. In general, educational developers do not make summative judgments about an individual's teaching. In particular, they should never perform the role of developer and summative evaluator concurrently for the same individual unless they have that person's explicit consent and with proper declaration to any panel or committee involved" ("Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers").

Support Staff
A part-time support staff member will assist the Director with the day-to-day tasks of the Center, including the coordination of and logistical planning for all Center programming and events, and the development and maintenance of the Center's online resources. In her site visit to our campuses, Mary Deane Sorcinelli suggested at least a half-time support staff assignment for the Center.

Faculty Fellows
During her site visit, Mary Deane Sorcinelli suggested having "faculty fellows" support the work of the director. A faculty fellow is a colleague who assists the Center director in planning and facilitating programming on a specific topic or in a disciplinary area. Virginia S. Lee, in her article, "Program Types and Prototypes," in *A Guide to Faculty Development*, describes the idea: "Faculty fellows build relationships with the faculty and extend the influence of the center. Some centers support a limited number of faculty fellows. Fellows may secure partial release time from their teaching or other departmental duties to work on a project, develop a program, or perform a service negotiated with the center" (p. 27). In the chapter, "Working With a Faculty Development Committee," in the same volume, Kim M. Mooney writes, "One model for engaging the outstanding teachers and scholars on a campus is to invite them to serve in the capacity as an 'associate' or 'fellow' and to give them a very specific programming idea to work with each semester" (p. 56).

The purpose of the year-long, stipend-based Faculty Fellows program is twofold. First, it provides individual faculty members with the opportunity to focus on generating tools and resources for innovative teaching practices on campus. Second, it enriches the Center's resources and programming. For example, Faculty Fellows might concentrate on inclusive teaching practices, team-based learning, flipped classrooms, or educational technology. Faculty Fellows will propose and implement a project to be completed over the course of an academic year and will receive a stipend in exchange for their service. It is expected that Faculty Fellows will work with the Director and participate in Center programming.

The John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning at Gustavus Adolphus College uses this model. The Center is led by a faculty director who serves a three-year term. A team of four faculty associates provide programming support while focusing on specific areas, such as excellence in teaching; new faculty programming; diversity and inclusive excellence; and research, scholarship, and creativity. The faculty director and associates remain active scholars and teachers during their terms. They are compensated for their work with the Kendall Center through reassigned time and/or stipends. (The Kendall Center is also supported by a part-time administrative staff assistant who works 25 hours per week.)

The dean of the faculty attended a session on "Faculty Fellows" at the fall 2019 POD Network conference in November, and listened as directors from numerous programs described their structures. Although some centers compensate their fellows with reassigned time, directors from SLACs reported that overload adjunct pay was sufficient. Another advantage to using fellows is that it allows the director to mentor colleagues to take leadership roles in faculty development, ensuring continuity once the director completes their time in the role.

Advisory Board

The Center Director should also consult regularly with campus leaders and stakeholders about pedagogical issues, seeking to foster a university culture that supports effective teaching. Examples of such stakeholders include, Student Accessibility Services, Instructional Technology, the Library, the Integrations Director, the Assessment Director, the Writing Center Director, the Math Skills Center Director, XPD, and other areas. A Center Advisory Board could be comprised of the Faculty Fellows in residence, as well as directors and/or staff from some or all of the above units. During the implementation of the Center, appointment term length will be staggered to ensure continuity of the Board.

Budget

Alan C. Frantz and colleagues, in their article, "The Roles of Teaching and Learning Centers," cite research indicating that almost two-thirds of campuses surveyed report that internal resources are used to support the center. The rest of those surveyed indicated additional support through grant funding and/or endowments. Former POD president Dee Fink, "in his experience with faculty development programs at many different kinds of institutions, noticed that at centers that one could consider to be financially well supported, the center budget was between ½ to 1 percent of faculty salaries and benefits (or of whomever the center is designed to serve, perhaps also including adjunct faculty, graduate teaching assistants, and certain staff)" (Robertson, 2010, pp. 41-42).

