

# Coulter Faculty Center Annual Report

Reporting Period July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006



Prepared by Anna T. McFadden, Interim Director

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### From the Interim Director

This has been a year of tremendous change for the Coulter Faculty Center. An interim director was hired January 1 to direct the reorganization and expansion of the Center in response to the growth of the university and the evolving needs of faculty. With teaching and learning at its core, the Center continued its extensive service to faculty in the fall under director Alan Altany. With the change in leadership in January, extensive needs assessment and strategic planning were begun. This past year, 272 faculty participated in 87 initiatives. This report details the year, the reorganization journey and its continuing evolution.

Anna T. McFadden

Coulter Faculty Center Staff and Supporting Personnel

Anna T. McFadden, Ph.D.  
Interim Director, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Foundations

Jane Kneller, Office Manager

Debra Randleman, M.A. Associate Director, Instructor of Mathematics

Alan Altany, Ph.D.  
Senior Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Professor of Religious Studies

Kevin Sisson, WebCat Team Leader

John Ashcraft, WebCat Instructional Support Specialist

Nina Marable, WebCAT Instructional Support Specialist

Jeff Kiska, WebCat Administrator

Laura Chapman, Instructional Support Specialist

Sue Grider, Instructional Training Specialist

Chris Snyder, Ph.D., Instructional Training Specialist

Neil Torda, Digital Media Lecturer/Lab Technician

Terry Nienhuis, Ph.D., Department of English  
Faculty Fellow for Publications

Betty Farmer, Ph.D., Department of Communication, Theatre, and Dance  
Faculty Fellow for Mentoring

John Habel, Ph.D., Department of Psychology  
Faculty Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

Sharon Dole, Ph.D., Department of Human Services  
Faculty Fellow for Part-Time Faculty Development

John LeBaron, Ph.D., Jay M. Robinson, Distinguished Professor for Educational Technologies  
Faculty Fellow for E-Learning

Claire DeCristofaro, MD, Department of Nursing  
Faculty Fellow for E-Learning

Shawn Acheson, Ph.D. Department of Psychology  
Faculty Fellow for Statistical Analysis and Research Design

David Luginbuhl, Ph.D. Department of Math and Computer Science  
Faculty Fellow for Significant Student Learning.

John Moore, Department of Communication, Theatre & Dance, Faculty Fellow - Digital Media

### CFC Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning exists to help the Faculty Center at Western Carolina University fulfill its vision of creating a community of teacher scholars promoting the excellence of teaching, learning, and other forms of scholarship.

The specific responsibilities of the Advisory Committee are as follows:

- To offer regular suggestions in identifying and prioritizing faculty needs connected with teaching and learning.
- To review and evaluate the role, work and effectiveness of the Coulter Faculty Center and how its work with faculty is affecting the learning of students
- To assess the Coulter Faculty Center's resources to be certain they are sufficient to meet its goals
- To support the role of the Coulter Faculty Center in the university community

### **Coulter Faculty Center Advisory Committee Members, 2005 – 2006**

John LeBaron, Educational Leadership and Foundations  
 Peter Nieckarz, Anthropology & Sociology  
 Kathy Starr, Physical Therapy  
 Tim Carstens, Librarian  
 Christine Stevens, Health Sciences  
 Debra Burke, Marketing & Business Law  
 Mike Smith, Management & International Business  
 Lisa Bloom, Human Services  
 Glenn Bowen, Service Learning  
 Bronwen Sheffield, Office of Educational Outreach  
 Carlie Merritt, Applied Criminology  
 Maurice Phipps, Health & Human Performance  
 Laura Cruz, History  
 John Habel (chair), Psychology  
 Bob Orr, Associate CIO, ex officio member  
 Anna T. McFadden, Interim Director, Coulter Faculty Center, ex officio member

### The Reorganization of the Coulter Faculty Center

In spring of 2005, Provost Kyle Carter called for a study to reorganize the Center to better serve faculty in their efforts to enhance student learning. In response to faculty requests from surveys, interviews and special events, the Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is now undergoing an expansion and restructuring. Combining the resources of the Coulter Faculty Center, Educational Technologies, and the Division of Educational Outreach, effective January 1, 2006 the Center entered a new phase of faculty support. Building upon current activities which include the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, faculty services, sponsored activities and publications, Center staff are working to integrate professional development activities, instructional design and technology support into a single point of service in Hunter Library.

