2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-DALLAS

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Governance, Structure, and Personnel

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the University of Texas-Dallas (UTD) was officially launched in January 2016 and reports to the Provost's Office. The directorship is a full-time administrative position, but the present holder of that position also has a tenured faculty appointment and an endowed research professorship. Accordingly, he is expected to carry out research, instructional, and service activities in support of CTL, his academic program, UTD, and the scholarly community writ large. He is assisted by a half-time Associate Director, who currently teaches half-time for one of UTD's schools; she also serves as Chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on Effective Teaching. Finally, there is a full-time Administrative Assistant II, who provides all clerical support for CTL. Funding for all salaries comes from the CTL budget.

The core CTL personnel are supplemented by two assistant directors, who are responsible for organizing a minimum number of events or programs each semester within each of eight UTD schools. The purpose is to expand the number of events and programs on campus and to direct such programming toward issues, concerns, and audiences specific to different schools and their instructional needs. A one course release and an administrative supplement are provided to each assistant director by CTL. In January 2019, the two assistant directors replaced eight "teaching leaders," one from each of UTD's schools. In addition, a faculty associate is responsible for directing the Graduate Reflective Teaching Seminar.

Core CTL Personnel

Director: Dr. Paul F. Diehl, Associate Provost and Ashbel Smith Professor, EPPS
Associate Director: Dr. Karen Huxtable-Jester, Piper Professor and Professor of Instruction, BBS
Administrative Assistant: Beverly Reed

Additional Personnel

Assistant Director: Dr. Carol Cirulli Lanham, EPPS Assistant Dean and Senior Lecturer II, EPPS
Assistant Director: Dr. Salena Brody, Professor of Instruction, BBS
Faculty Associate: Dr. Jonas Bunte, Associate Professor, EPPS

CTL Missions

- Provide campus-wide leadership and coordination of activities aimed at supporting excellence in teaching.
- Create a campus culture in which excellent teaching is recognized, respected, and rewarded.
- Enhance student learning through effective pedagogical approaches, assessments, and technologies.
- Support innovation in instructional practices and the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Encourage and disseminate best practices in teaching that are evidence-based.
- Introduce effective teaching practices to instructors with limited experience.
- Encourage self-reflection, assessment, and improvement by instructors.
- Promote teaching practices that improve student retention and completion rates, and enhance inclusion, equity, and sense of belonging.

This report covers activities from 17 July 2019 through 16 July 2020.

Programs and Activities

Teaching Certificates

CTL offers the Graduate Teaching Certificate (GTC) and the Advanced Graduate Teaching Certificate (AGTC). These are programs for graduate student teaching assistants (TAs) who complete a series of requirements attesting to their training and experience in pedagogy. This is in addition to the training received by all TAs at orientations conducted by the Office of Graduate Studies and by individual schools and programs. Objectives for the GTC are to (1) improve the instructional performance of TAs while at UTD; (2) encourage the use of evidence-based best practices in instruction; (3) improve instructional performance for those pursuing a teaching career in higher education; (4) encourage reflection and innovation in pedagogy for those new to teaching; and (5) enhance employment prospects by developing professional skills and strategies related to teaching. In addition, the AGTC is designed to (1) provide a structured process for the exploration of pedagogy from a discipline-based perspective; and (2) assist TAs in developing a deeper understanding of the scholarly duties required in an academic position. Similar certificate programs are offered for post-doctoral fellows who have instructional responsibilities.

The Graduate Teaching Certificate (GTC and AGTC) programs began in January 2016. Students may request to be enrolled at any point as they make progress toward their degrees, and they are not removed from the program until they leave the university. At the end of the spring 2020 semester, 1117 current graduate students were enrolled in one of the certificate programs for GTAs. It is not possible to identify which or how many of these were enrolled on their own request and which were at the request of their programs, but both circumstances are likely. Of these, 408 have accessed the organization between June 2019 and April 2020. More indicative are attempts (most resulting in some success) to complete at least one requirement by taking one or more of the online courses or turning in a workshop report essay. Approximately 40% (439) of participants attempted at least one GTC requirement. In the reporting period, 28 graduate students completed the GTC certificate; this is consistent with completion rates in past years. Nine completed the AGTC, a number somewhat above that in previous years.

The post-doctoral versions of the certificates were begun after the GTA programs and serve a smaller population. As of May 2020, 60 post-docs were enrolled in the basic certificate program and 16 accessed the organization in the reporting period; 26 have attempted at least one requirement. Nevertheless, only one person completed all the requirements for the GTC in the past year.

Although gross participation has increased over time, the number of completions has not kept pace commensurately. Completion percentage rates remain a concern, something characteristic of voluntary programs in the context of the busy lives of participants. Nevertheless, CTL continues to receive anecdotal evidence that the certificates enhance the employment prospects of our graduate students. A dean at a liberal arts university revealed why a UTD doctoral student was chosen for an interview and then offered a faculty position: "A major reason his application "rose to the top of the pool" was the fact that he completed three teaching certificates through the CTL [and UTD]."

Major Workshops and Associated Events

   CTL is committed to sponsoring several major events involving external speakers over the course of the academic year. In September 2019, Dr. Mary McNaughton-Cassill, Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Texas at San Antonio and a member of the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers provided expertise on student problems and incivility in the classroom. In October 2019, Dr. Anton Tolman, Professor of Behavioral Science and past Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence at Utah Valley University lectured on student resistance to learning. In February 2020, Dr. Gail Mellow, President Emeritus of LaGuardia Community College talked about a variety of new issues in education. A series of events surrounding a fourth external speaker was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

   A summary of their presentations and events is given in Table 1. In addition to these events, there were reading groups (see more below) associated with two of the speakers; faculty members read and discussed books written by the external speakers and others and then met with the guest speakers during his/her visits.

Mary McNaughton-Cassill   Anton Tolman   Gail Mellow

External Speaker	Title	Audience	Audience Size
Mary McNaughton-Cassill	Presentation: Managing Stress, Incivility and Mental Illness in the Classroom	Campus Faculty and Graduate TAs-Post Docs	**94**
Mary McNaughton-Cassill	Discussion on Teaching Psychology	BBS Teaching Assistants	
Mary McNaughton-Cassill	Discussion on Student Issues	Associate Dean of Students, Health and Wellness	

		Initiatives and Staff	
Mary McNaughton-Cassill	Presentation: Managing Stress, Incivility, and Mental Illness in the Classroom	Collin College Faculty and Administrators	
Mary McNaughton-Cassill	Meetings over Lunch and Dinners	Various Faculty and Administrators	
Anton Tolman	Presentation: Why Students Resist Learning	Campus Faculty and Graduate TAs-Post Doc	**79**
Anton Tolman	Discussion on Enhancing Student Success	Orbit,SACSCOC, Academic Assessment, and Student Success Center	
Anton Tolman	Discussion on Enhancing Student Success	Undergraduate Education, 1st Generation Network Faculty, and Faculty Mentors to Minority Scholarship Students	
Anton Tolman	Discussion on the book *Why Students Resist Learning*	Tolman Book Club Members	
Anton Tolman	General Discussion on Teaching	Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar Members	
Anton Tolman	Meetings over Lunch and Dinners	Various Faculty and Administrators	
Gail Mellow	The Future of University Education	Undergraduate Education Dean and Staff	
Gail Mellow	General Discussion on Teaching	Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar	
Gail Mellow	Presentation: Taking College Teaching Seriously	Campus Faculty and Graduate TAs-Post Doc	**91**
Gail Mellow	Discussion on the book *Taking College Teaching Seriously*	Mellow Book Reading Groups	
Gail Mellow	Discussion on Community College Issues and Challenges	Local Community College Administrators	

