Final Report
Academic Program Review
Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology

Review Process

The Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT) prepared a self-study following program review guidelines. An external review team visited the campus, reviewed the self-study documents, interviewed faculty, unit personnel and University administrators and submitted an external review report. A subcommittee of the Program Review Committee (PRC) read the self-study and the external review. This document reflects the subcommittee’s findings and recommendations.

Self-Study

Vision and Mission

The CTLT “is dedicated to creating a learning environment for faculty to achieve excellence and innovation in teaching through collaboration and technological support.” The Center supports both traditional teaching styles as well as new instructional technologies. It offers a variety of developmental activities, including seminars, workshops, conferences, programs and consultations. The activities are designed for (and in response to input from) individuals, departments and college offices. Collaboration is emphasized as both a philosophy and a procedural expectation throughout the CTLT self-study. Through its activities “…the CTLT significantly enhances and strengthens the intellectual and cultural learning environment of the University,” and so contributes directly to the University vision of becoming the premier learning community in Ohio and one of the best in the nation.

History

Opened in July of 1996, the CTLT has been in operation just over four years. The CTLT was initiated as a new department in the Library and Learning Resources, and was physically housed in Olscamp Hall. A year later (summer 1997), the CTLT was moved to the Academic Affairs area, and began reporting to a Vice Provost. In February, 1998, the physical location of the CTLT moved to University
Hall, and the Creative Development Studio was created at that location. The Studio is a computer lab meant for faculty and staff to work together to design, develop, assess and maintain instructional technology projects. The CTLT also has a resource area, containing books, tapes and other materials dealing with pedagogy.

The number of programs offered by the CTLT has expanded continuously since it was founded. The topics represented in its various workshops, consultations and conferences have been varied, and have been designed to respond to the expressed concerns of deans, chairs, and faculty patrons of the CTLT. The self-study describes its programs as combining both a technology orientation and a pedagogy orientation, such that “program participants are taken beyond skill-based training in instructional technology toward a larger goal of examining and synthesizing the information they are learning so that they may creatively apply such information to their teaching.” In recent times, the CTLT has expanded its online presence, providing a list of resource material, workshop schedules and event registration online. Assisting faculty in developing an online presence to support their teaching has been a consistent activity of the CTLT.

Several workshops and conferences have evolved into ongoing programs, “as the result of high interest by faculty.” Events and activities comprising these programs are available throughout the year and, in some cases (like the New Faculty Program), have grown and evolved over the course of several years. Other regular programs include: Tenure, Promotion & Scholarship Portfolio Program, Web Course Development Program, Social Networking Group Program, Grants Program, Teaching Large Classes Program, Faculty Associate Program, and Student/Faculty Team Program.

Most of the workshops and conferences put on by the CTLT involve BGSU faculty as teachers, consultants and advisors. The self-study describes this reliance in positive terms, as it taps local expertise, builds community, and establishes a network of teachers as learners. The Faculty Associate Program represents the most formal kind of relationship between BGSU faculty and the CTLT. Faculty Associates receive a “course release” (reassigned time) to work in the CTLT on projects of general importance to teaching and learning at BGSU. Faculty Associates have worked on projects such as web course development, the use of technology for classroom assessment, and portfolio development for tenure and promotion reviews.

The Student/Faculty Team Program provides faculty with an opportunity to develop and design a project with the help of a student staff member. Students filling this role have expertise in multimedia applications; graphic and digital design; 2D and 3D animation; network systems administration; online and hardcopy document development and design; hardware and software applications; and web design.

The CTLT has developed a close collaboration with Information Technology Services (ITS). ITS provides students to work at the CTLT and the CTLT provides instructional support and technology resources for ITS. Through their collaboration,
the CTLT and ITS have: produced an instructional tutorial CD, organized a forum, and produced a series of digital video clips for web presentation, among other things.

**Organization**

The CTLT has three full-time staff positions, a Director, a Coordinator for Instructional Development, and a Secretary. Students serve as temporary, part-time staff and work with faculty on projects in the area of their expertise. At the time the self-study was written, the CTLT employed 11 students. Faculty Associates are reassigned to work in the CTLT (in exchange for a course “release”). The CTLT has had at most two Faculty Associates at any one time. Since the self-study was written, one of the Faculty Associates has been given the title of Associate Director. Her main area of responsibility is development of online courses; she recently received an OLN grant to pursue online course development with Firelands faculty. Other Faculty Associates have worked on projects such as using technology for assessment, and the development of promotion and tenure portfolios.