Interim Director, Dr. Anna McFadden, moved from her position as Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations to lead the effort. McFadden, a faculty member for 10 years at WCU, spent three months studying in-depth the needs of faculty. The message was clear. Faculty want a seamless solution to enhancing their instruction whether pedagogically or

technically. The Center is now engaged in strategic planning to clarify the vision, mission, and strategic directions of the Coulter Faculty Center.

In the expanded Center, faculty will find assistance in designing curricula, integrating technology to augment student learning, training to use technologies, and exploring the scholarship of teaching and learning as well as new ways of addressing teaching and learning issues. For those faculty who are engaged or soon will be engaged in distance education, the Center is in the process of hiring instructional developers with expertise not only in course design but also in dealing specifically with successful pedagogy in a variety of distance formats. Faculty wanting to incorporate geographic information systems, audio or video integration, or research functions such as SPSS or SAS into their courses will find assistance for those efforts as well.

The reorganization builds on the strong foundation established by previous director Alan Altany who led WCU to a national reputation for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning with the establishment of the international peer-reviewed electronic journal MountainRise.

**For the 2005-2006 academic year, the Center recorded 87 initiatives with services to 272 faculty.**

### Needs Assessment

The following report was presented by Interim Director, Anna McFadden to the Western Carolina University Community:

The purpose of this report is to present a summary of data collected from interviews, surveys, and open forums concerning the reorganization of the Coulter Faculty Center. As Interim Director, in December 2005, I presented to the staff and the Advisory Board an entry plan designed to enable me to learn as much as possible not only about the current activities of the center, but also to determine the needs of the faculty as Western grows and changes. I am grateful to members of our staff who assisted me with this effort.

### **Methods**

The first question to be answered was "What is the Coulter Faculty Center currently doing?" To answer this question, I read the 2004-2005 center report. In addition, I studied the website as well as a list of current activities provided by the center. I also interviewed each staff member and Faculty Fellow.

The other two questions were "What services should the Coulter Faculty Center provide?" and "How should we provide these services?" To answer these questions, I interviewed each staff member and Faculty Fellow. In addition, I met with the leadership team of each college which included the dean, associate dean, and department heads. I also met with key individuals - the Provost, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Associate Chief Information Officer, the Dean of Distance and Continuing Education, the Chair of the Faculty Senate, and Chancellor Emeritus Coulter for whom the center is named. In addition, I conducted two Open Forums for faculty and met with the Nursing Faculty on the Enka campus. To be certain that we reached all faculty, I worked with the center staff to develop an electronic survey.

The Advisory Board deemed that student input was important. I consulted with John Habel, Chair of the Advisory Board, and Faculty Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Because the center is a part of the Committee on Significant Study Learning and a research study to be conducted involving students this spring, we determined that this data would best inform student needs concerning the professional development of faculty. We hope to have this data in the fall of 2006.

## Data Analysis

Most of the data collected involved listening carefully to open-ended questions and my hand recording responses. Laura Chapman recorded all of the data for the Open Forums. The open-ended responses on the electronic survey were compiled into one document. I read all of the responses and hi-lighted key words and phrases. I re-read the data again looking for patterns. After identifying the patterns in the data, I developed central themes. For the demographic and forced choice questions on the survey, frequencies and percentages were calculated. Laura Chapman of the Coulter Faculty Center staff read the report to provide a peer check since she had been involved in working with the Open Forum and survey data.

## Results

For Question 1, "What is the Faculty Center currently doing?" I determined that 1) many outstanding services and programs are in place, 2) participation in these services and programs has increased, and 3) Western has developed a national reputation as a leader in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. As one staff member noted, the CFC has sought to impact teaching and learning through "collaboration, conversation, and commitment to long term change." The center recognizes that one-shot workshops are not effective and that faculty development is much more complex. Since several new positions have been added to the center, I looked also at services currently provided by individuals in those new positions.

For Question 2, "What services should the Coulter Faculty Center provide?" the following broad themes emerged from the data:

### Visible Advocacy

The message is clear that faculty want the CFC to advocate for their needs. They want the director to be visible and persistent in calling for the voice of faculty in decisions. They see "management by walking around" as key.