Gail Mellow	Discussion on the Future Challenges for Universities	Members of the Lead UTD Leadership Cohort	
Gail Mellow	Meetings over Lunch and Dinners	Various Faculty and Administrators	

Table 1: Major Workshops and Associated Events, 2019-20

Annual Campus Workshop

CTL employed a different model for the 6th Annual All-Campus Workshop. Instead of tying the workshop to the expertise and presentation of an external speaker, UTD faculty took the lead in designing and implementing the program. Attended by a diverse audience of 105 (including UTD faculty, staff, graduate TAs, and Collin College faculty), the focus was on "Models of Instruction for Introductory Courses." The workshops featured a series of interactive exercises and discussions on the challenges inherent in large, introductory courses. The centerpieces of the workshop were 6 presentations of innovative approaches by UTD faculty members. An overview of the program is given in Appendix A.

For the 2020-21 academic year, we have tentative plans for the external speakers noted below but specific dates are on hold pending the diminution of the pandemic and clarity about the presence of faculty, staff, and teaching assistants on campus, as well as social distancing provisions. The form (e.g., in-person, webinars) will also be affected.

- ???? Speaker from the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers
- ???, "The Instruction Myth" with Dr. John Tagg, Professor Emeritus of English at Palomar College. *Deferred from Spring 2020*
- ???, "How Humans Learn" with Joshua Eyler, Director of Faculty Development and Director of the Thinkforward Quality Enhancement Plan at the University of Mississippi. *Deferred from Fall 2020*
- ??? "TBA" 7th Annual All-Campus Workshop.

Other Campus Workshops and Events

CTL also offered a series of 13 in-person and specialized events and workshops for faculty, TAs, Post-Docs, and professional staff; these are summarized in Table 2. The number of such events and workshops was reduced from the previous year because of cancellation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, but as noted below, CTL conducted a series of webinars addressing pedagogical issues on transitioning to remote and online instruction.

Workshop/Event	Audience	Audience Size
Dissecting Your Syllabus	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, Graduate TAs	18
Student Autism Webinar	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	50
Maximizing the Transformative Value of Introductory Courses	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	60
Teaching as a Transferable Skill Graduate Professional Week	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	72
Innovative Teaching Practices in STEM Courses	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	69
The Role of Faculty in Promoting Transfer Student Success	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	44
What Students Do Know Can Hurt Them: Evidence on Providing Study Guides and Slides	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	41
Understanding Challenges Faced by International Students	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	49
Documenting Teaching Effectiveness	Campus Faculty	34
Using Social Media to Create a Community of Practice	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	65
Teaching Statements and Teaching Portfolios for Graduate Teaching Assistants	Post-Doctoral and Graduate TAs	55
Guiding the Mentoring Relationship Between Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	48
Classroom Considerations for Student Veterans	Campus Faculty, Staff, Post-Doctoral, and Graduate TAs	23

Table 2: Other Campus Workshops and Events, 2019-2020

Average participation represents an increase over previous years. Attendance by non-tenure system faculty, staff, and graduate TAs has been very good; participation by tenure-system faculty has lagged behind expectations.

As with external speakers, plans for the 2020-21 academic year have been delayed due to the pandemic.

School Workshops and Events

School workshops and events were designed to meet the special needs and interests of faculty and graduate TAs in related disciplines. Table 3 below lists all the school workshops and events during the reporting year; note the regular events ceased in March 2020 due to the COVID pandemic. Events thereafter are reported in the next section.

Workshop/Event	School	Audience Size
Orientation for Part-Time Faculty	JSOM	15
Book Group – *The New Education*	JSOM	6
Lunch and Learn on Community Engaged Learning	JSOM	8
Lunch and Learn on Best Practices in Online Teaching	JSOM	8
Graduate TA Orientation	EPPS	21
Book Group – *The Slow Professor*	EPPS	7
Lunch and Learn on Top Tips for TAs	EPPS	26
Workshop on Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)	EPPS	19
Faculty-Led Programs Abroad	EPPS and A&H	29
Book Group – *The New Education*	IS	5
Book Group – *The Slow Professor*	IS	6
Teaching Dilemmas Happy Hour	IS and BBS	13
Book Club – *What the Best Teachers Do*	A&H	8
Graduate TA Orientation	A&H	8
Lecturer Launch	BBS	11
Roundtable Discussion: Introduction to Psychology	BBS	5
Teaching "Happy Hour"	BBS	7

International Teaching Workshop for Graduate Students	BBS	33
TA Teaching Panel for Graduate Students	BBS	37
Bagels and Books Dean's Book Club	BBS	11
Compassionate Teaching	BBS	15
Tips and Treats	BBS	8
Making the Most of Office Hours	ECS	22
Book Group: *What the Best Teachers Do*	ECS	14
Broadening Diversity in Science	ECS and NSM	10
Time Management for TAs	ECS	23
Book Group: *Coddling of the American Mind*	ECS	16
Mentoring TAs Effectively	NSM	24
Book Group: *Coddling of the American Mind*	NSM	4
"Intentional Teaching" for Graduate TAs	ATEC	16
Making Midsemester Informal Feedback Useful	ATEC	8
Navigating Difficult Discussions in the Classroom	ATEC	10
Developing a Teaching Philosophy	ATEC	4

Table 3: School-Level Events, 2019-2020

COVID-19 Related Events and Adaptations

The COVID-19 pandemic has had tremendous effects on the world, and higher education has been among the many institutions affected. The immediate impact of UTD's shift to remote instruction in March 2020 was to remove faculty, staff, and students from the physical campus. Accordingly, CTL cancelled many planned in-person events, including one external speaker, numerous workshops and events, and special summer events for graduate TAs and staff respectively.

In place of the cancelled events and in response to the pandemic conditions, CTL pursued a multi-pronged strategy for assisting faculty and teaching assistants with the new instructional environment. This consisted of a series of activities.

Campus-level webinars on a variety of remote teaching topics were given at the end of the spring semester and prior to the beginning of the summer semester. They were also recorded for future use. These are summarized in Table 4.

Title	Description	Audience Size
Options and Recommendations for Remote Administration of Exams	Recommendations focus primarily on responding to the current circumstances of *emergency* remote teaching and learning	120
Essential First Choices	Laying out the range of choices that instructors need to make in setting up an online course, including platform, requirements, student interactions, lectures, and the like.	157
Best Practices	General orientation toward effective online strategies – designed to serve those who only attend one webinar as well as to set up future webinars	81
Compassionate Teaching and Staying Connected with Students	Discussing the major challenges facing students in this crisis and appropriate faculty responses. Also covered office hours, student contact through the semester, disengaged students, review sessions, and other concerns	45
Group Work	How to create and pull off group work assignments in virtual space	29
Assignment Construction	Creating assignments that promote student engagement, constructing exams, and how to promote and manage student discussions in an online environment	64
TAs and Student Interaction	Options and Strategies for TAs (not instructors of record) for interacting effectively with students.	56
Digital Transformation (co-sponsored with OIT)	Special guest, Glenda Morgan, Research Director at Gartner shared her insights on the challenges and opportunities facing the need for digital transformation.	117
Supporting Adjunct Faculty: A Training for Department Chairs (co-sponsored with Office of Vice President for	Webcast by Academic Impressions: Strategies for successfully supporting adjunct or part-time faculty at the onset of and throughout the semester	4

Academic Affairs and Provost)		

Table 4: Webinar Schedule, Spring and Summer 2020

<u>School-Level Activities</u>

In addition, a series of school-level events were held in response to changes in instructional modalities. CTL Assistant Directors also carried up with regular programming to the extent possible during the pandemic. These activities are summarized in Table 5.