The CTLT is advised by the CTLT Advisory Board. At the time the self-study was written, the board had a majority of members from the College of Arts & Sciences, but also had members representing the College of Education and Human Development and the College of Business Administration. The board is active; for instance, it assumed a major role in writing the self-study.

**Programs**

The self-study describes eleven program areas, each designed to address topics of importance to the BGSU community. These will be summarized below. Within each program area, the CTLT offers a variety of services, including: workshops, seminars, conferences, consultations, in-studio instruction, a Resource Library, and online assistance.

*Faculty Associate Program.* As described above, this program allows BGSU faculty to use a one-course reassignment to the CTLT to work on specific projects, including such topics as assessment, web-course development and tenure and promotion portfolios.

*New Faculty Program.* This program begins in the week before the start of fall classes with a two-day conference. The conference is coordinated with other new faculty orientation activities put on by other offices. The conference addresses pedagogical issues of interest to new teachers, introduces faculty to campus resources, and provides an introduction to CTLT workshops, programs and services offered for new faculty throughout the rest of the year.

*Online Course Management Program.* In addition to basic media instruction in software like PowerPoint and PageMaker, this program offers workshops that concentrate specifically on information management activities. Many of these use the course management tool, WebCT.
Using New Media for Teaching & Learning Program. This program offers instruction in any software and hardware relevant to teaching and learning, including for instance, CD-ROM technology, Claris HomePage, PhotoShop, PowerPoint and PageMaker. “Although most faculty are computer literate, these workshops continue to address the various levels of competence…” that faculty need to enhance their teaching through technological means.

Consultations. CTLT staff meet with individuals or groups to explore and develop ideas. Larger scale workshops and conferences invariably had their beginnings in a consultation. These meetings with clients “constitute a major portion of CTLT activities.” Face to face meetings are augmented with hard-copy documentation, in-studio instruction, and email communication.

Teaching Large Classes Program. Services in this area are all designed to address the challenges inherent in teaching large class. The self-study describes several activities in this area planned for the future, as well as a few events occurring in 1999-2000.

Social Network Program. This is the newest program area among the ones described. It offers opportunities for faculty to interact socially.

Tenure and Promotion Scholarship Program. In response to high demand from the faculty, the CTLT offers several workshops on preparing materials for promotion and tenure review.

Grants and External Contracts Program. CTLT staff have received several grants and contracts:
1) $30,000 (Aeroquip/Vickers) to develop a CD-ROM presentation in Financial Education and an instructional tool for Problem Analysis and Resolution.
2) $96,000 and $7,000 (American Accounting Association) to develop interactive CD-ROMs.
3) $50,000 (OLN) to develop web-based training with faculty from Firelands.

Selected Topics in Professional Development Program. These activities are developed in response to specific requests from faculty and departments. Examples include: Strategies for Teaching Diversity Across the Curriculum, Intellectual Property Rights of Faculty and Universities, and Assessment.

Student/Faculty Teams Programs. These have been described previously in other contexts. This program pairs students trained in particular technology applications with faculty who want individual assistance to develop a project.

Clients
The CTLT staff consult with individual faculty, department chairs or groups, deans and the Provost. They also work collaboratively with other units at BGSU, such as ITS. Some flyers, videos, and other work products, are produced in cooperation with other units on campus.

**Operations**

The CTLT occupies a set of offices and a general administrative space in 201 University Hall. They share a conference room and some office equipment with Partnerships for Community Action. The Creative Development Studio is housed on the second floor of University Hall, adjacent to the main CTLT office.

The computer systems in the Studio are arranged in suites, an arrangement which makes it easy for faculty to consult with staff while working on a project. Workstations have been augmented for a variety of functions, including: document scanning and character recognition; slide and film scanning; digital video editing; and duplication and printing for CD-ROM media.

The CTLT’s operating budget is $30,000 per year. Grants and contracts provide additional income that supplements hardware, software and student personnel budgets.

**Self-Assessment**

The self-study’s evaluation of the quality of its programs and services is based on attendance at CTLT functions, evaluation forms collected at all CTLT events, solicited and unsolicited letters, and individual feedback. The event evaluation forms have a high return rate (average 90%). The self-study states that feedback received through these means has had a significant impact on planning and revision of CTLT activities.

