

What is ICUT and How Can I Be Involved?

Many faculty have raised questions about the activities and future plans of ICUT, the new Institute for College and University Teaching.

Question: What is the Institute and what does it do?

The mission of the Institute is to promote excellence in teaching among faculty members and higher education institutions in North Carolina and across the Southeast. Expanding on the programs WCU has been offering North Carolina universities, the Institute will also serve community colleges and private colleges and universities, eventually offering its services nationwide. In addition, the Institute disseminates a newsletter that promotes dialogue on post-secondary teaching and supports faculty research projects on effective teaching strategies.

Question: How is the Institute Organized?

Currently, the Institute has a Director, Judy Stillion; an Associate Director, Ben Ward; and an Assistant Director, Kay Hill, who have taken on these positions in addition to their regular duties. We have a half-time person for this year only who is helping to write grants and to coordinate planning for summer programs. Various secretaries have devoted part of their work-load to helping with the work of the Institute. Finally, a state-wide Advisory Board meets twice a year to advise the staff of the Institute on future directions and on programming for the Institute.

Question: How is the Institute funded?

Currently, the Institute has a small state budget to support on-going costs. We also received a one-time only allocation to purchase needed equipment and furnish the office this year. Each of the programs of the Institute is designed to be self-supporting through registration fees and institutional membership dues. We are in the process of writing grants to underwrite the costs of some continuing programs. With the help of a volunteer, Gordon Mercer, we are also planning a fund-raising campaign. Finally, we plan to use the strategic planning process at Western as well as to approach General Administration to request funds for the administration of the Institute.

Question: How can Western faculty be involved in the Institute?

We hope Western faculty will want to be involved in the Institute in many ways. First, our faculty are invited to all the general programs offered by the Institute. However, because enrollment in some activities may be limited, early registration is always a good idea. Second, we will continue to use Western faculty as presenters at many of our programs as we have in the Carolina Colloquy and New Faculty Seminars in the past. Third, all faculty at Western recently received the second copy of our newsletter, *The Cutting Edge*, and were asked to return a card if they wanted to continue to receive the publication. This is one way in which we hope communication with interested faculty will be continued. Finally, we are always interested in hearing from Western faculty who have ideas for the Institute. The ideas and energy of Western faculty helped shape the vision for the Institute and we hope that we will never lose that close connection. You can begin your involvement by asking questions or making comments about this essay and sending them to the FCTE for publication in *notes & quotes*.

Question: What does the Institute do for Western Carolina University?

The presence of the Institute has already assured that Western is the one university in the state that has programs and facilities devoted to promoting excellence in teaching on a state-wide level. In response to a proposal from the UNC Faculty Delegate Assembly, General Administration has designated WCU as host site for a 1994 conference on evaluating and enhancing teaching. Particularly at this time in history, any university that becomes known for promoting excellence in teaching has distinguished itself. We think that the Institute has the promise of helping Western Carolina University develop a reputation rooted in a very real interest in promoting post-secondary teaching excellence.

Question: What are the future plans for the Institute?

The Institute will be moving to the Camp Laboratory School facility at the earliest possible date. We also have a series of programs planned for the spring, summer, and fall of 1994 as listed below. We hope many of you will be involved in one or more of these programs and we want to issue an open invitation to become a part of the Institute by sharing your ideas and letting us know of your interest in being a part of it.

Future Programs

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Multi-Campus Retreat	Faculty from all Universities	May 16-19
New Faculty Seminar	Carolina Colloquy Members	May 30-June 4
New Faculty Seminar II	Non-Carolina Colloquy Members	June 6-11
Carolina Colloquy	Carolina Colloquy Members	July 21-24
Humanities Conference*	All Post-Secondary Institutions	August 6-13
State-wide Conference on Evaluating and		

Rewarding Teaching

All UNC Institutions

TBA

*Tentative--Depending on Funding

**Judy Stillion, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Director of the Institute
for College and University Teaching**

Comments or Questions?

If you have comments you would like to make about this essay or further questions about ICUT you would like to ask Judy, please send them by the 8th of the month to Judy (HFR 535; phone: 7495; VAX: StillionJ) or to Terry Nienhuis (FCTE; phone: 7196; Vax: TNienhuis). Please indicate whether you are willing to be quoted or prefer to remain anonymous.