

Xavier University, Its Campus Culture, and the Common Ground of Scholarship

Mission Statement. *Xavier is an historically Black University with a unique Catholic character. In reaffirming its African American heritage and its Catholic tradition, the University is guided by its mission to provide each student with a liberal and professional education. To insure the excellence of its programs, all relevant means, including teaching, research, and community service are utilized in a pluralistic environment for the ultimate purpose of helping to create a more just and humane society.*

Xavier University of Louisiana, through its Center for the Advancement of Teaching, respectfully requests a three-year grant of \$450,000.00 from the Bush Foundation and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to infuse the collaborative model of teaching and learning throughout the curriculum, particularly through the use of technology. The proposal has been inspired by the work of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Teaching Initiative “From Idea to Prototype: The Peer Review of Teaching,” and in particular, the published proceedings of this project, Making Teaching Community Property.

In March 1997, Xavier University of Louisiana was awarded a grant of \$10,000 by the Bush and William and Flora Hewlett Foundations for a period of planning a new and comprehensive faculty development program. This document reports on the results of the planning period and requests additional funding to implement the new faculty development initiatives.

Faculty Development at Xavier University: Needs and Opportunities. The faculty and students of Xavier University have benefited tremendously from prior support from the Bush Foundation and W. K. Kellogg Foundation to transform teaching and learning. Support from the Bush Foundation led to the infusion of writing across the curriculum. A generous grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation made possible the establishment of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, now a major catalyst for rethinking teaching and learning. This Center now serves as the focal point for faculty development activities at the university. In many respects, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching is an outgrowth of the Bush Foundation's prior support of faculty development at Xavier.

In the spring of 1996, an *ad hoc* committee composed of faculty from across disciplines and the chairperson of the Faculty Development Committee met to discuss opportunities for new faculty development initiatives at Xavier. The work of this committee informed a letter of intent to Dr. Humphrey Doerman from Dr. Norman C. Francis, Xavier's President. Upon invitation from the Bush and Hewlett Foundations to submit a planning grant, a committee composed of faculty from each academic department was established which permitted broad-based faculty planning for a new and effective faculty development program.

In preparing the planning proposal, which was submitted in October 1996, the committee identified the need to:

1. **promote the scholarship of teaching by creating a campus culture where teaching is made public, discussed, examined, improved, and rewarded;**
2. **implement a faculty development program that encourages and supports the use of technology in the classroom;**
3. **establish communities of faculty and students whose conversations are focused on specific teaching and learning problems and opportunities; and**
4. **establish communities of faculty and students engaged in research using information technology and other resources.**

In preparation for the planning grant and subsequent implementation proposal, two surveys queried all university faculty about their perceptions of faculty development needs at Xavier, and skills and expertise already possessed by Xavier faculty and which could be tapped for faculty development-related initiatives. The award of the Planning Grant prompted the formation of three focus groups which met throughout the spring 1997 semester to develop a strategy for implementing new initiatives in each of three areas--pedagogy, technology, and research. Also during the planning period, faculty and staff resource persons identified successful and innovative faculty development programs and university teaching centers. An informal World-Wide Web site was developed that provided the university faculty with access, via hypertext links, to these resources, as well as on-line access to minutes of the focus group meetings. Two university-wide forums were held in March and October 1997, which provided opportunities for wider discussion about faculty development at Xavier.

Significant contributions to the development of the implementation proposal were made by members of the writing group (consisting of the focus group chairpersons and staff of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching) who attended the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Faculty Roles and Rewards Conference (January 1997), National Conference (March 1997), and Peer Review of Teaching Project Meeting (June 1997). Additionally, one member of the writing group attended the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education Conference (October 1997). In May 1997, the writing group held a retreat to draft the implementation proposal. Last, an outside consultant, Ms. Lesley Cafarelli, Director of The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning, provided the writing group with comments, questions, and criticisms that further shaped the proposal. As noted previously, Xavier's exposure to the AAHE Teaching Initiative has given considerable definition and focus to the aims of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching in general, and this faculty development implementation proposal in particular.

From discussions among faculty during the planning process, a broad consensus emerged that learning is most effective when undertaken in a collaborative context involving dialogue, investigation, debate, and analytical thinking. Moreover, the faculty noted the importance of preparing students to work in teams in the modern workplace. For these reasons, the focus groups recommended, as the foundation for this proposal, small groups of faculty and students devoted to clearly defined teaching and learning projects. Such small groups, or communities, will function as the cornerstone for the renewal and development of Xavier's faculty. One of the early lessons of the AAHE Teaching Initiative is that these collaborative endeavors can (1) reinvigorate faculty looking for fresh and effective ways to educate students, and (2) give faculty

concrete techniques and the intellectual content they need to help students acquire independence of judgment.

