

## Fall 2002 Advisory Group

As in the spring 2002 semester, the fall 2002 Advisory Group comprised faculty members from the Library, College of Arts and Sciences (A&S), and College of Pharmacy. The specific A&S departments with faculty representation included:

- African-American Studies
- Biology
- Business
- Chemistry
- Communications
- Computer Sciences and Computer Engineering
- Division of Education
- English
- History
- Languages
- Mathematics
- Philosophy
- Physics/Engineering
- Political Science
- Theology
- Sociology

Faculty members from both divisions of the College of Pharmacy – Division of Clinical & Administrative Sciences, and Division of Basic Pharmaceutical Sciences – also served on the fall 2002 Advisory Group.

We've compiled the minutes of the three Advisory Group luncheons that were held during the fall 2002 semester. We've also provided a summary of the minutes that we think captures the salient themes that were discussed at the luncheons.

We asked the members of the Advisory Group to help the Center during the fall 2002 semester in two specific ways:

1. Given the breadth and variety of comments and suggestions that we received during the spring 2002 Advisory Group luncheons, what, in your opinion, are the three or four most prominent or significant themes that emerge? In affect, to what should we pay the closest attention?
2. The Center staff members have begun to think about another grant proposal. We want to develop a proposal around a concept or theme that is determined by the faculty. Thus, we need the input of the members of the Advisory Group.

We have compiled the notes from these meetings and provided them below.

We first, however, provide you with a summary of the Fall 2002 Advisory Group meetings, including a few thoughts in response to the question, "So, now what do we do with this input?"

### **Summary**

Many of the comments regarding the major themes from last semester's Advisory Group meetings also relate to faculty members' ideas for a new grant proposal.

We have attempted to derive from these discussions the three most important areas that the Advisory Group members believe the Center should invest its efforts, including the development of a new grant proposal.

These areas are (in no order of priority):

1. Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching
2. Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning
3. Support of New Faculty Members

It would now be fair to ask, "What will you do with this information?"

The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (OVPAA) has given the Center the opportunity to invite a Xavier faculty member to serve as Associate Director. The Associate Director may assume responsibility for the New Faculty Orientation and a more fully developed New Faculty Workshop Series, as well as organizing the general workshops for the entire faculty. The Associate Director may also be responsible for working with the OVPAA in further developing the Faculty Mentoring Program.

Were such responsibilities to be delegated to the Associate Director, the Center would be better able to address many of the comments and suggestions of the Advisory Group concerning the three areas listed above.

The OVPAA has also given preliminary approval for the Center to request a new staff position. Based on feedback from the Advisory Group, and our own experience in working on projects with faculty, writing grant proposals, and reporting on the outcomes of grant initiatives, we are in most need of a staff person with expertise in (1) college and university teaching, (2) pedagogy, and (3) assessment. We envision such a person:

1. Developing and implementing a research-based teaching and learning initiative across the campus
2. Assisting faculty in developing their methods of teaching and assessing student learning
3. Providing workshops to faculty on teaching- and learning-related topics
4. Assisting other Center staff in assessing the outcomes of specific initiatives and faculty projects.

As with the Associate Director, this new staff person will help to address many of the faculty needs identified over the past year by the Center's Advisory Group.

Finally, beginning in the fall 2003 semester, the Center staff will begin formulating the specific ideas for a new grant proposal. At this point in time, we believe the concept of the proposal will be directly related to the three major themes mentioned above: Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching, Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning, Support of New Faculty Members. Of course, the form that these three ideas will take in the final proposal will be determined, at least in part, by any institutional changes that may occur between now and then, and the potential source of funding.