Event	*School*	*Audience Size*
Remote Teaching Forums (6 sessions)	EPPS	72
Teaching Humanities to STEM Students - TAs	A&H	10
Preparing for Summer Remote Teaching (2 sessions)	EPPS	60
Book Group: *The Defining Decade*	JSOM	4
Preparing for Summer Remote Teaching	A&H	8
Anti-Racism Roundtable Discussions (8 sessions)	BBS	85

Table 5: School-Level Activities During Spring and Summer 2020

<u>Committee Service</u>

CTL personnel also served on special committees associated with the transition to remote teaching and planning for the fall 2020 semester.

- Academic Continuity Group (Paul F. Diehl and Karen Huxtable-Jester)
  - Faculty Retention and Morale Subgroup ((Paul F. Diehl and Karen Huxtable-Jester, Co-chairs)
- eLearning Mentors – weekly advising sessions (Carol Cirulli Lanham and Karen Huxtable-Jester)
- Continuing Online Instruction Subgroup (Salena Brody and Carol Cirulli Lanham)

CTL "Course" on Teaching

CTL created a course "CTL Resources for Fall 2020 Teaching" that is embedded in eLearning. All fall instructors (1,400+) are "enrolled" in the course. The course site is divided into a series of modules that correspond to different modalities of instruction (e.g. HyFlex) and key issues in course design and instruction (e.g., pre-semester planning; exams and assignments). Each module contains a (1) a video overview, (2) videos and materials from UTD faculty, (3) links and handouts on best practices from other universities and pedagogy listservs, and as available (4) prerecorded webinars from CTL on the subjects at hand. There is also a module for questions from instructors that is set up as a discussion board. A separate module is dedicated to new faculty. Specifically, the modules are:

- Questions About Teaching?
- New Faculty Resources
- Pre-Semester Planning
- Getting Started
- Asynchronous Instruction
- Making the Most of Synchronous Sessions
- The HyFlex Model
- Exams, Assignments, and Other Assessments
- Technical Tips and Frequently Asked Questions

In addition to these other activities during the pandemic, CTL personnel also:

- Held consultations with and provided advice to individual instructors (Carol Cirulli Lanham, Salena Brody, Karen Huxtable-Jester, and Paul F. Diehl)
- Provided professional development consulting to Office of Diversity and Community Engagement (Salena Brody)
- Consulted with Counseling Center on training and community outreach (Salena Brody)
- Gave interviews to *The Mercury* (student newspaper) and *Comets Discuss* (Paul F. Diehl and Salena Brody)
- Participated in the Institutional Equity Training Initiative (Karen Huxtable-Jester and Salena Brody)

Instructional Improvement Awards

CTL conducted competitions for Instructional Improvement Awards (IIAs), with the goals to (1) support the continuous improvement of instruction on campus, (2) support the implementation of teaching innovations and enhancements (not including equipment), (3) encourage the development of multiple, discipline-appropriate assessment alternatives and the dissemination of successful models to other units for use in support of teaching improvement, and (4) increase visibility of teaching excellence, enhancement, and innovation across and beyond the campus community.

IIAs enable recipients to design, implement, and assess instructional innovation projects that enhance teaching and learning at UTD. Projects and activities that may be supported by IIA grants include, but are not limited to (1) projects that improve existing courses or create new

courses or curriculum, with the expectation that viable improvements include the incorporation of innovative educational technologies or the development of community-engagement opportunities, and (2) research that examines the effectiveness of some aspect of instructional practice or that develops methods to measure instructional effectiveness.

CTL held two competitions during the reporting year. For the fall 2019 competition, it selected three recipients for awards, using only 1/3 of available funds. Unfortunately, the spring 2020 competition was suspended when UTD imposed a budget freeze; spring applications were deferred to the next academic year. The three funded projects for 2019-2020 are summarized in Table 6.

Principal Investigator	School	Project Title
Ali Tariq	ECS	High Impact Electronics Laboratory Course for Bioengineers
Oziel Rios	ECS	Developing an Augmented Reality Intervention for Mechanical Engineering Freshman Students with Low Spatial Visualization Skills
Jonas Bunte	EPPS	Reducing DFW rates at the University of Texas at Dallas

Table 6: Instructional Improvement Awards, 2019-2020

Reflective Teaching Seminars and ACUE Program

CTL offered the Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar (SRTS) for the first time during this academic year. The SRTS is based on the philosophy that even award-winning instructors can improve their teaching through innovation and experimentation. Senior faculty members are also in a unique position to influence the quality of instruction in their own units and across campus through modeling good practices, encouraging experimentation and innovation, and by systematic evaluation of colleagues' instruction.

The goals of the SRTS are to have participants: (1) Diversify instructional methods, activities, assignments, and assessments to create an optimal learning environment for students, (2) Create and use technology and media innovations both for presenting course content and requiring their use by students, (3) Assess their own teaching performance and identify needs, opportunities, and resources for improvement. This can involve scholarship of teaching and learning as well as responding to student performance in real time to improve learning outcomes, (4) Utilize the knowledge and skills necessary to give helpful feedback to colleagues on their teaching performance or "teacher artifacts" (materials or resources used in teaching, e.g., syllabi, exams, assignments, websites, etc.), and (5) Align curriculum, instruction, and assessment in existing courses and in planning new courses or units of instruction. Identify how assessment data can be used to improve learning at the course level and program level. A copy of the seminar schedule is given in Appendix B.

Fourteen faculty members from 9 different UTD schools and units participated in the SRTS seminar, which involved 16 meetings over the course of the academic year. The CTL Director and Associate Director served as seminar facilitators and participating faculty discussed issues such as active learning, grading, and dealing with controversial subject matter.

For the second year in a row, CTL sponsored the Graduate Reflective Teaching Seminar (GRTS). Led by 2018 President's Teaching Award winner and 2020 ROTA winner Jonas Bunte, this seminar was targeted at advanced graduate teaching assistants. Forty-five individuals applied for 20 slots, and the 10-week seminar was held in the spring 2020 semester. The objectives were to get participants to (1) identify the key elements of course preparation and syllabus design, (2) use techniques designed to improve lecturing and leading discussions, (3) implement active learning strategies and create case studies, (4) help students prepare for class and manage challenging classroom dynamics, and (5) design assessments and understand efficient grading procedures. .

During the 2020-21 academic year, CTL will combine its Reflective Teaching Seminar for junior faculty members (previously offered twice) with a new initiative of the University of Texas System and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). Thirty UTD faculty members are scheduled to participate in ACUE's year-long course on "Effective Teaching Practices." The sample schedule appears in Appendix C.

Orientation and Faculty Mentoring

In the summer of 2018, the Provost approved CTL leadership of the new faculty orientation and its coordination with the Senate Committee on Faculty Mentoring (CFM) and its junior faculty mentoring program.