The budgets for the teaching and learning centers at peer institutions vary greatly. The Kendall Center at Gustavus Adolphus College is supported by an endowment that generates around $56,000 annually to support faculty development programming. The Center also has an operating budget of $21,000 and manages a faculty travel budget of $97,000. The Lasko Center at Juniata College is also funded by an endowment that was established after the institution leveraged a grant from Teagle Foundation for faculty development. The endowment generates around $25,000 annually and is used to support much of the Center's programming. Course releases for the past director, director, and director-designate are paid for through an existing operating line within the provost's budget. Like Juniata, the annual budget for the Faculty Center for Teaching at Muhlenberg College is approximately $31,000, although the website did not provide further details.

To get the Center started at CSB/SJU, Academic Affairs should leverage existing faculty development resources, and the dean of the faculty and others can continue to pursue donor relationships through the IA offices for ongoing financial support. (The dean of the faculty has already met with potential donors and has received an enthusiastic response.) In addition, faculty development could be prominently featured in SD2025 and in upcoming fundraising campaigns.

Physical Space/Location
Many articles on starting teaching and learning centers emphasize the importance of the physical location of the Center. Ed Neal and Lola Peed-Neal, in their chapter, "Promoting Your Program and Grounding it in the Institution," in *A Guide to Faculty Development*, contend, "Placement of program offices in a central location sends the message that the institutional administration values its investment in faculty development" (p. 103). Mary Deane Sorcinelli, in her classic piece on the "Ten Principles of Good Practice in Creating and Sustaining Teaching and Learning Centers," argues, "While space is often tight at most institutions, it is important that the center develop a presence and identity on campus, that it be accessible, and that it be allocated enough space to allow for individual consultation and group seminars" (p. 17). Elizabeth Dickens and colleagues, in their recent article on "Starting a Center for Teaching and Learning," emphasize that, "The physical space, in addition to serving the practical function of hosting consultations, collaborations, workshops, and other services, can signal to faculty the degree of institutional support for the new CTL" (2019, p. 3).

The Teaching and Learning Center is ideally located in an easily accessible space, with ample room for gathering and teaching as well as office space for personnel associated with the Center. Co-locating this space with other key services such as instructional technology or assessment would be an ideal way to foster collaboration between areas. A central location to the campuses would provide an ability for faculty to visit regardless of their office locations and encourages cross-disciplinary interactions. We seek to create a hospitable, attractive space with flexible furniture arrangements and key resources that both support formal programming and invite conversation. At CSB, a likely location is Clemens Library (rooms A101 and A102, the original location of LES). Since most of the remainder of CSB's campus has been renovated recently for specific departmental purposes, there are few other alternatives in the central part of campus. Likewise at SJU a possible location is Alcuin Library (rooms 125 and 135), though there may be options in the Quad that are also central to campus. Since there have been a large number of relocations at both campuses, a final determination of location would prudently involve consultation with facilities staff.

Surveys conducted of deans and faculty members at liberal arts colleges confirm the importance of the location of the Center. The authors of *Developing Faculty in Liberal Arts Colleges*, "recommend investing in a CTL by providing a physical space in which faculty members can interact around issues of T&L. We suggest this based on insights gleaned from conversations with deans. At institutions with an actual, physical center, we heard about its symbolic importance for faculty members, as it serves as a safe space in which teaching practices can be tested, programming can be supported, and resources made available" (2017, p. 40). One of the responses they cite in their book stands out: "As one director of a CTL said during an interview, 'I am thrilled we now have an actual center on campus. Having a physical presence has made all the difference'" (2017, p. 27).