## ***Compilation of the Fall 2002 Advisory Group Members' Responses***

### **Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching**

1. Provide release time
2. Build a community for interaction among those doing the scholarship of teaching
3. Develop a program that encourages the application of research to teaching
4. Provide expert help on the design of classroom research or teaching and learning research projects, including writing hypotheses, and gathering and analyzing data
5. Provide or help build a library resource on the scholarship of teaching
6. Establish a new staff position in the Center for someone with expertise in pedagogy, the scholarship of teaching, and helping faculty identify learning objectives for both skills and knowledge associated with the course (see also "Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning")
7. Help faculty with pedagogical research; provide information for faculty on pedagogical research
8. Provide travel support for faculty to attend teaching workshops and conferences
9. Help new faculty members develop and improve their teaching
10. Create a chat room for dialogue about teaching and learning
11. Promote dialogue regarding teaching as a vocation; collaborate with the Faith and Learning Programs
12. Because of the evolving nature of knowledge, encourage faculty innovation in content development
13. Use Faculty Institute to showcase faculty innovation in teaching
14. Continue to provide support for faculty use of technology
15. Continue with the technology initiatives, given the changing technology and evolving needs of students
16. When faculty members make transitions to using technology in their courses, help them to be aware of the challenges and pitfalls
17. Promote a thoughtful assessment of the affect of technology on teaching and learning (see also "Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning")
18. Provide more workshops on teaching and promote faculty discussion on teaching; revisit the old Bush model of retreats and workshops on teaching
19. Sponsor more faculty showcases where faculty can present information about their teaching innovations, philosophies, practices, etc.

### **Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning**

1. Provide expert help in evaluating courses; help faculty evaluate the affect of their teaching on student learning
2. Help faculty do a better job of identifying the course learning objectives
3. Promote curriculum development efforts at the department level (see also "Departmental Dialogue")
4. Help faculty with the "deliverables" aspect of projects that are funded by Center grants
5. We need help in developing a more coherent curriculum; we need help in assessing our courses
6. Help the faculty assess student learning outcomes
7. At an institutional level, there is need to re-think and assess the core curriculum
8. Do not get involved in the assessment of programs, but instead focus on assessing faculty teaching
9. Offer more workshops on assessment
10. Offer department-specific assessment workshops
11. Establish a new staff position in the Center for someone with expertise in pedagogy, the scholarship of teaching, and helping faculty identify learning objectives for both skills and knowledge associated with the course (see also "Curriculum Development and Assessment of Student Learning")

### **Support of New Faculty Members**

1. Do more to support new faculty; establish a more systematic way to help them
2. Build a community among the new faculty members
3. Work to help new faculty improve their teaching; create a support network

4. Do more to promote the mentoring program; help create a stable faculty
5. Promote more dialogue between new faculty members and "veteran" faculty members (the Bush retreats of years ago were very good in this regard)
6. Develop a workshop program for new faculty members

## **Departmental and Interdepartmental Opportunities and Dialogue**

1. Promote curriculum development efforts at the department level
2. Promote departmental dialogue; build collaborations
3. Promote more interdisciplinary dialogue, such as that which took place years ago in the Science Education Research Group (SERG); promote more SERG-like activities
4. Promote curriculum development; content development; help faculty and departments meet benchmarks or standards as concerns student learning
5. Concentrate on building departmental partnerships, not just academic partnerships
6. Help chairs evaluate faculty

## **General Advice**

1. Help the institution avoid academic fads
2. Provide travel support to faculty who wish to see courses taught elsewhere
3. Reduce the emphasis placed on providing stipends and increase the opportunities for release time
4. Cultivate relationships with other universities
5. Be more involved in the discussion that surrounds faculty load issues; what literature exists having to do with the quality of teaching relative to (a) number of students enrolled in the course, (b) retention of students, and (c) course load for faculty? (Some suggested that the Center NOT get involved in this discussion.)
6. Provide summer support for faculty work in teaching and research; support faculty and student research during the summer
7. Help faculty prepare for the rank and tenure review process, particularly in the area of teaching (Some members suggested the Center be cautious in providing this sort of assistance.)
8. Help faculty prepare their faculty update sheets – help them to contextualize the student evaluation results (Some members suggested the Center be cautious in providing this sort of assistance.)
9. Bring in outside speakers to address changes in higher education; the MIT initiative is an example of such a change about which Xavier faculty could learn much
10. Broaden the notion of the scholarship of teaching to include scholarship in general; provide workshops to help people make research connections with others
11. Promote a thoughtful discussion among faculty about the nature of Xavier as Catholic and an HBCU. Why are these characteristics important? What are their implications?