The new faculty orientation has shifted away from a purely informational event to one dedicated to interaction, community development, and faculty development (a copy of the schedule can be found in Appendix D). The 2019 orientation followed a similar model to its predecessor with a few notable changes: (1) the orientation condensed to a single day, (2) special open sessions on the days following orientation dealing with human resource and resource concerns, and (3) provision of expanded supplemental information, (4) dropping or modifying specific sessions based on participant evaluations. Evaluations were strongly positive overall, and for most individual sessions.

The orientation was supplemented by an extensive array of information and resources provided to new (and in some cases existing) faculty in various forms (websites, electronic copies, hard copies, handbooks); such information covers a wide range of UTD services, procedures, and information in multiple areas such as staff benefits, training, and teaching tips.

Given the pandemic and other factors, several changes are planned for 2020. Separate orientations will be held for tenure system and non-tenure system faculty respectively; this was the result of projected larger numbers of faculty in each group. More significantly, the orientations will be "virtual," consisting of synchronous and asynchronous components. Rather than a single day, presentations and activities will be spread out over several weeks, beginning in mid to late July with information (e.g., syllabi requirements) necessary to prepare for the fall semester and through September (culminating with discussions of evaluation, promotion, and tenure).

Under the leadership of a new CFM chair, a multi-level mentoring process was created. New assistant professors were formed into peer groups based on school, with smaller schools

combined with others. This approach was designed to build community, peer friendships, accountability, and a sense of cohort. Peer groups met outside our formal events at least once a month over coffee/lunch/drinks to share experiences and discuss research/teaching and or other opportunities and challenges faced. At the second level, program heads chose a mentor for each participant; mentors-mentees are expected to meet a minimum of two times each term, generally at the beginning and towards the end of each semester. Finally, there were several workshops each semester, and CTL assisted in those that were teaching related.

Teaching Awards

For the fourth year, CTL oversaw the nominations and selections of all University teaching awards, and the nominations for state and University of Texas System awards. These honors included the President's Teaching Excellence Awards as well as the UT System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Awards (ROTA), membership into the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers, and Piper Professorships. The selection processes were run jointly with the Committee on Effective Teaching.

In the UT System competitions, two UTD faculty members (Joanna Gentsch and Jonas Bunte) each earned a ROTA. In addition, a UTD faculty member (Denise Boots) was named a Piper Professor, one of 10 recognized in the state and only the fourth ever from UTD in the 52-year history of the award. Finally, a UTD faculty member and administrator (Jessica Murphy) was named to the UT System Academy of Distinguished Teachers, open only to previous ROTA winners with exceptional instructional and service records.

At the campus-level, five faculty members were recipients of President's Teaching Excellence Awards – details can be found at https://www.utdallas.edu/news/faculty-staff/presidents-teaching-excellence-awards-2020/

CTL also continued to encourage schools and programs to honor excellence in teaching. The purpose is to recognize more excellent instructors and provide qualified nominees for future University and System competitions. All eight schools at UTD now have such honors, a significant step forward even though some challenges remain with synchronizing timing with the University awards processes.

In April 2020, CTL had planned to sponsor its fourth annual reception celebrating excellence in instruction. Winners of System, University and school teaching awards, as well as SRTS and GRTS participants and graduate teaching certificate recipients, were to be recognized. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the reception has been rescheduled to April 2021 when two years' worth of winners will be recognized.

Provost Task Force on Large Introductory Classes

For the fifth year, CTL facilitated a task force dedicated to examining instructional issues on campus (previous ones addressed part-time faculty support, increasing enrollment, student evaluations, and online education respectively respectively). This past year, the subject was on large introductory classes. This task force is charged with assisting in improving how these classes are taught, specifically addressing the following tasks:

- Identify the different models for conducting large, introductory classes. These include variations along the dimensions of (1) mode of delivery (e.g., lecture, online, blended), (2) structure (e.g., lecture only, discussion or recitation sections), and (3) use of teaching assistants (e.g., graders, lab instructors, supervised independent instructors).

- Develop guidelines for ensuring consistency in grading, content, and requirements across multiple sections of the same course, within the parameters of academic freedom. For example, consistency in grading and requirements might examine DFW rates across courses among other concerns.

- Make recommendations for ensuring high quality teaching and learning in introductory classes. For example, teaching and learning might be examined in terms of student success in follow-on courses and student retention, among other concerns

The task force issued a report that contained a series of recommendations on how to improve these courses. See Appendix E for a copy of the report.

Campus-Level Reading Groups

CTL sponsored three sets of campus-level reading groups in which faculty members read and met to discuss books on pedagogy. Books are provided by CTL and participants may keep them when the reading groups are completed.

- Book: *Why Students Resist Learning: A Practical Model for Understanding and Helping Students* by Anton Tolman and Janine Kremling. 28 participants.
- Book: *Taking College Teaching Seriously: Pedagogy Matters* by Gail Mellow et al. 21 participants.
- Book: *The Instruction Myth: Why Higher Education is Hard to Change and How to Change It* by John Tagg. Books distributed, but group discussion cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, selected members of the faculty provided feedback to drafts of the book *Learning to Change: Designing Student Nudges for the Brain in the Body or Learning Nudges: Designing Education for the Brain and the Body* by Jose Bowen. Participants meet with the author and CTL leaders for several sessions, but others were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the coming academic year, CTL will sponsor such groups again; with assistance of the McDermott Library, electronic copies of books will be provided, and discussion groups will be virtual. These will involve books authored by our external speakers.

Professional Presentations, Publications, and External Service

The CTL Director, Paul F. Diehl, provided the following professional service related to pedagogy, in addition to his regular CTL service and activities:

- Publication, co-editor and introduction co-author, "Forum: The Introductory Course in International Relations/Studies: Regional Variations.*"* Accepted for publication in *International Studies Perspectives*
- Workshop Leader, "Graduate Student Training Session," International Studies Association-Innovative Pedagogy Conference, 2019.
- Workshop Co-Leader, "What do Students Need to Know in Intro: Innovative Teaching and International Studies Literacy," International Studies Association-Innovative Pedagogy Conference, 2019.
- Editorial Board and Reviewer, *Innovative Higher Education*

The CTL Associate Director, Karen Huxtable-Jester, provided the following professional service related to pedagogy in addition to her regular CTL service and activities:

- Presentation, "Motivation is Not Enough: Proactive Strategies for Faculty to Promote Student Success," (with Gloria Shenoy) 3- Hour Pre-conference Session, SACSCOC Annual Meeting 2019
- Reviewer, *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*
- Reviewer, *Innovative Higher Education*

The CTL Assistant Director, Salena Brody, provided the following professional service related to pedagogy in addition to her regular CTL service and activities:

- Presentation, "Throughlines: Know Your History, Plan Your Impact." First Year Experience Program "Experience, Reflection, Action," Boston College, 2020.
- Publication, co-author of "Faculty Stereotype Threat in the Classroom." Accepted for publication in *Navigating Difficult Moments in Teaching Diversity and Social Justice*.
- Publication, co-author of "Inclusion/Exclusion: Balancing Viewpoint Diversity and Harmful Speech in the Multicultural Classroom." Accepted for publication in *Navigating Difficult Moments in Teaching Diversity and Social Justice*.