The self-study characterizes the feedback from faculty and departments as “overwhelmingly favorable.” The self-study points to attendance (demand) records as another line of evidence suggesting that CTLT activities are valued by the University community: “Each year the number of clients served by the Center have increased. In year one, approximately 400 faculty were involved in CTLT-sponsored activities. In year two and three, approximately 600-800 faculty were involved in CTLT-sponsored activities. Since August 1999 [the self-study is dated February, 2000], over 650 faculty have participated in CTLT events…”

Similarly, the number of faculty presenting at workshops and conferences has increased. Also, the self-study lists eight departments that have asked CTLT staff to conduct special events that are discipline-specific, since August, 1999. Collaborations, too, provide evidence that the University community values the CTLT and its services.

The self-study evaluates its $30,000 operating budget as “very small”. It notes additional support for hardware and student workers obtained through its
collaborative relationship with ITS. Money coming into the CTLT through grants and contracts has also provided an important supplement to the operating budget, although the self-study states this is “not a permanent solution to the funding problem.”

**Planning**

The self-study presents eight major areas to work on in the upcoming five years:

1) The Faculty Associate Program is “key to the viability of both new and existing faculty development initiatives.”
2) The self-study states that CTLT must increase grants awarded.
3) The CTLT plans to expand through the development of new programs, such as faculty mentoring, and making good use of the new infrastructure.
4) Opportunities for teaching exchanges would be valuable for BGSU faculty.
5) Collaborate with other units at BGSU to expand and improve the CTLT’s services.
6) Develop a viable faculty mentoring initiative.
7) Create new pedagogy/technology initiatives that keep pace with developments.
8) Provide training and support for faculty developing web-courses.

The self-study provides a rough timeline for efforts that address the above areas. All of the plans require increased budgetary support for implementation.

**External Review Team’s Report**

The external team prefaced their report with three understandings that provide context for their evaluation and recommendations. First, the two external reviewers have over 30 years combined work in faculty development in a wide range of college and university campuses. Second, the CTLT is both a very new program and “a program that has operated with an extremely small base budget.” And third, faculty development programs are campus specific.

**Strengths**

The external report finds that the CTLT has been highly productive. “Based on our experiences, this level of annual program offerings is extremely high given the size of the Center staff.” The external report characterizes the volume of clients served by the CTLT as “a phenomenal accomplishment.”

The external report also notes that the number of faculty who have contributed their time and energy to CTLT activities as presenters and teachers is large. By this measure as well, the CTLT appears “extraordinarily successful.” “This unusually high level of faculty participation leadership, and modeling of good teaching is yet another testament to the Center’s reputation among faculty.”
The external report also notes the CTLT’s success in garnering external support “to supplement its meager operating budget”.

The external report summarizes comments and reports obtained through campus interviews during their visit to campus. These are consistently positive and lead the external reviewers to conclude: “the CTLT is clearly valued by a large number of BGSU stakeholders.”

**Concerns**

The external reviewers found five themes, representing areas of concern expressed in their interviews of faculty:

1) There was “clear and overwhelming concern” that the CTLT does not receive the institutional support it deserves, both in terms of dollars and recognition. The report quotes one interviewee as representing the views of several, in saying, “Resources are meager and not consistent with the priorities of the institution.”

2) There was concern expressed that the CTLT needs to rely so heavily on “volunteerism and goodwill of faculty members.”

3) The campus community appears grateful that the CTLT supports “almost all requests for assistance.” However, this same service-orientation and responsiveness is seen as a potential danger, in that the CTLT’s efforts and energies may be spread too thinly.

4) It was noted that the CTLT Advisory Board has few members outside of the College of Arts and Sciences.

5) There is an overlap between the services provided by the CTLT and other units on campus. This overlap creates some confusion among faculty as to where to turn for help with particular issues.

6) Finally, the external report notes “the single most critical comment about the CTLT that was shared during the interviews suggested that not all faculty had a positive experience in the Center’s early workshops. We certainly support this interviewee’s suggestion that ‘The Center needs to reach out to those who didn’t experience success, and to let them know that they’ve gotten it right now.’ We also believe that it is unrealistic to expect that a faculty development Center will please ‘all faculty members all of the time’.”

