

Proposal to Change Unit Name from

**Office of Faculty and TA Development
TO
University Center for the Advancement of Teaching**

Faculty and TA Development began a revision of its services in 2000, resulting in a refocusing of efforts to better address OAA and Ohio State priorities for course redesign, learning outcomes assessments, technology-enhanced teaching, learning, and research. Most of these changes move toward longer-term professional development for OSU faculty, staff, and GTAs, and significant new service areas including greater support to academic units on teaching related issues such as GTA support, peer review of teaching, curriculum development and assessment, and promotion and assistance with the scholarship of teaching and learning.

In 2006, the reporting line for Faculty and TA Development was changed from the College of Education to the Office of Academic Affairs. Since that time, FTAD has aligned its focus to that of OAA: to “stimulate and enable academic excellence.” The Faculty & TA Development philosophy of practice explicates the unit’s mission, vision, objectives and core principles, all of which have evolved over the past few years (attached). Stakeholders reinforce the belief that the current name expresses neither the range of services nor the mission, vision, objectives and core principles of the unit. Faculty & TA Development is no longer only an office where individuals can get support, but a center that has programs, communities, departmental partnerships, and interdisciplinary collaborations.

We therefore propose that Faculty and TA Development be renamed the
University Center for the Advancement of Teaching.

The following provides some specific reasons for the changing the name of this unit:

(1) **Faculty & TA Development work advances *teaching*** and learning across the entire institution, working with staff and units as well as faculty and TAs. In addition to traditional services such as consultations and workshops, since 2000 FTAD has created several long-term programs to promote a community of teaching at Ohio State. FTAD staff members value the importance of community and connect instructors from different disciplines who come together around a common goal: student learning. They do this by sponsoring learning communities such as TOAST (described below), and the Ohio State Teaching Enhancement Programs (OSTEP), through which groups of faculty, staff or TAs meet regularly throughout the year to work on a teaching-related project. FTAD staff members convene and facilitate book groups, in which participants from all disciplines come together to read and discuss a book on teaching.

FTAD staff members facilitate collaboration of departments who are working toward a common teaching goal, including significant course redesign efforts and assessments of course and program learning outcomes. FTAD staff members value and maintain partnerships with units across the campus, such as the Office of Minority Affairs, Department of Theater, the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing, the Office of Disabilities Services, the ADA Coordinator, and many others. Both independently and with University partners, FTAD sponsors programs to

support teachers with various aspects of their teaching and their students' learning. Additionally, FTAD collaborates with OAA and Arts & Sciences Assessment and Curriculum Development to support faculty in assessing the learning outcomes of courses and programs.

(2) Faculty & TA Development seeks to *advance* the field of educational development.

FTAD staff members have championed efforts to promote the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) at Ohio State, by supporting Ohio State faculty and staff members in their SoTL research efforts. FTAD also sponsored the learning community that has grown into the Ohio State Association for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (TOAST). TOAST has had both local impact, and, through an association with the Carnegie Academy for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, connections across the US and internationally. As the home of the Central Ohio Regional Center of the Ohio Learning Network, FTAD has supported faculty professional learning communities to further the agendas of the Office of Academic Affairs, The Ohio State University, and the Ohio Board of Regents, advancing appropriate uses of instructional technologies.

(3) Faculty & TA Development supports the university's research mission appropriate to a *Center*, in addition to our service to the scholarship of others on teaching and learning, maintaining an active research agenda that explores university teaching and efforts to support it. FTAD staff members publish regularly in peer-reviewed, national-level journals in the field of educational development. Staff participates in national and international conferences. They follow the literature on university pedagogy and share it with OSU instructors to help them to be scholarly teachers for whom research on teaching informs their teaching practice as disciplinary scholarship informs their research programs. This work is necessarily transdisciplinary, as teaching is one of the few practices that cross all disciplinary borders within the university, and the scholarship that supports effective teaching draws from and offers to all fields.