### Support for New Faculty

The campus community sees the CFC as providing not only professional support but assisting with the socialization of new faculty. They feel new faculty need to know the institutional history and need to be provided networking opportunities. The suggestion was made that a technology mentoring program be added to the current mentoring services. There is a strong voice for "just-in time professional development" so that new faculty are not overwhelmed at the beginning of their first semester. Many see the Center as the clearinghouse where new faculty can turn to get answers to all of their questions. The message seems to be "Help us make sense of all this stuff!" Even if the center does not provide the services they need, they see the CFC as the place to direct them. There is strong support for the confidential, formative nature services provided by the center. As one interviewee noted, "The Faculty Center should be an oasis where new faculty find shining examples, education and dissemination."

### Support for Faculty Research in their Disciplines

Support for research emerged as a major concern. Faculty want assistance with research design and data analysis. They want an online electronic survey tool, and as one survey respondent said, "It cannot come soon enough." Faculty interested in qualitative research want university support for qualitative data analysis software. Tied to this support is the need for assistance for faculty going up for full professor. They want a clear understanding of expectations and how to meet these expectations. There were several suggestions that the Faculty Writing Circle be reconstituted to provide discipline based support for publication, particularly peer-reviewed journals. Many faculty

want to see discipline research as a way to enhance teaching valued as much in the Faculty Center as SoTL.

### Support for Technology in Teaching

The “one stop” message is clear for technology support. In addition, faculty are insistent about the need for after hours and weekend support for WebCT for both students and faculty. They want differentiated technology training- workshops, small groups, learning communities, and individual consultation. Faculty want direct contact for advanced support. They want assistance with copyright and intellectual property issues. Interest in digital media is strong and growing. Faculty see the Faculty Sandbox as a comfortable, essential part of their technology support and an area that needs on-going financial support for up-to date equipment. In addition to the tools, faculty need assistance with the pedagogy of online teaching and recognition that their online teaching is valued and understood. Some requested training in using SMART classrooms. Faculty also need assistance with connecting from home. Many are interested in the use of laptops with their students in the classroom. Targeted disciplined specific training for introducing computer driven assignments in the classroom was cited as a need as well as training on blogging and podcasting. Faculty want showcase opportunities for their technology integration work. MAC users called for more support. Best practice standards for online course design as a role for new instructional designers was mentioned. Staff called for consistent professional response to faculty as well as a standard set of tools and responses. There was a call for a comprehensive list of the software supported by the university and available to faculty.

### Support for Part-Time Faculty

Sharon Dole’s study of part-time faculty needs was most useful in providing data. It is clear that part-time faculty feel disenfranchised. They need opportunities for a teaching award, microgrants, and instructional improvement grants. They need an advocate through the infrastructure of the university system. An example is the need to have an email account created immediately upon hiring. In addition, part-time faculty need online training and support since coming to campus is not feasible for many.

### Support for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Faculty who have participated in SoTL efforts on campus truly enjoy and feel they have benefited. They cite the Summer Institute, the SoTL Faire, the Readers Roundtable and Faculty Learning Communities. Many indicate that they had never talked with anyone about their teaching until they participated in these experiences. Through these opportunities, they feel they found support for risk taking and venue for resource sharing. They advocate constructivist, collaborative, learner centered faculty development. They support Western taking a leadership role in CASTL to work with and learn from other institutions. There were suggestions to make the literature review and main SoTL journals more easily available, to add a SoTL librarian, and to publish conference proceedings from the SoTL Faire. SoTL participants want acknowledgement for all forms of scholarly activity at Western.

### Support for Department Heads for the Improvement of Instruction

The role of the department head is difficult. Department heads need a great deal of support but their time is limited. One of the most difficult tasks for which many were not trained is the supervision and evaluation of instruction. They need assistance to align this support with the seven principles of effective teaching adopted by the Faculty Senate. While some would like formal training, due to time constraints, others would like individual consultations with a center staff member.

## Graduate Teaching Assistants

A need exists to collaborate with the graduate school to develop a teaching and learning training model for graduate teaching assistants as well as a more effective communication system concerning center services.