**Recommendations of the External Team**

1) Give greater campus-wide recognition to the CTLT and the role it plays in helping the University achieve its mission. Senior campus leaders should visibly commend the CTLT staff for “the outstanding job they have already done in providing far-reaching programs on a very limited budget.” There should also be formal administrative recognition of the many faculty who have contributed to the CTLT without compensation or reward. The external report suggests, for instance, “some type of prominent celebratory event at the start of the new academic year…to call public attention to the important institutional role the
CTLT has played in encouraging and supporting faculty efforts to enhance the teaching and learning process.”

2) Create a more focused and detailed strategic plan. The external report gives some very detailed ideas on how the CTLT might go about this planning process, in collaboration with the Advisory Board, interested faculty and senior campus administrators. For instance, they suggest that the mission of the CTLT (as stated on page 3 of the self-study and reviewed in the second paragraph of this report) is not aligned well with the eight major areas of the “strategic plan” (as stated on pages 44-45 of the self-study and reviewed at the end of the “Self-Study” section of this report). They suggest that identification of programmatic needs, first, would give useful guidance to the selection and development of specific programs.

3) “The most striking problem we see... and our most significant and urgent recommendation, involves the extraordinarily low level of recurring University funding for center operations and personnel.” The report recommends that the President, Provost and deans work collectively to increase the CTLT’s base budget. They further recommend that the planning efforts (recommendation 2) be followed by the preparation of budgetary requests from the CTLT in support of specific priorities.

4) The external report recommends that the CTLT continue to report to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (now Vice Provost for Academic Programs).

5) The CTLT should work more closely with deans to identify, develop and support particular programs and services. They also recommend that faculty volunteers be compensated with an appropriate stipend.

6) Once significantly increased recurring funding is provided, the CTLT should both expand the depth of ongoing activities and the breadth of new program offerings. The strategic planning effort (recommendation 2) should guide the choice of new programs.

7) Once significantly increased recurring funding is provided, the CTLT should reduce the amount of time devoted to activities not part of the primary mission of the CTLT. Specifically, time spent pursuing “entrepreneurial activities such as seeking external grant funding, performing contract work, or exchanging services with other campus units” has detracted from the CTLT’s time and energy devoted to support faculty development.

8) The location and physical facilities “appear sufficient but are clearly not excessive for ... [the] current level of activities.” The CTLT should anticipate possible increased space needs in the future.
Program Review Committee Findings

Support. The PRC finds that the CTLT has done an outstanding job of providing faculty development opportunities for a large number of faculty, and they have done so with very little support from the University. We concur with the external reviewers’ finding that the CTLT has not received the institutional support it needs and deserves, either in terms of dollars or recognition.

Evaluation. Although there were few reports of dissatisfaction with the CTLT in either the self-study or the external report, the PRC is sensitive to the possibility that some portions of the campus community do not feel well served by the CTLT. Despite the consistently positive evidence reported in the self-study and the external review, the PRC finds a need for a survey conducted independently of CTLT workshops and events. While project-specific feedback (e.g., at a workshop) provides one source of valuable information, there is a need for annual evaluations from the campus community as a whole on the availability and appropriateness of CTLT activities.

Strategic Plan. The PRC agrees with the external team in finding that the strategic plan presented by the CTLT is not well developed. The plan is developed only at a very general level, and as such provides little specific guidance. Another problematic feature of the plan is that it allows too many possibilities. Particularly in light of the limited financial support for the CTLT, human and physical resources are stretched too thinly by the many different initiatives.

At the same time, the PRC finds that there are many calls for additional programs. Given the influx of large numbers of new faculty, a rapidly changing technology related to teaching, the construction of the campus infrastructure, and a University mission that calls for excellence in teaching and learning, there are a large number of demands and expectations for faculty development programs. The PRC finds that it is imperative for the CTLT to develop a detailed strategic plan that is directly responsive to the University mission. In developing priorities within this plan, it is essential that the CTLT work with deans, chairs, the Advisory Board and other constituencies to develop a prioritization.

Budget. The PRC finds that the CTLT is seriously underfunded. All lines of evidence available support the conclusion that funding for faculty development through the CTLT is not commensurate with the University’s mission to become a premier learning community. The budget is not adequate to sustain the current level of activity on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, any further elaboration of the priorities within the strategic called for above carry with them additional budgetary needs. The CTLT operates on a shoestring. Expectations for growth of programs are not reasonable without appropriate financial resources.