These communities of faculty (and students, where appropriate) will operate within individual departments and across disciplines, and will be dedicated to active inquiry of teaching and learning for the improvement of both. Through specific collaborative endeavors, community members will develop new teaching skills and pedagogies, computer-based courses and courseware, and knowledge via research endeavors. A culture of lifelong collaborative learners at Xavier University will emerge consisting of faculty and students prepared for the challenges of the future. This in turn will lead faculty to improve their own teaching through a consistent dialogue with each other and with students.

Project Rationale. Xavier University was founded as a normal school to train teachers. Its commitment to teaching is recognized nationally. Despite this commitment and the value the university places on teaching, teaching at Xavier remains largely a "private endeavor" as it is in many universities across the nation--a phenomenon, Lee Shulman, President of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, refers to as "pedagogical solitude" (*Change* 25[6]: 6-7). As at most universities, new faculty bring with them expertise in research, but often little knowledge of how students learn or of teaching strategies other than the lecture. **One aim of the proposed faculty development initiatives is to create a culture where teaching is critically examined using research principles; that is, it is made public, discussed, examined, improved, and rewarded.**

Previous technology-based workshops and initiatives promoted by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching have provided individual faculty with software training and release time or stipends to develop computer-based courseware and courses. During the past three years, approximately 20% of Xavier's faculty have participated in these new technology-based initiatives. It is now apparent that a "digital divide" exists between those faculty who have investigated, developed, and implemented technology in the classroom and those with little or no familiarity with instructional technology. **The second aim of the proposed initiatives is to establish a faculty development program that encourages and supports the use of pedagogically effective technology in the classroom via a community of faculty and students.**

In recent years, higher education has experienced a shift from teacher-centered, lecture-based instruction to student-centered pedagogies such as collaborative, cooperative, and active learning. This shift, however, has not been widely accepted by all faculty, and Xavier is no exception. Typically, faculty have been encouraged to incorporate student-centered teaching into their classrooms after having attended a workshop. However, because these faculty often do not find support from on-going conversations with colleagues and students about the new pedagogies, many often abandon these new teaching strategies for the more familiar lecture-only approach. **The third aim of the proposed faculty development initiatives is to establish communities of faculty and students whose conversations are focused on specific teaching and learning problems and opportunities.**

Finally, the explosive growth of the World-Wide Web offers faculty and student researchers in higher education new opportunities for inquiry and investigation. Currently, there is limited use by Xavier faculty and students of information technology resources, especially e-mail, electronic

discussion, and the Internet, for focused and thorough research. **The fourth aim of the proposed initiatives is to establish communities of faculty and students engaged in research using information technology and other resources.**

Project Implementation. The proposed faculty development initiatives will be facilitated through Xavier's Center for the Advancement of Teaching. A Steering Committee composed of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching staff and the Faculty Development Committee will coordinate and oversee all grant-related activities. (The latter is an interdisciplinary and elected committee formed during the term of the initial Bush Foundation faculty development grant.) The Director of the Center will also serve as Project Director, with budgetary oversight of grant activities. Because of the more discipline-specific nature of projects of the research communities, an *ad hoc* committee will be formed to review research proposals. The chair of this research committee shall be a member of the Steering Committee.

To create and sustain a campus culture where the common ground of faculty scholarship in teaching and research leads to improved student learning, the proposed faculty development program at Xavier University will comprise the following:

1. **workshops;**
2. **teaching communities;**
3. **technology communities;**
4. **summer institutes;** and
5. **travel grants.**

The relationships among these various initiatives are described below, as well as in Tables 1, 2, and 3 on pages 9, 10, and 11, respectively.

Workshops. Workshops will develop faculty skills and knowledge, and promote conversation and focused inquiries about teaching and student learning challenges at Xavier. The workshops will also serve as the primary means of establishing teaching, technology, and research communities of Xavier faculty and students. Examples of workshop topics include: "Teaching as Scholarly Inquiry," "Internet Research and Critical Responsibility," "Developing a Network-Interactive Course," "Case Studies and the World-Wide Web," and "Writing in the Disciplines." Additionally, a "New Faculty Workshop Series" will be held. To provide a model for the type of workshop envisioned and the communities that will be established as a result, brief descriptions of many of these proposed workshops follow.