## A Rethinking of How We Communicate and Provide the Opportunities Offered at the Coulter Faculty Center

As one respondent noted, the CFC should be a “make it happen conduit.” As another said, “The center should be like the information center at an airport,” with referrals to other offices. Faculty see the Coulter Faculty Center webpage design as critical to this effort. This change in service will require the office manager role to change and more support for events coordination. As the University campus extends beyond the boundaries of Western North Carolina, video streaming of CFC events and training will become critical. Many faculty want online training and discussion opportunities. The Enka campus has needs for on site support. Respondents see the center director as key in being visible in colleges and departments to communicate opportunities. In addition, faculty want to see the connection of services to other initiatives on campus such as service learning, the mission of the university, strategic planning, and the Quality Enhancement Plan. A Frequently Asked Questions section on the website was one suggestion. As the same time, faculty want the FAC to assist with “not losing the family with the growth.”

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The faculty have spoken and their consistent message is a call for an umbrella organization. It will be important for the Coulter Faculty Center Staff and Advisory Board to use this information to revisit the mission of the center and to create a strategic plan consistent with the mission and strategic plan of the university. The center leadership will need to be visible and to persistently advocate for the needs of faculty to promote significant student learning. In addition, the staff must visualize support beyond the boundaries of Cullowhee and explore the use of technology to enhance that support. Faculty must feel that they own the Center and all must feel comfortable in accessing its services. In the midst of the re-organization, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning must remain at the core and support must be provided to continue and expand WCU'S national SoTL work. And finally, to be a truly successful organization, the voices of students must be added to the conversation about teaching and learning.

To keep the focus on teaching and learning, the Center Staff and Advisory Board can ask the following questions. These are based on Huber and Hutchings' (2005) recommended action agenda for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning:

How can we establish more and better ways to talk about learning?

How will we include students in the discussion about learning?

How can we recognize teaching as substantive, intellectual work?

How can we create new genres and forms to document the work of teaching and learning?

How can we build and maintain the infrastructure needed to make pedagogical work of high quality available and accessible to all?

The Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning draws upon a rich history and much success in its work. In the midst of such rapid change at Western Carolina University, it

behooves the Coulter Faculty Center to, in the words of Oblinger (2005), set its sights on “constantly making its future rather than defending its past.”

### Strategic Planning

Following the report to the University Community, the Coulter Faculty Center Staff, Faculty Fellows, and Advisory Board gathered at a strategic planning retreat. They began the draft of a vision and mission statement and a smaller committee was appointed to continue their work. So far, the committee has created the following:

#### Myron L. Coulter Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Vision, Mission, Strategic Directions

(draft)

#### Vision

The Faculty Center will be a community of teacher scholars promoting excellence in teaching and learning, and other forms of scholarship.

#### Mission

The Faculty Center is dedicated to the continual enrichment of the culture of teaching and learning. It seeks to

- Promote the development of knowledge and the exchange of experiences in a responsive, supportive, and confidential setting.
- Assist faculty with tailored teaching strategies
- Provide leadership and support for multiple forms of scholarship
- Support and advance the effective and appropriate use of technology in teaching and learning
- Serve as a centralized resource for faculty support and information

#### Strategic Directions

- To the advance the reputation of the Faculty Center as a leader in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
- To expand faculty development to enhance significant student learning
- To expand the role of the Faculty Center as a central resource for support and information for all faculty both on and off campus
- To facilitate the effectiveness of technology in teaching and learning
- To provide events and opportunities for collaboration and conversation among faculty and students

The Strategic Planning Committee is now completing the development of strategic initiatives. This entire final draft will go to the faculty for review and comment before final approval.

## A Big Picture

In the spring of each year, the Coulter Faculty Center issues to each member with registered attendance for a Faculty Center service, a letter summarizing the faculty member's efforts to improve teaching. Faculty use these for their Annual Faculty Evaluation files. **This year we issued 272 letters for 87 different initiatives.**

## Addressing Areas of Need

**Areas of need identified through the needs assessment are being addressed through programs already in place and by new initiatives in the CFC. These are noted separately.**

### Visible Advocacy

CFC staff played an important advocacy role by serving on or facilitating the following committees:

- Microgrant Committee (ex officio member)
- Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award Committee (ex officio member)
- Board of Governors' Excellence in Teaching Award Committee (ex officio member)
- Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award Committee (ex officio member)
- Provost's Instructional Improvement Grants Committee (ex officio member)
- Committee on Student Learning (co-chair)
- Summer Institute for Teaching & Learning Planning Committee
- SoTL Faire Planning Committee
- Service Learning Advisory
- CFC Advisory Committee
- SoTL Leadership Team

**New Initiatives since January 1.** The Director has attempted to get out of the office and be visible. She met with all the college leadership teams as a part of the needs assessment. She is in full attendance at all Faculty Center major functions and greets participants. She continues her role as a faculty member with participation in such important events as graduation and through service on many committees, she has chosen not to delegate those responsibilities but to rather attend as an advocate for faculty. A new committee responsibility for the director is the Student Computer Requirement Committee as well as an advisory role to the Quality Enhancement Committee.