Breadth of Program Offerings. Following are several specific ideas that should be considered for prioritization within the strategic plan, given appropriate funding.
1) Since graduate students are asked to perform many teaching functions, frequently at the freshman level, there is a need to ensure that graduate students are adequately prepared for their teaching assignments and/or have the necessary support to respond to challenges or problems in the classroom. It would be helpful if the CTLT would support department efforts to provide pedagogical and technological training for TAs.

2) The PRC agrees with the external reviewers that the needs of new faculty must be addressed by the CTLT.

3) Teaching performance does appear to be addressed in various workshops and seminars run by the CTLT; the PRC applauds this effort and believes that this should continue to be an important function of the CTLT.

4) The CTLT has provided some programs in support of classroom and program assessment. Additional efforts of this nature, including technological options, should be considered.

5) Faculty need support in developing effective pedagogical strategies in large classes.

6) Development for faculty teaching general education courses is needed; the CTLT may be asked to contribute to the development of such a program.

Grant and Contract Work. On one hand, there is an effort across campus to increase grant awards, and it is reasonable to expect the CTLT to be a part of this effort. On the other hand, the CTLT has been forced to do contract work to support some of its most basic services. The external review stated that the net result was that the CTLT’s efforts were forced away from the central part of its mission of faculty development. The PRC finds that grant activity is appropriate for the CTLT provided the projects supported by the grants are directly relevant to the mission of the CTLT. For example, the recent OLN grant is an excellent example of grant-supported work directly relevant to teaching and learning at BGSU. In contrast, the contract work undertaken for the American Accounting Association was only indirectly related, although it did provide money for hardware and student employment.

Overlap. The external team noted that some faculty were confused about where different but related services were located on campus. PRC reports on the Library and Learning Services and on Television Services have noted this overlap in the past. The several offices on campus should strive to communicate their missions, particularly in areas of overlap, and help to ensure that faculty get appropriate advice.

Advisory Committee. PRC finds that the Vice Provost for Academic Programs should ensure that each college is represented on the Advisory Board.

Physical Facilities. If the CTLT develops a strategic plan as described, and if the priorities within that plan receive financial support as recommended, then the CTLT may well have to seek additional space.
1) **Recognition.** Senior campus leaders should visibly commend the CTLT staff for the outstanding job they have done in providing far-reaching programs on a very limited budget. We follow the external team’s lead in recommending a prominent celebratory event at the start of the new academic year to call public attention to the important institutional role the CTLT has played in enhancing teaching and learning through faculty development. Recognition should also be given to the many faculty who have contributed their expertise to the CTLT’s programs.

2) **Evaluation.** The Vice Provost for Academic Programs should carry out an annual evaluation that is independent of workshops and other specific CTLT programs. The annual evaluation should be based on a survey of faculty, graduate students, and other clients. The CTLT Advisory Board should be involved in this process.

3) **Strategic Plan and Breadth of Program Offerings.** The CTLT should develop a detailed strategic plan. The recommendations of the external team, as summarized on pages 7-8 of this report, should be followed closely in developing the strategic plan. As described by the external reviewers, the CTLT staff, the CTLT Advisory Board, deans, and interested faculty should all contribute to the development of the plan and the prioritization of its elements. Programs (existing and proposed) should be prioritized by the degree to which they contribute to the central mission of the CTLT, and by the perceived demand.

4) **Budget.** As recommended by the external team, the CTLT should prepare clear and concise proposals for expanding existing activities and initiating new ones; each proposal would outline the necessary budgetary resources needed for implementation. The strategic plan with budgetary proposals should be presented to the Provost and the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration during spring semester, 2001. The PRC supports increased resources for the CTLT, provided the Provost accepts the strategic plan and the prioritization of programs within it.

5) **Grant and Contract Work.** The CTLT should pursue grant-funding for those programs that achieve high priority within the strategic plan. All such activities should follow existing University policy and be routed through the SPAR office. Budgetary support provided by the University should obviate the need to seek contract work to support basic CTLT operations.

6) **Overlap.** The CTLT, IMS and Television Services should all strive to communicate their missions, particularly in areas of overlap, and help to ensure that faculty get appropriate advice.

7) **Advisory Committee.** The Vice Provost for Academic Programs should review the composition of the Advisory Board on an annual basis to ensure broad University representation.

The Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology should report annually to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, with a copy to the Provost, on the implementation of these recommendations.