- *Scholarship, the Academy, and Xavier's Campus Culture*
This workshop, based on Ernest Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate, is the seminal workshop of the proposed faculty development program for Xavier faculty. This workshop will ground faculty in the concept of the scholarly inquiry about teaching and serve as the focal point for the establishment of discipline-based and interdisciplinary teaching communities, including a course portfolio working group.
- *New Faculty Workshop Series*
This workshop series offers an opportunity to introduce new faculty to a culture of teaching and learning at Xavier that is built on the collaborative efforts of faculty and students

engaged in scholarly inquiries about teaching and learning. New faculty will be invited to participate in discipline- and interdisciplinary-based teaching communities, including a course portfolio working group.

- *Internet Research and Critical Responsibility*
This workshop will provide collaborative, hands-on research in the relevant fields of participants and provide faculty with assistance in helping students critically analyze Web-based resources. Workshop participants will be invited to form interdisciplinary collaborations to develop research projects under the scholar-apprentice program, or form disciplinary or interdisciplinary teaching or technology communities organized around the incorporation of Internet research and critical responsibility in the classroom.
- *Writing in the Disciplines*
This workshop will provide an introduction to Xavier's new on-line Writing Center and lead to the establishment of discipline-based communities. Each community will work with the Writing Center staff to develop a Web site dedicated to writing in the discipline and that will include style guides, writing examples, and other information for students.

Teaching Communities. The workshops described above, and others, will lead to the establishment of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching communities. The teaching communities of faculty (and students, where appropriate) will be formed around clearly defined issues and objectives such as:

- *Collaborative Learning in English 1010 and 1020*
This community will explore ways to engage students as willing participants in a dynamic learning environment. Faculty will design strategies that encourage students to use critical thinking skills as they interact with each other and the instructor.
- *Scientific Writing Across the Biology Curriculum*
Faculty and students in the Biology Department will work with Writing Center staff to develop a Web site that provides students with information on and examples of writing for a variety of science-literate audiences.
- *The Course Portfolio: Documentation and Evaluation of Teaching*
This community will use the course portfolio as a vehicle for making their teaching a reflective, peer reviewed scholarly activity.
- *Student Learning: What the Research Tells Us*
This community of faculty and students will investigate research literature on effective teaching and student learning. The investigation and subsequent discussions will lead to new and revised teaching strategies and assessments of student learning.

Technology Communities. The proposed technology communities have been designed to appeal to a diverse faculty. This diversity lies in Xavier faculty members' varying familiarity and experience with computer technologies, their teaching styles, and expectations for student learning. Three types of technology communities will offer faculty an array of opportunities to develop their expertise in technologies that best serve their teaching needs.

- *Inquiry and Development*
These communities will consist of faculty (and students, if appropriate) with limited familiarity of and experience with educational technologies. Faculty and students will explore, implement, and assess the use of computer technologies such as simulations, e-mail, writing software, CD-ROMs, and Web resources. Faculty will be invited to establish these communities via a Request for Proposals (RFP) (see Appendix A) and as a result of workshops such as "Developing a Computer-based Component for Your Course."
- *Case Studies*
These communities are designed for faculty (and students, if appropriate) who wish to develop and incorporate Web-based case studies in teaching and student learning. Faculty will be invited to establish these communities following the "Case Studies and the World-Wide Web" workshop, for example, and via an RFP (see Appendix A).
- *Innovation and Integration*
These communities will provide an environment for faculty and students to develop and implement innovative computer-based courseware. They will consist of faculty with considerable familiarity and experience with educational technologies, as well as a consultant or an instructional designer. The workshop titled "Developing a Network-Interactive Course" will introduce faculty to new educational technologies such as virtual reality, 3-D, interactive Web pages, and multi-user object-oriented (MOO) environments. Following this workshop, an RFP (see Appendix A) will be issued to all the faculty inviting them to submit proposals for the development of innovative and effective computer courseware.

Research Communities. A scholar-apprentice program will be established following, for example, the "Internet Research and Critical Responsibility" workshop. Additionally, an RFP (see Appendix A) will be issued to all the faculty to establish these communities. These research communities will promote scholar-student relationships with a distinct focus on disciplinary or interdisciplinary collaboration. The program will promote research and knowledge construction using information technology and other resources, and provide faculty and students with opportunities to find new ways to look at information by incorporating insight, understanding, and scholarship from across the disciplines. The program will also be the impetus for establishing a university-wide student research colloquium, Web site, and an online journal for student research.

