

## Introduction to the 1998-99 Planning Document

As stated in the Final Project Report to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, "By no means do we consider our project completed. The real work and the contributions that we believe our Center for (the Advancement of) Teaching can make to the teaching and learning process lie ahead." The staff of the Center strives consistently to develop and sustain university efforts to advance the art of teaching at all levels. The services and facilities of the Center will continue to be available to faculty of all colleges at Xavier University and to the Center's three partner schools in the New Orleans Public School system: Mildred Osborne Elementary School, Thurgood Marshall Middle School, and McDonogh #35 Senior High School. Additionally, the Center will continue to provide opportunities for faculty to develop new teaching strategies and curricula, and to incorporate the use of technology in ways that are pedagogically effective.

The mission of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, as stated above, remains unchanged in 1998.

### *Grant Support*

In the previous 5-year Planning Document, it was noted that the "... Center is currently at a crossroads, as the funding provided by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation ends in December 1997. Coincident with the end of this funding is the opportunity, however, for support from the Bush and William and Flora Hewlett foundations to plan and implement faculty development initiatives." The generous funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has, but for one exception (see below), expired. The university, through the Center, was fortunate to receive a three-year grant from the Bush and William and Flora Hewlett foundations to establish a faculty development program which will (1) promote the scholarship of teaching by creating a campus culture where teaching is made public, discussed, examined, improved, and rewarded, (2) encourage and support 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. The overall objective of this faculty development program is to **create and sustain a campus culture where the common ground of faculty scholarship in teaching and research leads to improved student learning**. The three-year faculty development program will include workshops, teaching and technology communities, summer institutes, and travel grants.

### *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.

### *Teaching Communities*

The workshops referred to 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 website 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) 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.

- *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 will be issued to the entire 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 will be issued to the entire 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, website, and an online journal for student research.

## *Summer Institute*

A multi-day institute will be held 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.

Assessment of the impact of the faculty development program on the campus culture and student learning is an important component of the grant. Specific assessment plans were outlined in the proposal submitted to the foundations. These plans are provided below.

## **Assessment of Workshops**

Workshops will be designed so as to have clearly defined outcomes. A questionnaire 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.

## **Assessment of 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 website. 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.

## **Assessment of 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. 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.

## **Assessment of 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.

## Assessment of 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.

The budget for the faculty development program funded by the Bush and Hewlett foundations is available in the Center.

With support from the Bush and Hewlett foundations for new faculty development initiatives, the Center places itself in the position to contribute significantly to the professional renewal and development needs and interests of Xavier's faculty. To further the efforts of the Center as a focal point for faculty development, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has provided funding for faculty projects in technology. Last, to support the Center's collaboration with its partner schools, funding from the Bell South Foundation and Apple Computer, Inc. has also been obtained.

Five commitments and goals for the Center were listed in the 1997 Planning Document--they are listed again below. Where appropriate, text is added (and made bold) to indicate changes, successes, progress, etc.

## Commitments and Goals

The following commitments and goals shape the day-to-day activities of the Center, as well as its long-term planning and vision.

1. *To realize the potential of technology for improved teaching and student learning.*

Since its inception, the Center has promoted and supported the development, implementation, and assessment of technology in the classrooms of Xavier University and its partner schools. The staff of the Center is committed to maintaining its role in assisting faculty at Xavier and its partner schools in reaching this goal. The specific means by which the Center will accomplish this include the following:

- Multimedia projects currently being developed by Xavier humanities faculty as part of the grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will begin to be implemented in the classroom in the fall 1997 semester. **Web-based projects developed by three of the four Mellon Authors were demonstrated and evaluated by students in the fall 1997 semester. In late April 1998 the projects will be available from the Center's website at <http://www.xula.edu/Administratiive/cat/Mellon98/Sacred.htm>.**
- Faculty development initiatives outlined in the Bush-Hewlett Faculty Development proposal include the establishment of technology and learning communities. **Faculty in attendance at the Center's Introduction to Web Authoring workshop were invited to submit proposals to establish technology communities for the 1998-99 academic year. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 26 April 1998. In an effort to further develop the Center's ability to assess the use of technology in teaching and student learning, the Center purchased the *Flashlight Current Student Inventory*, a resource for assessing the use of educational technologies. Moreover, with funds from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the State of Louisiana, three Teaching Fellowships are available to faculty for the summer 1998 and 1998-99 academic year. One Teaching Fellowship will support a faculty member who will work directly with the Center to assess the use of educational technologies. The *Flashlight* resource, and others developed or identified by the Teaching Fellow, will be used in this program. Two Teaching Fellowships are intended for faculty members who wish to integrate technology in the teaching and learning process.**

2. *To maintain rich and productive relationships with Xavier's partner schools.*

The Center has developed collaborative efforts with its partner schools: Mildred Osborne Elementary School, Thurgood Marshall Middle School, and McDonogh #35 Senior High School. The Center continues to support the projects described below.