Other Contributions

CTL provided a series of presentations on its programs and teaching-related topics, and otherwise provided services to UTD constituencies:

- Gave presentations to undergraduate mentors and PLTL leaders
- Gave presentations at training sessions for TAs in multiple schools
- Gave presentations at two OGE new TA orientations

Physical Space Utilization

CTL moved into permanent space located on the main floor of the McDermott Library (MC 2.402 and 2.404) in late June 2017. This includes office space for the administrative

assistant, a small meeting and reception area, and a large room suitable for larger meetings, workshops with less than 50 participants, and other CTL programs. CTL permitted approximately 24 other units to use the larger seminar room for events, provided that the programming was related to or had implications for teaching. During the reporting year, CTL hosted 130 events in its space, both its own exclusive programs, those it co-sponsored, and those conducted by other units. These numbers were for events through March 15, when events were cancelled and the space was closed due to the pandemic. Usage was on pace to exceed that in prior years until the closure.

CTL continued to have privileged access during select hours to the 100-seat auditorium directly across from the new office space and this was used for events with anticipated attendance of greater than 50 participants.

Appendices

Appendix A: 6th Annual All-Campus Workshop, 6 March 2020

Innovations in Teaching Large and Introductory Courses

8:30   Breakfast and arrangement of participants at tables by school and program

9:00   Welcome and framing of essential concerns, Dr. Paul Diehl, Director, CTL

9:15   Table discussions: identification of key challenges by course or program; full group debriefing led by Dr. Karen Huxtable, Associate Director, CTL

10:00   break

10:10   Teaching Slam
1. Getting students involved in reading through *Perusall,* Dr. Regina Ybarra
2. Retrieval-based learning, Dr. Lamya Saleh
3. Recitation and problem-solving sections for large classes, Dr. Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki
4. Active learning and TA training for calculus problem sections, Dr. John Zweck
5. Learning beyond the classroom, Dr. Amandeep Sra and Dr. Stephanie Taylor
6. Common exams and grading, Dr. John Sibert

11:20   Solutions and evidence-yielding practices, structured table discussions of strategies and implementation plans; full group debriefing led by Dr. Karen Huxtable

11:50   Closing remarks, Dr. Paul Diehl

12:00   End

CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL)
SENIOR REFLECTIVE TEACHING SEMINAR
Academic Year 2019-2020

Seminar Leaders:

Dr. Karen Huxtable-Jester
Associate Director, CTL
Piper Professor and Senior Lecturer III
Email: drkarenhj@utdallas.edu

Dr. Paul F. Diehl
Director, CTL
Ashbel Smith Professor of Political Science
Email: pdiehl@utdallas.edu

Fall Schedule: Tuesdays, 4:00 – 5:15 PM
Room: MC2.404

Spring Schedule: Tuesdays, 4:00 – 5:15 PM
Room: MC2.404

September 10	January 21
September 17	January 28
September 24	February 11
October 1	February 25
October 8	March 10
October 15	April 30 (CTL Awards Reception)
October 22	
October 29	
November 5	
November 12	

*Seminar Format and Philosophy***:**

"Chalk and Talk." "Stand and Deliver." "The Sage on the Stage." These are the traditional conceptions of university instructors in the public mind, but they no longer reflect the myriad of ways that instruction is conducted. Active learning was a novel approach a few decades ago, but has now become standard practice in most university classrooms. Similarly, course websites were once unusual, but now such sites are automatically created for every class at UTD (although they are frequently under or misused). This seminar is dedicated to looking forward to newer approaches to teaching as well as new applications to traditional practices.

The Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar is based on the philosophy that even award-winning instructors can improve their teaching through innovation and experimentation. Senior faculty members are also in a unique position to influence the quality of instruction in their own units and across campus through modelling good practices, encouraging experimentation and innovation, and by systematic evaluation of colleagues' instruction.

Typical seminar sessions include providing information about innovative teaching approaches, time for interacting with colleagues, and dialogue about important pedagogical ideas and approaches. We hope that the Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar will help to improve and enrich participant careers by expanding horizons, increasing awareness of the scholarship on teaching and learning, and providing some knowledge to experiment with new approaches and ideas in classrooms and beyond.

In the Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar, learning is an active process during which participants collaborate and learn from each other. In this collegial learning environment, individuals have strong responsibilities to one another. Our obligations as the seminar leaders include (a) being knowledgeable and current in the subject matter, (b) planning and providing rich experiences, (c) helping participants to assess their potential and identify areas of growth, and (d) assisting participants to meet both the course objectives and the personal learning goals you have identified.

Participant obligations include (a) attending all sessions, (b) participating actively and positively, (c) expressing learning needs to us and (d) providing the leaders with feedback on the seminar.

Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar Goals and Objectives

When you have successfully completed this seminar, you will be better able to:

1. Diversify instructional methods, activities, assignments, and assessments to create an optimal (e.g., equitable and inclusive) learning environment for students.
2. Create and use technology and media innovations both for presenting course content and requiring their use by students.
3. Assess your own teaching performance and identify needs, opportunities, and resources for improvement. This can involve scholarship of teaching and learning as well as responding to student performance in real time to improve learning outcomes.
4. Utilize the knowledge and skills necessary to give helpful feedback to colleagues on their teaching performance or "teacher artifacts" (materials or resources used in teaching, e.g., syllabi, exams, assignments, websites, etc.).
5. Align curriculum, instruction, and assessment in existing courses and in planning new courses or units of instruction. Identify how assessment data can be used to improve learning at the course level and program level.

Materials and Resources:

All materials will be provided by the seminar leaders on a weekly basis.

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

CTL provides a range of services designed to help improve instruction on campus. Everyone in this class will receive invitations to all workshops and events offered by CTL and you are encouraged to attend those that meet your interests and/or stimulate your curiosity.

Major external speakers and workshops have been scheduled for the 2019-20 academic year:

- 18 September 2019, "Managing Classroom Incivility" with Dr. Mary McNaughton-Cassill, Professor of Psychology at the University of Texas-San Antonio as well as a member of the University of Texas System Academy of Distinguished Teachers.
- 31 October 2019, "Why Students Resist Learning" with Dr. Anton Tolman, Professor of Behavioral Sciences, Utah Valley University.

- 7 February 2020, 5th annual *Excellence in Teaching* workshop "Models of Instruction for Introductory Level Courses."
- 10 March 2020, "Taking College Teaching Seriously" with Dr. Gail Mellow, President Emeritus of LaGuardia Community College.
- 31 March, 2020, "The Instruction Myth" with Dr. John Tagg, Professor Emeritus of English at Palomar College.

Electronic Resources

If you are a Facebook member, please like/follow our page (https://www.facebook.com/CTLUTD/) for periodic postings about instruction.

Find us on Twitter @CTLUTD.

We also recommend that you consider signing up for or following a series of other electronic resources on teaching:

- Tomorrow's Professor Listserv at https://tomprof.stanford.edu/. The frequent and short excerpts from works on current "hot topics" in higher education are thought-provoking. This "desktop faculty development" resource will also help you to develop a sense of the "big picture" of the scholarship of teaching and learning at the college level. The online archive offers a wealth of information at your fingertips. To subscribe to the listserv, go to: https://mailman.stanford.edu/mailman/listinfo/tomorrows-professor

- Faculty Focus and The Teaching Professor Blog. Sign up for a free newsletter at https://www.facultyfocus.com/. Edited by Mary Bart and featuring a blog by Maryellen Weimer, Faculty Focus publishes articles on effective teaching strategies in higher education.