**The Ohio State University
Office of Faculty and TA Development
Philosophy of Practice 2007**

Mission

Faculty & TA Development at The Ohio State University assists faculty members, instructors, and graduate teaching associates in becoming the finest teachers they wish to be. As a part of the Office of Academic Affairs, FTAD stimulates and enables excellence in teaching and learning. FTAD supports teaching at Ohio State through consultations, events, and information resources.

Philosophy of Practice

The support and services we provide are guided by the following core principles:

Community

We believe that knowledge and expertise are socially constructed within a specific context and that a collaborative community provides the space for people to share ideas and learn from one another. We focus on creating and sustaining a climate that supports teaching, developing a community of peers at the local, national, and international levels, and fostering a culture that celebrates the practice of teaching, as well as research on university instruction. We also value and seek to extend our partnerships within Ohio State, across the field of higher education, and more broadly.

Community requires trust and a sense of safety. Our goal is to provide a safe and trustworthy environment for those instructors who choose to work with us. One part of this effort is that we work with them on a voluntary and confidential basis, and that we do not participate in summative evaluation of their work. We believe that we are more effective as helpers when we are not also the “judges.”

Our community is stronger for valuing the diversity of its members. Faculty & TA Development has a long-standing collaboration with the Office of Minority Affairs to support improving the learning climate for students from historically under-represented groups. The Commitment to Success Program uses the methodologies of scholarly analysis to support academic units in developing and implementing diversity action plans. Recently, this effort has expanded in partnership with the Department of Theatre, creating an interactive theatre troupe, InterACT, which provides highly effective programming on issues of diversity and inclusion. Other partners in these efforts include Student Affairs, the ADA coordinator, the Office for Disability Services, and the Nisonger Center.

We have worked to create opportunities for faculty to engage in learning communities through the Ohio State Teaching Enhancement Program (OSTEP). These groups meet regularly for a year, working together to support each other’s efforts on a teaching related project. Similarly, Faculty & TA Development supports other communities of teacher –scholars, such as the Academy of Teaching and TOAST – The OSU Association for Scholarship of Teaching. Faculty & TA Development also sponsors book groups, both campus wide and within academic units, as a form of multi-level community; participants share the experience of reading a book together and trying the ideas they read about.

Through surveys and reports from these groups, we know that members value the community created throughout the life of the groups and beyond. They feel a better sense of connectedness with other units on campus and see common challenges and solutions.

We also have a strong commitment to enhancing and utilizing the community that exists within our office. We believe in working together in a reflective manner that enables us to develop ourselves as members of our office, our university, and our profession.

Service

We believe our role is to make other people's work lives easier, more productive, and more enjoyable. We work with a 'person-first' orientation that begins with the needs of the client. It is important to consider each person as a multifaceted being in order to serve him/her best. We work to increase student success by supporting individual instructors and entire units, and we also participate in service to the university.

It is vital that the staff of a university teaching center address the particular needs of the instructors with whom they are working, just as all teachers must address the particular needs of the students who are actually in their classes. At Faculty & TA Development, we listen carefully to faculty and teaching associates to be sure we are responding to their real needs. We also make a point of trying always to say "yes" to whatever request an instructor has: sometimes that means "yes, we can do that for or with you," sometimes, "yes, we can direct you to the place on campus that provides that service," and sometimes, "yes, we'll help you find the information or resources you want." If faculty members have to spend too much time and effort finding the support they need, they may decide not to follow through with whatever instructional innovation they had in mind. This makes a service orientation, the "yes we can" attitude, very important for the success of both individual instructional consultants and for the entire teaching center as an organization.

In serving on academic department and college committees and university initiatives, Faculty & TA Development seeks to be both a source of information and expertise and an advocate for enhancing a university culture that supports and honors teaching and teaching improvement. We have been invited to participate in many such activities including the Senate Committee on Peer Review of Teaching, SEI Oversight, Assessment of GEC, and several college and departmental efforts to improve teaching and to develop systems of assessment.

Faculty & TA Development makes a concerted, regular effort to gather and use feedback from our clients and constituents. Satisfaction surveys after events, annual surveys that include both quantitative and qualitative responses, the numbers of return users of our services, events attendance, email and comments (solicited and not), and grants awarded all afford evidence of the effectiveness of our work. These data also allow us to continue to improve the service we give.