Online Space
The programs offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning can be expanded and reinforced by a robust online presence. We foresee a Center for Teaching and Learning website that may consolidate news of conferences, workshops and other opportunities related to pedagogy;

provide case studies, sample assignments, and other reading materials about specific topics; publicize faculty teaching and research accomplishments; and offer asynchronous/streaming video opportunities for those who cannot attend a program in person. This is especially important given the many responsibilities—both professional and personal—that might deter or prevent attendance at the common late afternoon time slot. A robust online presence can provide resources to faculty when they are needed, as colleagues confront and respond to challenging classroom situations.

Assessment and Success

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the director of the teaching and learning center will be expected to create an assessment and evaluation plan. The plan will include goals and outcomes for the center, along with direct and indirect measures (assessments) used to determine programmatic effectiveness. Research summarizes mechanisms for effective assessment, specifically for centers for teaching and learning, and the director should utilize best practices based on these works (Beach, Sorcinelli, Austin, & Rivard, 2016, chapter 7; and Gillespie, Robertson, et. al., 2010, chapter 9). The Director is accountable to the Provost for reporting about Center effectiveness annually and for creating action plans for change as warranted by the data. The director of the center for teaching and learning will work collaboratively with the director of assessment in fulfilling these duties.

Benefits of the Proposal

The benefits of faculty development and of a center for teaching and learning are supported by a vast array of research in the field of educational development. Colleges and universities are seeking to redefine themselves in the changing environment of higher education, and out of this, student learning and success has emerged as a clear priority (Kezar, 2017, vii). As Laurie Grupp, a faculty developer at Providence College observes, "In order to remain competitive and relevant, colleges are introducing strategic initiatives and enhancements to teaching and learning." Many of these efforts are concentrated in faculty development programs, which aim to help faculty members "stay current with innovations in pedagogy and adapt to the changing role of the faculty member" (Grupp, 2014, p. 45).

The connections between quality teaching, student success and institutional efficiency are increasingly clear: "*Study after study demonstrates that students' experiences in the classroom and with faculty are one of the most important factors in student outcomes ranging from persistence, graduation, sense of belonging, and academic self-efficacy to other important psychosocial outcomes associated with learning and graduation*" (Kezer, 2017, p. vii).

What students learn in the classroom depends on the pedagogical choices their faculty members make. Teaching and learning centers can help faculty establish clear learning goals and design curricula around them, create assignments that facilitate student learning; and use assessment and feedback to improve their teaching. Better teaching leads to positive outcomes for students, and teaching and learning centers are uniquely positioned to support faculty in this work (Haras, 2017, 41-3).

Increasing attention to student success is occurring at the same time that drastic changes are taking place in student demographics. Today's college campuses are home to increasingly diverse student bodies, yet learning gaps persist between white students and historically underrepresented groups. In

a 2017 report by the American Council on Education, Lorenzo Esters asserts that inclusion is the largest barrier to college attainment. To support the success of students from diverse backgrounds and experiences, faculty members need to be knowledgeable of and practiced in inclusive and culturally responsive teaching. Teaching and learning centers can help faculty adopt inclusive and evidence-based classroom pedagogy and prepare for this work. "At the forefront of change, these centers can foster equitable and inclusive practices for students and faculty, mitigating existing educational gaps and stereotype threats that jeopardize how students see themselves and implicit biases that prevent faculty from an objective student assessment," Esters claims (2017, pp. 1-4). Faculty also need support to be able to "have 'difficult conversations' in their classrooms—to engage our students (and each other) in productive discussions about diversity, inequality, identity, power, and privilege" (Reder, 2014, p. 5).

Recent studies document the effectiveness of faculty development efforts. Between 2009-2011, Carleton College and Washington State University conducted a three-year study to investigate how faculty members' efforts to become better teachers impacted student learning. The "Tracer Project" provided clear evidence that faculty participation in professional development activities benefited classroom instruction, student learning, and the broader culture of teaching at the institutions. "When faculty improve their teaching, students learn more and their performance on course work improves. As greater numbers of faculty make common cause of improving teaching, the goals of that improvement tend to spread throughout the institution" (Condon, 2016).