### Support for New Faculty

The CFC's participation in New Faculty Orientation was well-received last year with evaluation ratings ranging on a 10 point scale in the 8-10 range. A session was conducted on syllabus construction as well as cooperative learning, blogs for student learning, best practices for online learning, assessing student learning, the scholarship of teaching and learning, academic integrity and technology, and pedagogy and the use of WebCT.

### **New Faculty Orientation Seminar August 12<sup>th</sup> 2005 Evaluation Data**

Organization of Material	8.72	Effective Presentation Style	8.86
Presented at the right level	8.56	Speaker's knowledge of subject	9.32
Practicality of material to my job	8.95	Speaker covered the material clearly	9.06
Notebook/handout material supported the subject	8.84	Speaker responded well to questions	9.11
Effective small group activities	9.19	Overall	9.03
Effective visual aids	9.10		

## Faculty Mentoring Program

In addition, Dr. Betty Farmer's work with the Faculty Mentoring program involved 36 pairs and 73 individuals. Participants received a program orientation and participated in such activities as an AFE/TPR Panel, Breakfast with the Faculty Fellows, a campus tour with Chancellor Bardo, and received free tickets to many campus events.

**New Initiatives Since January 1.** The CFC staff has studied the evaluations from last year's new faculty orientation as well as the needs assessment data. We have requested to be an early part of the university's web redesign so that we may create a web presence that represents a one-stop repository especially designed to help new faculty who wish to go to one place for answers. In addition, we recognize the need for "just in time professional development" and designed our day of New Faculty Orientation to allow participants to exit with a product- a syllabus linked to campus resources.

## Support for Faculty Research in Their Disciplines

The CFC continued support of the activities of both the Qualitative and Quantitative Research Groups.

**New Initiatives since January 1.** The CFC helped fund the exploration and purchase of qualitative software for faculty for their research. In addition, we added a Faculty Fellow for Research Design and Statistical Analysis to work with faculty who need assistance. Also, the CFC led the pilot for Ultimate Survey, an online survey tool for faculty and students for use in their research. The pilot was successful and as of June 14, 2006, the tool is available to all faculty. This year we will offer support for faculty desiring to apply for Fulbright Scholarships. John LeBaron, the Jay M Robinson Endowed Chair for Educational Technologies and a two time Fulbright Scholar winner who will be based in the Center will provide support and assistance to faculty in this area.

## Support for Technology in Teaching

The Coulter Faculty Center sponsored Faculty Learning Communities on Online Teaching and Learning and Technology in Teaching. The Online Teaching and Learning Community was born from a Focus Team at the 2005 Summer Institute for Teaching and Learning. In addition, the CFC collaborated with the Office of Educational Outreach on the 2005 E-Learning Retreat. 40 faculty participated in this retreat and are engaged in self-assessment of their online courses.

## New Initiatives since January 1.

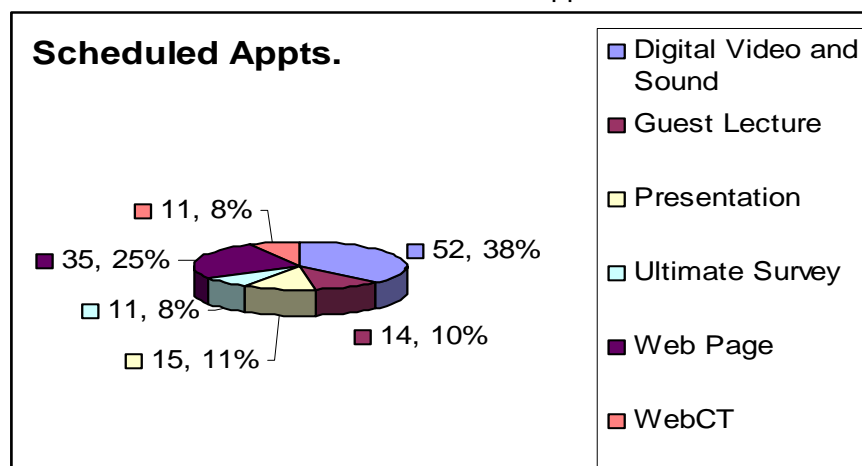
The move of the Educational Technologies staff to the Coulter Faculty Center created an opportunity for enhanced support for faculty.