Scholarship

As members of the academic community, the staff of Faculty & TA Development understands that scholarship is the core value and practice of our institution. We believe that this culture of

evidence should guide teaching and service, just as it does discovery-focused research. Scholarship is demonstrated in critically reflective, scholarly teaching and assessment.

We have published regularly in the national-level journals of the field of educational development, and continue to have an active research agenda exploring both university teaching and efforts to enhance and support such teaching. We also follow, use, and share the literature on university pedagogy with Ohio State instructors to help them to be scholarly teachers, for whom research on teaching informs their practice and for whom research on teaching is as creative an act as any other form of original act of the scholarship of discovery or creation, disseminated like any other scholarly endeavor performed by us and our colleagues at our institution.

We help in clarifying their instructional goals, generating testable questions about how best to achieve these goals, and gathering useful data to answer their questions. These efforts are often limited to a single instructor and a single class. However, this practice often generates findings that can and should be shared.

This practice has been growing internationally in higher education over the last fifteen or so years under the name of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Faculty & TA Development has championed in these efforts at Ohio State. In addition to assisting individual faculty members in their SoTL efforts, FTAD sponsored a faculty learning community on the topic that has grown into TOAST – The OSU Association for Scholarship of Teaching. Affiliated with local, national and international partners, this group of more than 30 Ohio State faculty supports its members in collegial relationships across disciplines and seeks to reinforce a faculty culture that brings the scholarship of teaching and research together.

By working in community, with the orientation of service, and techniques of scholarship, Faculty & TA Development seeks to further our mission of supporting the enhancement/advancement of teaching and learning at The Ohio State University.



FACULTY & TA DEVELOPMENT

Annual Report 2007 – 2008 fiscal year

Executive SummaryMission (proposed revision)

Faculty & TA Development (FTAD) exists to assist all those who teach at The Ohio State University to excel in teaching, support student learning, and experience the satisfaction that results from teaching well.

FTAD seeks to advance teaching at Ohio State by promoting a university culture that puts students first by valuing a scholarly approach to teaching and learning, and focuses on teacher success by providing information, consultation, and events on teaching.

FTAD has far-reaching impact on teaching at all levels and across the university.

During the 2007-2008 reporting period,

- **We focused on faculty and helped them to put students first**
 - worked with 1474 individuals (faculty, TAs, administrators, and staff -- 651 of them graduate students), from all campuses and colleges. This represents an impact on 20% of the instructional staff of the university, and 93% of units.
 - consulted on issues of teaching and learning with 247 individuals (faculty, TAs, staff). These instructors were from 101 different units and represented all colleges (except Law). These individual consultations on teaching advancement included 559 meetings, class visits and other contacts.
 - more than 1340 different instructors participated in 159 teaching events (for a total of 2218 attendances), including 361 new GTAs who attended our orientation conference.
- **We worked to create one Ohio State by increasing our trans-institutional collaborations**
 - members of all but 8 academic units have worked with FTAD in teaching improvement efforts (102 of 110 on the A-Z colleges/schools/departments list, or 93%). These include faculty from all campuses and all colleges. FTAD staff conducted 87 unit consultations; 41 academic and support units used these services, representing 30% of units.
 - collaborated with academic units, support units, and other groups to develop and present programming to advance teaching and learning.
- **We began to assist in recasting the research agenda to include scholarship on university teaching and learning**
 - supported the Academy of Teaching, The OSU Association for Scholarship of Teaching (TOAST), and consulted and co-authored with individual faculty and graduate students.
- **We sought to simplify systems and structures**
 - continued to assess our own work and to assist academic programs to use assessment to advance transparency and accountability.

Going forward, Faculty & TA Development will

- continue these successful efforts to advance the quality of teaching and learning at Ohio State.
- prepare to support the curricular and course redesign activities needed to convert to semesters.
- extend our participation in globalization of the university, by both outreach and service, and by further developing services for international instructors, teaching of international students, and globalization of the curriculum.
- refine our mission, change our name, and strengthen recognition of our services.