- Apple Computer, Inc. will support the collaboration of faculty and students at Xavier and Thurgood Marshall Middle School during the 1997-98 academic year to use asynchronous communication technology to plan and design projects dealing with human aggression and cultural violence. **Funding from the Bell South Foundation was received and will further support this project through August 1998.**
- Staff in the Center, in collaboration with faculty from McDonogh #35 Senior High School and Mildred Osborne Elementary School, will submit a proposal to the Toyota USA Foundation. The major focus of the proposal is a systemic K-16 math and science project that incorporates interdisciplinary curriculum and "real world" classroom applications using advanced Geographic Information System technology. **The proposal was submitted, but was not chosen for funding.**
- The Center will support collaborative efforts among Center staff and partner school faculty to develop and launch interactive school Web pages. **The New Orleans Public School system has given leadership to the public schools' efforts to develop websites. The Center has provided Web authoring software training and Web-site design assistance to faculty at Thurgood Marshall Middle School.**

3. *To create a culture of teaching and learning.*

As a center for the *advancement of teaching*, the primary goal of the Center is to promote the art of teaching at all levels. The Center will continue to pursue this goal in the following ways:

- The Center will support departments to participate in the American Association for Higher Education's Peer Review of Teaching Project. Currently, the Center supports two departments-- Biology and English--in pursuing initiatives consistent with the goals of the Peer Review of Teaching Project. **The English Department has been particularly successful during the 1997-98 academic year in maintaining and establishing new teaching circles. During the 1997-98 academic year, the Center supported 27 faculty members in course portfolio projects. Teaching Communities of the Bush-Hewlett Faculty Development Grant will include faculty working on course portfolios during the 1998-99 academic year.**
- Faculty development initiatives outlined in the proposal to the Bush and William and Flora Hewlett foundations include the establishment of teaching and learning communities, and workshops on pedagogy and technology. These initiatives will begin in May 1998.
- The Center will continue to support electronic classrooms and laboratories for faculty and student use.

4. *To serve as the institutional facilitator for faculty development initiatives at Xavier University.*

As indicated above, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching is in a position to develop and support new faculty development initiatives if the proposal to the Bush Foundation and William and Flora Hewlett foundations is funded. The Center intends to become the widely recognized institutional facilitator for faculty development initiatives and opportunities at Xavier University. As such, it will coordinate and support the following:

- The Center will continue to offer a workshop for new faculty, with subsequent workshops throughout the faculty's first year.
- The Director of the Center will continue to make available to all faculty information about faculty development opportunities (*e.g.*, grants, workshops, conferences) and serve as the liaison to the Faculty Resource Network and The Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning. A variety of media will be used to promote faculty development opportunities including announcements at academic assembly meetings, posters, messages to chairpersons, and electronic messages to all faculty members. **Dr. Elizabeth Barron, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and former Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, will continue to serve as the liaison to the Faculty Resource Network.**
- The Director of the Center will function as the project director for the Bush and Hewlett foundations faculty development initiatives in pedagogy, research, and technology. Additionally,

the staff and faculty of the Center will be a part of the Steering Committee associated with the grant.

- The Center will have greater faculty "presence" in determining and fulfilling its commitments and goals. This will be accomplished, in part, by having a Faculty-in-Residence. **Dr. Jonathan Rotondo-McCord served as Faculty-in-Residence during the 1997-98 academic year; he will continue in this capacity during the 1998-98 academic year. Additionally, with the award of the Teaching Fellowships (see above), it is hoped that these faculty will contribute to the work of the Center. Last, the University Faculty Development Committee is a part of the Steering Committee for the Bush-Hewlett Faculty Development Grant.**

5. *To maintain state-of-the-art electronic classrooms and laboratories and to have a staff that meets the needs of university faculty in its use of technology for teaching and student learning.*

- The four ceiling-mounted monitors in Room 502 will be replaced with a projection system similar to that which is in Room 501. **This was completed between the fall 1997 and spring 1998 semesters.**
- The consoles in Rooms 501 and 502 will be modified so that local computers can be connected and there is a single control board for all functions. **This too was completed during the semester break.**
- Cable television will be made available in Rooms 501, 502, and 532A.
- An additional staff person with expertise in multimedia production will be sought.