Summer Institute. A multi-day institute will be held each May at an off-campus location to provide faculty an opportunity to learn from each other's experience as participants in communities that have been supported by the Bush-Hewlett Faculty Development grant. This institute will also serve to (1) encourage participation of other faculty in the initiatives of the grant; (2) increase collegiality and discussion about teaching and learning at Xavier; (3) assist faculty and departments in planning new teaching, technology, and research projects; and (4) learn from guest speakers. Members of the Steering Committee and faculty from departments participating in the AAHE Teaching Initiative will coordinate the summer institute.

Travel Grants. A fund will be established to support faculty attendance at conferences and professional meetings specific to the improvement of teaching (*e.g.*, Lilly Conferences on

College and University Teaching, The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning Conferences), and faculty and student presentations of Scholar-Apprentice research projects.

The plan for the implementation of the proposed faculty development initiatives is provided in Tables 1, 2, and 3 on following pages.

Project Assessment¹. Responsibility for the overall evaluation of the proposed faculty development initiatives will rest with the Steering Committee and the Project Director. Each teaching, technology, or research community will include a plan for the assessment of its activities in its proposal to the Steering Committee. Additional means for assessing the impact of the proposed faculty development initiatives are described below.

Workshops. Workshops will be designed so as to have clearly defined outcomes. A questionnaire, such as that found in Appendix B, will be given at the conclusion of each workshop to obtain participants' feedback on the effectiveness and usefulness of the workshop, with modifications occurring as needed in subsequent workshops. The questionnaire will not only attempt to document faculty "satisfaction" of the workshop, but will also measure the extent to which the outcomes were reached and point to lessons learned and a specific plan for action as a result of the workshop. Approximately two months following the workshop, some, if not all, workshop participants will be contacted in order to determine the extent to which the plans for action were implemented and improved student learning.

Teaching Communities. Because of the potential for the teaching communities to address diverse issues relevant to teaching and student learning, the outcomes of a given community will depend on its specific focus. Additionally, the teaching community experience is inherently dynamic, and thus is difficult to measure in quantitative terms alone. Therefore, the primary means for the assessment of teaching communities will be threefold.

The first component will be a confidential peer review process designed to gauge the degree to which community members have used insights gained from their teaching community to advance and improve their own teaching. At times to be determined by individual communities, community members will visit each other's classroom (where applicable), interview students from the class, and write a narrative report of their conclusions.

The second assessment instrument will consist of "products" of a teaching community's work, such as a course portfolio, modified syllabus, new classroom assessment tools, assessment results, new teaching strategies, or a course Web site. These can serve as tangible evidence of the impact of these faculty development initiatives.

Finally, each teaching community will author a comprehensive narrative report distilling the results of the two means of assessment described above, and placing the value of these results in the context of the overall teaching community experience.

Technology Communities. Project reports submitted by the technology communities will form the basis of the Steering Committee's evaluation of the effectiveness of the technology communities. As noted in the sample RFPs in Appendix A, each technology community will develop and implement a plan for the classroom assessment of its project. The results of the assessment will be included in the final report. Additionally, "products" of the work of the technology communities, such as Web-based courseware, case studies, and electronic discussions, will serve as further evidence of the success of these faculty development initiatives.

¹ The assessment of this project as described in this portion of the proposal will be further informed by the developing assessment plan of the AAHE Teaching Initiative. Since this plan is still under development, we offer the above strategies for assessing the impact of the proposed initiatives.

Research Communities. The effectiveness of the scholar-apprentice program will be measured, in part, by the new knowledge obtained by the research communities. This new knowledge will be presented at a university-wide student research colloquium and, if appropriate, a professional meeting, and published in the peer reviewed on-line journal and, if possible, a professional journal. Additionally, each research community will submit a final report to the Steering Committee, which will, amongst other things, document the impact the community had on student learning.

Summer Institute. The summer institute will give the Steering Committee an opportunity to learn more about the impact of the faculty development initiatives for which support was given. Each teaching, technology, and research community will give a presentation at the institute about its activities and projects, and the lessons learned. The success of the Summer Institute itself will be measured by a survey, similar to that used in workshops, that will be conducted of participants, and the number and plans of new communities that are formed as a result of the Institute.