- Journal on Excellence in College Teaching at http://celt.miamioh.edu/ject/

- There are also some discipline-specific resources, and you are encouraged to identify and join the academic organization within your discipline that focuses on teaching, such as:

  o American Historical Association at https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning
  o National Business Education Association at https://www.nbea.org/
  o Society for the Teaching of Psychology at http://teachpsych.org/
  o Humanities Education and Research Association at http://www.h-e-r-a.org/
  o National Science Teachers Association at http://www.nsta.org/
  o American Society for Engineering Education at https://www.asee.org/
  o American Political Science Association Teaching Resources at http://www.apsanet.org/programs/teaching
  o American Sociological Association at Teaching Resources http://www.asanet.org/teaching-learning/faculty
  o International Society for Technology in Education Standards for Computer Science Educators at https://www.iste.org (see also the professional learning networks on this site at including the Arts and Technology Network and Games and Simulations Network)

DATE	TOPIC
FALL September 10	Introduction and Reception
September 17	Soft Skills, Hard Skills, and Content - joined by Mary McNaugton-Cassill (UT Academy of Distinguished Teachers)
September 24	Exams and Alternative Assessment Strategies
October 1	Group Projects and Team-Based Learning
October 8	Capstone Experiences—Promoting Integration of Learning Across Courses – joined by Edward Harpham (Dean, Wildenthal Honors College)
October 15	Including Ethics in the Curriculum
October 22	Graduate Course Strategies and Innovations
October 29	Active Learning Strategies, Interteaching, and Blended Learning
November 5	Integrating High Impact Practices into Course Design
November 12	Digital Analytics for Instructors - joined by Courtney Brecheen (Senior Associate Dean, OUE)
SPRING January 21	Communication Across the Curriculum
January 28	Research-Based Principles for Matching Technology to Pedagogy – joined by Darren Crone (Assistant Provost and eLearning Director)
February 11	Participants' Choice
February 25	Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness
March 10	Academic Leadership in Promoting Good Teaching, joined by Dr. Gail Mellow (President Emeritus, LaGuardia Community College)
April 30	CTL Celebration of Teaching Excellence

Senior Reflective Teaching Seminar 2019-2020 Participants

Monica Rankin	mrankin@utdallas.edu	A&H
Christi Nielsen	christi.nielsen@utdallas.edu	ATEC
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Bernine Khan	bik140030@utdallas.edu	NSM

Appendix C: ACUE Course on Teaching

^{Thx}
ACUE Course in Effective Teaching Practices
SAMPLE Course Schedule-Fall 2020-2021

Timeframe			Module
Open	Start	Due	
8/21	8/21	8/30	*Course Launch – Leading a Productive First Day*
Block 1: Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Environment			
8/21	8/31	9/6	Promoting a Civil Learning Environment*
8/21	9/7	9/13	Engaging Underprepared Students
8/21	9/14	9/20	Helping Students Persist in their Studies
8/21	9/21	9/27	Embracing the Diversity in Your Learning Environment*
8/21	9/28	10/4	Checking for Student Understanding
8/21	10/5	10/11	Providing Useful Feedback
Summary Discussion			
Break or Make-up Week 10/12-10/18			
Block 2: Promoting Active Learning			
10/12	10/19	11/1	Developing Effective Class Sessions and Lectures *(1 combined reflection for 3c/4c)*
			Teaching Powerful Note-taking Skills *(1 combined reflection for 3c/4c)*
10/12	11/2	11/15	Using Groups to Ensure Active Learning *(1 combined reflection for 3a/3b)*
			Using the Active Learning Cycle *(1 combined reflection for 3a/3b)*
10/12	11/16	11/22	Planning Effective Discussions *(1 combined reflection for 3d/3e)*
			Facilitating Effective Discussions *(1 combined reflection for 3d/3e)*
Summary Discussion			
Mid-Course Survey			
Break or Make-up Week			
Block 3: Inspiring Inquiry and Preparing Lifelong Learners			
1/15	1/18	1/24	Motivating Your Students
1/15	1/25	1/31	Providing Clear Directions and Explanations
1/15	2/1	2/7	Using Concept Maps and Other Visualization Tools
1/15	2/8	2/14	Using Student Achievement and Feedback to Improve Your Teaching*
1/15	2/15	2/21	Using Advanced Questioning
1/15	2/22	2/28	Developing Self-Directed Learners
Summary Discussion			
Break or Make-up Week 3/1–3/7			
Block 4: Designing Student Centered Courses			
3/1	3/8	4/4	Establishing Powerful Learning Outcomes* *(1 combined reflection for 1a/1b/1c)*
			Aligning Assessments with Course Outcomes* *(1 combined reflection for 1a/1b/1c)*
			Aligning Activities and Assignments with Course Outcomes**(1 combined reflection for 1a/1b/1c)*
Break or Make-up Week 3/15 – 3/19			
3/1	4/5	4/11	Developing Fair, Consistent, and Transparent Grading Practices*
3/1	4/12	4/18	Developing and Using Rubrics and Checklists*
3/1	4/19	4/25	Preparing an Effective Syllabus*
Summary Discussion			
Make-up Week: All Reflections Due April 30			

Appendix D: New Faculty Orientation 2019

New Faculty Orientation 2019

Unless otherwise noted, all sessions will be held in the McDermott Suite, 4th floor library

Date	Time	Topic	Presenters	Title
Tuesday 13 August				
	7:45-8:30	Breakfast		
	8:15-8:30	Overview	Paul F. Diehl	Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
	8:30-9:00	Welcome	Richard Benson Inga Musselman	President Provost
	9:00-9:30	UTD Structures, Committees, and Language	Ravi Prakash	Speaker of the Academic Senate
	9:30-10:00	Profiles of UTD Students	Amanda Smith Jessica Murphy Juan Gonzalez	Dean of Students Dean of Undergraduate Education Dean of Graduate Studies
	10:00-10:45	Be Explicit: Syllabi, Learning Outcomes, and Assessment	Gloria Shenoy	Director of Assessment
	10:45-11:15	Technology in the Classroom	Darren Crone Roopa Vinay	Assistant Provost eLearning Manager
	11:15-12:15	Challenging Student Behaviors	Paul F. Diehl	Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
	12:15-1:15	Lunch		
	12:30-1:00	The Evolution of UTD	Calvin Jamison	Vice President for Facilities and Economic Development
	1:15-2:30	Resources for Student Success	Karen Huxtable-Jester Kerry Tate Laura Smith Brandon Johnson	Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Director, Student AccessAbility Associate Dean of Students, Health and Wellness Initiatives Director, Student Success Center
	2:30-3:00	Research (for Tenure-System Faculty)	Joseph Pancrazio	Vice-President for Research
	2:30-3:00**	Promotion and Evaluation	Francesca Filbey	Associate Provost

		Process (for Senior Lecturers and Clinical Faculty)		
	3:00-3:30**	Teaching Concerns (for Senior Lecturers and Clinical Faculty)	Karen Huxtable-Jester	Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
	3:00-3:30	Tenure and Promotion Process (for Tenure-System Faculty)	Francesca Filbey	Associate Provost
	3:30-4:00	An Overview of Faculty Benefits Title IX/EEO	Colleen Dutton Marco Mendoza	Chief Human Resources Officer Senior Director, Institutional Compliance, EEO, and Title IX

** to be held in Center for Teaching and Learning, MC2.404 (2nd floor library)

Walk-ins for questions about employee benefits and research

Date	Time	Event and Location
Wednesday 14 August	**9:00-11:00 AM**	Walk-in – Human Resources --Administrative Building classroom 2.216
		An opportunity for you to meet one on one with HR staff to learn more about your employee benefits and answer any questions. Spouses are welcome to join you for this informal session.
	9:00-11:00 AM	Walk-In – Office of Research – Administrative Building classroom 2.216
		- IRB, IACUC, Responsible Conduct of Research, Conflict of Research and Export Control - Research and Academic Safety - Sponsored Projects - Seed grant opportunities - Core Facilities - Technology Commercialization - Data management, UTRC fast track, High performance computing, and research websites

Appendix E: Report of the Task Force on Large Introductory Classes.