Resources directed to faculty development are good investments for the institutions. Steven Taylor of the American Council on Education supports this point: "Improving the quality of instruction is an institutional imperative, as better teaching leads to better student outcomes, which is good for the institution. Better student outcomes impact attrition, the number of courses repeated, and time to graduation. Therefore, there is a financial incentive for the institution to invest in preparing its faculty. As with any organization, faculty need support, guidance, and resources to achieve and maintain high levels of teaching effectiveness. Faculty developers are well positioned to provide that support if provided with resources necessary to sustain that effort at the institution" (Haras, 2017, p. Ix).

Many faculty development programs aim to create an institution-wide culture of teaching excellence. Beyond student success, faculty members are also looking to engage with their colleagues in meaningful work. Teaching and learning centers can be a place where faculty members build a shared practice together. Through workshops, consultations, learning communities, and collaborations, faculty members encounter existing and potential mentoring networks and can connect with colleagues across the institution (Calderwood & Klaf, 2014, p. 77). As Baker, Lunsford, and Pifer summarize (2017), "CTLs can be a way to rejuvenate faculty members and allow them to build communities" (p. 39).

Faculty development programs are essential for the survival of small colleges and universities, which have built their reputations on taking teaching seriously. Teaching and learning centers can help "make the good teaching and learning occurring on those campuses not only more visible, but also more critically informed and deliberate," observes longtime faculty developer Michael Reder (2014, p. 1). Quality teaching is also good for institutional efficiency. Faculty development programs not only support better teaching by individual faculty members, but it also builds a teaching culture that contributes to campus-wide initiatives, strategic directions, and organizational development (Grupp,

p. 28). Likewise, on small campuses, faculty members often occupy key administrative leadership positions, and teaching and learning centers can help prepare faculty members for these roles.

Finally, one of the intangible benefits of a teaching and learning center at this particular moment at CSB/SJU, would be the tremendous boost it would deliver in faculty morale. At a time when student enrollments have declined and departments and programs have felt the strain of diminished resources, a center for teaching and learning would signal an institutional commitment toward faculty, which would generate renewed enthusiasm and commitment towards teaching excellence. In her article, "Faculty Development: An Investment for the Future," Marilla Svinicki posits: "If you spend time and resources in faculty and staff development, you will get a huge return on your investment in terms of creativity, productivity, morale, and self-renewing energy" (p. 211).

Summary of Recommendations

"Given the centrality of the faculty in the life of colleges and universities and the acceleration of change in higher education," writes Virginia S. Lee, "faculty development is more important than ever. While intimately tied to the teaching and learning agenda of institutions, faculty development plays a critical role in enhancing overall institutional effectiveness" (2010, p. 33). This task force recommends that the current Learning Enhancement Service (LES) program be revitalized as a teaching & learning center (whose exact name can be determined after a mission statement is developed). A full-time director should be chosen to lead the center, with support from a part-time administrative assistant, at least two Faculty Fellows compensated with stipends, and an advisory board consisting of relevant stakeholders. The center director should work with the advisory board to determine if further needs assessment is warranted and write a mission statement for the center and publicize center vision, goals, and services. Although center activities might focus at first on a signature program, eventually the services could expand to benefit all faculty (as well as many staff) at CSB/SJU. The arrival of a center for teaching and learning at the conclusion of the Mellon-funded Becoming Community initiative and during the implementation of the Integrations Curriculum, as well as at a time of major shifts in higher education, would position faculty at CSB/SJU to further promote pedagogical innovations that benefit student learning and success. As Andrea Beach, Mary Dean Sorcinelli, Ann E. Austin, and Jaclyn K. Rivard note in their seminal work on *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence*, "faculty development is now more central and widely recognized as an important support for teaching and learning and a key lever for change in higher education institutions" (2016, p. 145).

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