A Three-year Budget for the Proposed Faculty Development Initiatives*

Personnel Costs		
Project Director (@ 1/4 of salary)		
Administrative Assistant (@ 1/4 of salary)		
Instructional Designer (@ 1/4 of salary)		
Technology Coordinator (@ 1/8 of salary)		
Faculty-in-Residence (@ 1/8 of salary)	\$129,750	
Faculty @ ¼ release time	105,000	
Fringe Benefits @ 16%	37,560	
Faculty Stipends	70,440	
Student Stipends	12,000	
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS		\$354,750
Travel Costs		
Faculty	9,000	
Students	5,000	
Consultants	7,000	
		21,000
TOTAL TRAVEL COSTS		
Computer Costs		
9 multimedia computers for faculty	31,500	
Computer software	6,000	
TOTAL COMPUTER COSTS		37,500
Office Supply Costs		
Printing, telephone, postage, etc.	13,500	
TOTAL OFFICE SUPPLY COSTS		13,500
Other Costs		
Membership Fees	9,750	
Consultant Fees	7,500	
Food and Catering	6,000	
TOTAL OTHER COSTS		23,250

		\$450,000
<u>TOTAL THREE-YEAR BUDGET</u>		

*The three-year funding period extends from May 1998 to May 2001. The proposed expenditures during each of the three years will be \$150,000.

Budget Rationale.

Personnel Costs. The implementation, assessment, management, and reporting of the proposed faculty development initiatives will require considerable time commitment on the part of all personnel involved. At a minimum, one-fourth of Dr. Todd Stanislav’s time will be devoted to the project as Project Director. The administrative assistance of Ms. Barbara Sanders is essential to the management of this project.

The design, development, implementation, and assessment of pedagogically effective computer-based course materials is very time intensive and will require, at a minimum, one-fourth of Ms. Gayna Stevens-Credle’s time. (Ms. Stevens-Credle is the Instructional Designer in the Center for the Advancement of Teaching.) Additionally, the expertise and one-eighth time commitment of Ms. Janice Florent, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching’s Technology Coordinator, is necessary in order to facilitate the faculty’s use of technology to improve their teaching, students’ learning, and research. Last, one-eighth of Dr. Jonathan Rotondo-McCord’s time will be committed to assisting faculty develop technology-based courseware and organizing workshops, especially the New Faculty Series Workshops. Dr. Rotondo-McCord is an associate professor of history and currently has a one-half time appointment in the Center for the Advancement of Teaching as Faculty-in-Residence.

In order to provide faculty requisite time to succeed in their technology and research projects, the budget includes costs associated with one-fourth release time for twenty-one faculty (seven faculty each of the three years).

In lieu of release time, stipends will be provided to the faculty involved in teaching, technology, or research projects. The proposed budget provides for \$1,000.00 stipends for each of at least forty-five faculty (fifteen each of the three years), as well as modest (approximately \$100.00) stipends for faculty who participate in the Summer Institute. The latter stipends will be offered because the Summer Institute will be held at a time when the faculty are not under University contract.

The award of stipends will compensate students participating in many of the proposed communities. The proposed budget provides for an average stipend of \$500.00 to be paid to each of twenty-four students (eight students each of the three years).

Travel Costs. The use of funds to support faculty and student travel will provide faculty opportunities to attend conferences specific to the improvement of teaching, and faculty and students to give presentations at conferences and professional meetings. The broad

dissemination of the projects provides an opportunity to extend the impact of the proposed faculty development initiatives beyond the Xavier community.

Consultants will be used to lead workshops and be Summer Institute leaders. One or more project evaluators will also be identified.

Computer Costs. Because of the pivotal role that technology plays in reaching the goals of this project, and because not all Xavier faculty have computers in their offices, the proposed budget will permit the purchase of three multimedia computers and necessary software each year. Each computer will be located in the office of the faculty member whose collaborative teaching, technology, or research project is funded by the grant. (Should the faculty member leave the university or no longer participate in the project, the computer will be reassigned by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching.)

Office Supply Costs. These costs include local and long distance telephone service, printing, postage, and office supplies such as computer disks, toner cartridges, paper, *etc.* that are needed to implement the proposed faculty development initiatives.

Other Costs. Xavier University's membership in faculty development and other national organizations is essential to the development and maintenance of its faculty development program. The proposed budget will permit Xavier to be members of the following professional organizations:

1. Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education;
2. The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning;
3. Historically Black Colleges and Universities Faculty Development Network; and
4. New York University Faculty Resource Network.