I.   Membership of the Task Force:

SCHOOL	NAME
NSM	Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki (Task Force Chair)
CTL	Karen Huxtable-Jester
AH	Charles Hatfield
BBS	Shayla Holub
ECS	Diana Cogan
EPPS	Dann Arce
JSOM	Rebecca Files

II.   Charge for Task Force on Large Introductory Classes

Large introductory classes play a critical role in the undergraduate curriculum and student experiences. These provide foundational knowledge and skills that are essential for advanced classes on the same or related subject matter. Research also indicates that student experiences (good and bad) in these courses influence subsequent decisions to stay with or change majors. Both large classes and introductory classes pose unique challenges to students and instructors.
       This task force was charged with assisting in improving how these classes are taught, specifically addressing the concerns listed below:

1.   Identify different models for conducting large, introductory classes, including those with varying (a) modes of delivery, (b) structure, and (c) use of teaching assistants.

2.   Develop guidelines for ensuring consistency in grading, content, and requirements across multiple sections of the same course, within the parameters of academic freedom.

3.   Make recommendations for ensuring high quality teaching and learning in introductory classes.

III.   Activities of Task Force:

The task force gathered existing relevant literature on the topic of teaching large, introductory classes that was made available by Karen Huxtable-Jester and Mustapha Ishak-Boushaki to its members via UTD Box (https://utdallas.box.com/s/c2kay961gvrl8ybwsntwazkv1xdjo61y). The Task Force members met in person on 09/18/2019, 10/23/2019 and 11/13/2019. Objectives and methodology of work were set at the beginning of the first meeting followed by multiple discussions of the current status and models of large, introductory classes in each school at UTD. The task force continued its work during the follow up meetings and the exchange of documents and comments via emails. It also completed written and verbal surveys of faculty across schools to address specific points of the task force charge. The committee also reviewed comments collected from faculty teaching or coordinating large, introductory classes at UTD. After several iterative discussions within the task force, a consensus has formed on what practices and guidelines would be highly beneficial for our large, introductory classes at UTD. It was noted that even if such practices and guidelines need some adaptation for different schools, they should be beneficial on the university-wide scale. The recommendations, observations and rationales are summarized in this report.

V.   Observations and recommendations of the Task Force team (ordered according to the items listed in the charge):

1. Identify the different models for conducting large, introductory classes.

These include variations along the dimensions of (a) mode of delivery (e.g., lecture, online, blended), (b) structure (e.g., lecture only, discussion or recitation sections), and (c) use of teaching assistants (e.g., graders, lab instructors, supervised independent instructors).

a) Recommendations on mode of delivery (e.g., lecture, online, blended):

- **Encourage a mixture of traditional lectures supplemented by interactive learning techniques**

Observations and rationale: There was consensus among the task force members that a mixture of traditional lectures supplemented by interactive learning techniques (e.g. Buehl, 2013) and recitation/discussion sessions should continue to be encouraged at UTD. There is no single best way to teach, but considerable evidence from the scholarship of teaching and learning indicates that students, especially students new to college coursework, become more involved in their learning and learn more when interactive strategies are used. Low-stakes assessments (e.g., short papers or quizzes that have little or no negative impact on students' grades) should be used early and often, both as a tool for retrieval practice and to keep the instructor and students aware of students' learning progress. There are also a number of on-line options for interactive learning. These include programs like Pearson's MyMath Lab, McGraw Hill Connect, zyBooks and Mastering Physics. These types of programs may be used to provide assistance and feedback to students as they read texts and work through homework problems. In addition, use of on-line homework lessens the grading requirements for Teaching Assistants (TAs) and frees them to spend time interacting with students in lab or recitation settings.

- **Encourage close and personalized interactions between instructor and students for online courses**

Observations and rationale: Online courses available to introductory-level students must be carefully designed to provide the structure and support needed to closely monitor students' progress and require

active involvement. High quality online courses depend on close, personalized interactions between the instructor and each student.

- **Instructors should avoid viewing their courses as "weed-out" or "gatekeeper" courses**

Observations and rationale: Many students in introductory courses are first year students. First-Year Experience courses designed to facilitate their academic success should be complemented by introductory courses that recognize the first-year experience is occurring across all of a students' courses (Koch & Gardner, 2018). The Task Force recommends that instructors explicitly avoid viewing their courses as "weed-out" or "gatekeeper" courses, and instead view their own objective as that of facilitating the success of <u>all</u> students.

b) Recommendations on structure:

- **Add recitation, problem-solving, or discussion sessions where non-present**

Observations and rationale: Task force members agreed that, in addition to lectures, required supplemental sessions are essential for students' understanding and mastery of the subject taught. For example, some subjects such as math, physics, chemistry, economics, and others require such guided problem-solving sessions where students learn by practicing and trying in a mentored environment. These sessions are commonly used in most other tier-one institutions.

At the school of NSM at UTD, the Math department already runs problem solving sessions, Biology has discussion sections, Chemistry has an active PLTL program, and Physics has just started a pilot successful implementation of recitation sessions. Overall, the University has a capacity issue when it comes to scheduling classes, and this has limited the implementation of recitation sessions even though they are preferred by many programs. The Task Force did find that rooms of different sizes are available for recitation sessions on Fridays. It is worth noting that other institutions such as UT Austin run recitation and tutorial sessions even during the weekends in order to overcome room availability limitations. However, questions were raised about how non-traditional students may be disadvantaged by this. Non-traditional students are the *new traditional* in the sense that juggling multiple demands from work, family, academics, and more is now typical for most students. Such conditions should be considered before scheduling any week-end sessions.

It was identified that some departments will need more TAs to run such recitation sessions. TAs need to receive suitable training to run successful recitation sessions. This can be done effectively by UTD CTL. TAs also will require ongoing close supervision by course organizers or other senior faculty in each school. CTL can provide guidance for designing such support. TAs will gain considerable benefits from this investment both in their immediate performance of their responsibilities and in the teaching skill that will make them more competitive in the academic job market.

- **Facilitate academic units' autonomy in deciding the size and structure to offer large sections or decentralize into smaller ones.**

Observations and rationale: The task force found that some schools like JSOM and Engineering prefer smaller sections of 70 or fewer students, while other Schools prefer larger sections of 150+, particularly for classes such as Chemistry, Physics, and others. It was noted that access to and allocation of large (150+ student) classrooms varies across academic units. For example, course schedulers in A&H, BBS, and EPPS report being denied access to large classrooms by the Registrar. Some instructors in NSM report courses having been assigned to large sections without prior input or consideration of its curricular impact.

Furthermore, some units are confronted or challenged when scheduling 300 students in five sections of 60 students each, whereas in other schools this is common practice and goes unquestioned. The allocation of large classrooms has implications for the ability to generate SCHs, which has budgetary implications. The size of the classroom also had implications for individual faculty workload, which is coming under increased scrutiny. As such, access to large classrooms, or the lack thereof, and autonomy in deciding whether to offer large sections or decentralize into smaller ones needs to be recognized and accounted for by Central Administration and the Registrar.

c) Recommendations on the use of teaching assistants (TAs):

Depending on schools and academic units, current use of TAs at UTD consists of a many different responsibilities that vary considerably across programs and schools. These can include, when present: holding office hours, leading discussion sessions, leading recitation sessions, leading lab sections, serving as Instructor of Record for their own class sections, grading homework and exams. It was found by the task force that the quality of the guidance that TAs receive for serving in these roles also varies considerably, sometimes being expected to perform their duties with little guidance, and sometimes unable to obtain the guidance they need.

- **Manage and capitalize on TAs office hours that are under-utilized by students.**

Observations and Rationale: It is well known that students tend to under-utilize faculty and TA office hours. A way to remedy this is to add mandatory recitation or discussion sessions, if not already present. This may imply that some of the office hours will be left as such but others re-used to run recitation sessions.

- **Assign more TAs to serve large numbers of students or to staff small sections.**

Observations and Rationale: As the university expands its graduate programs, more doctoral students should be available to serve as TAs.

- **Create incentives for TAs to foster and encourage effective teaching assistantship.**

Observations and Rationale: Learning how to teach excellently should be a goal for every graduate TA. Even those who intend to pursue careers in industry or otherwise not explicitly in teaching roles will benefit from the teaching-related skills they develop. Excellent performance is recognized at the campus and school levels by teaching awards. TAs also have the opportunity to earn the Graduate and Advanced Graduate Teaching Certificates, credentials that will bolster their CVs and prospects for employment. These recognitions and incentives should be continued and multiplied.

- **Provide TAs with the needed suitable training.**

Observations and Rationale: Deploying TAs to improve the types and amount of support available to undergraduates in large introductory courses requires that all TAs receive corresponding training and guidance in understanding students and their needs, effective teaching strategies, and pedagogical content knowledge in their respective disciplines. Ideally, providing this training and ongoing close supervision will result from the combined efforts of individual programs and CTL.

2. Develop guidelines for ensuring consistency in grading, content, and requirements across multiple sections of the same course, within the parameters of academic freedom.

One of the common models for offering large introductory courses involves multiple sections. When multiple sections of a course are offered with the same course number and description, and

serve the same role in the overall program, it is essential for the sections to be reasonably equivalent in content, level of difficulty, assessment methods, as well as course-level student learning outcomes. If one or more sections appears to have much higher rates of students who drop, fail, withdraw, or have incomplete grades, it will be necessary for the course organizers to collaborate in identifying the causes and develop solutions to improve equity across sections. Accordingly, the recommendations of the Task Force are as follows:

- **Encourage (require) that multi-section large introductory courses should be coordinated to receive the same course content coverage and grading scheme.**

Observations and Rationale: This can be done by having common syllabi or common relevant sections in syllabi for the list of topics and schedule across different sections of the same course. Some schools may find it meaningful to also coordinate sections through common exams and grading rubrics.

- **Encourage (require) that multi-section large introductory courses should have a course coordinator to facilitate consistency between sections.**

Observations and Rationale: Such a coordinator should organize a pre-semester meeting across all faculty teaching the same course to discuss material covered, expectations, grading scheme and rubrics, book, etc. This should be followed by other meetings during the semester.

- **Encourage PhD students or other graduate students who are Instructors of Record to sit in another professors' class before teaching their course.**

Observations and Rationale: Doctoral students may serve as Instructor of Record, but should serve as a TA for the same course for at least one semester before taking on this more advanced role. Another option is for the PhD student to sit in another professor's lectures in the previous semester.

It was found that some Departments or Schools have already implemented some of the above practices, while others have them only partially implemented or not at all.

3. Make recommendations for ensuring high quality teaching and learning in introductory classes.

- **Encourage putting best professors in the large introductory classes**

Observations and Rationale: Large introductory courses are some of the most challenging courses to teach. They also potentially affect, either positively or negatively, more students than small advanced courses. As explained by Chambliss and Takacs in their book "How College Works," the first instructors students encounter as they enter the university should be those who are established as excellent teachers. The quality of instruction will powerfully influence the success of students both who are planning to continue in the discipline and those whose only understanding of the discipline will come from this one, critical, course experience.

The question therefore arises as to whether the University should identify standards for placing faculty into large sections. In addition, resources should be made available to faculty that are teaching a large section

for the first time. Examples include guidelines for teaching large sections, possibly provided by CTL, and mentoring for new instructors.

- **Train junior faculty in making classroom time engaging. For example, via CTL activities.**

Observations and Rationale: New faculty members often have little experience teaching, but it is inefficient to expect them to "learn on the job" at students' expense. Support can be provided via multiple routes, including workshops and other offerings from CTL, the biannual Reflective Teaching Seminar, and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) online course in Effective Teaching Practices, https://acue.org/acue_courses/effective-teaching-practices/.

- **More explicit faculty input is needed when considering classroom design, particularly for larger classrooms.**

Observations and Rationale: The task force members encourage faculty input from the design stage of new classrooms through classrooms going online. For example, ECSW 1.315, which is one of the newest large classrooms on campus, has design deficiencies. It has no center aisle, which increases the difficulty of proctoring, distributing, and returning exams. The podium in the classroom is inadequate in that it has no easily accessible power outlet for faculty peripherals such as laptops. These and other drawbacks are immediately evident to faculty that teach in large classrooms. Similarly, some smaller classrooms in ECSS initially had insufficient whiteboard space.

- **Explore more creative responses for students finding themselves in the DFW range due to struggles with (mental) health issues, unanticipated work obligations, financial exigency, family events, and so on.**

Observations and Rationale: In analyzing DWF rates in large sections, the committee observed that a significant proportion of the outcomes in this category are not primarily explained by academic performance. The proportion in question is characterized by missing grades and gaps in attendance. Hence, the university needs to think beyond academic rationales and academic support programs as interventions. If it is not already the case, some faculty should reimagine their role as that of ensuring the success of all students rather than as serving as gate-keepers weeding students out. In that way, they will be able to develop methods and course policies that maintain high academic standards while removing the rigidity that can interfere with students' success.

- **Encourage students to build a network of other students in the same major.**

Observations and Rationale: College studies are challenging! Students need support from fellow students as well as faculty. More experienced students, in particular, can encourage and tutor their fellow students in ways faculty cannot, both because of time constraints and because of the inherent social separation between faculty and students. For example, the UTD student chapter of IEEE offers tutoring for many computer engineering and electrical engineering classes; ECS 1100 instructors bring in upperclassmen to serve as mentors for freshmen students; and many UTD student organizations (including UTD student affiliates of professional societies) offer opportunities for student involvement with others in their major. These organizations allow students to build a support network, add appropriate extra-curricular activities to their resumes and develop a sense of belonging that extends beyond the classroom. Transfer students, international students and first-generation students are particularly at risk of feeling isolated, so it is especially important that they be encouraged to be active in at least one student organization. Course

programming that encourages students to make connections with other students (through student organizations) and with faculty (e.g., through undergraduate research projects) should improve student persistence and retention. Consequently, we encourage faculty to adopt strategies that promote student networking as part of their strategy for more inclusive teaching.