- **Online Teaching and Learning.** The WebCT team- Kevin Sisson, Jeff Kiska, Nina Marable (who recently retired), and John Ashcraft - stepped up its operation and invited students to name their course management system. They chose WebCAT and the Center staff stepped forward to provide a temporary solution for weekend support for online learners. The staff engaged in more than 35 individual consultations with Faculty teaching and supporting WebCT, Wimba, Respondus, Turnitin and Centra and provided technical assistance which averaged 2-5 support calls per day from the help desk, another 5-6 direct calls and 10 direct emails. The staff has manually created 650 courses for the spring 2006, over 120 for the summer 2006 and already have over 200 ready for the fall 2006. For the 2005-2006 academic year, the staff conducted 43 workshops. For Fall 2005, there were 5819 student accounts and for Spring 2006 there were 6276 student accounts.

Beginning June 1, 2006 the WebCAT support team and other center staff initiated a temporary solution to the end for weekend support for students and faculty. The group developed a rotating schedule. The first weekend there were 5 calls on Saturday and 12 on Sunday as well as several emails to respond to.

With funding from the Division of Educational Outreach, the CFC hired two Faculty Fellows for E-Learning and has hired two more for the fall. The first two- John LeBaron, Claire DeCristofaro- led the work of the Faculty Learning Community for Online Teaching and Learning and served as faculty representatives to the WebCAT implementation team. Together with the new hires for fall, Dixie McGinty and Mary Teslow, this group worked with WebCAT team leader Kevin Sisson to develop a self assessment tool to enhance quality in online courses. This tool was shared and tested at the E-Learning Retreat in May. The group is also developing a technology mentoring program for faculty.

- The area of digital media experienced exponential interest and growth. Services through the Sandbox and the position of a Digital Media lecturer responded to this need. The Digital Media Lecturer, Erik Jeffreys (who left us for a job in Las Vegas) and his replacement Neil Torda, resolved minor IT issues in FPAC as well as maintained all the video editing equipment for students. They made certain the digital media labs worked as planned and provided beginning of the semester lab instruction. Both provided in-class support for Final Cut Pro Studio HD and assisted students with video projects. The Physical Therapy Department and the FPAC Museum were users of digital media services. In addition, Neil taught two workshops on MacOS X. The lecturers also worked on 8 video editing projects such as Love Your Body Day, and the Young Cherokee Project.
- The Faculty Sandbox, under the direction of Laura Chapman, has two types of clients:
  1. faculty members who schedule appointments for specific projects
  2. walk-in clients—who are self starters or may require help. There are many repeat clients.
- The Sandbox had 138 scheduled appointments.



- The Sandbox had approximately 226 walk-in sessions.

These faculty members are usually self-starters and require little to no assistance. If they require help the Sandbox staff tries to accommodate their needs or they make follow-up appointments. The three main resources used by walk-in clientele are scanning, Word to PDF and web page development. Collaboration is a major focus. This year the Sandbox has been active in many projects and collaborative initiatives with other university personnel, departments and colleges. Such activities included the development of prototype learning objects for

Cherokee Language Revitalization; collaboration with Hunter Library for ArtStor training for Art Department faculty; assistance with the Adventure of the American Mind Project sessions on Digital Story Telling; participation in the college technology committees; support for the Enka Campus faculty. The Sandbox was also instrumental in the Ultimate Survey project.

- Training

The training team, Sue Grider and Chris Snyder, offered 64 workshops during the Spring Semester. 421 registrants signed up to take our workshops and 260 faculty and staff were able to attend for a total of 61.76% attendance. These workshops included the use of step sheets for faculty to take away from workshops. These step sheets are also available on the web. The workshop website has undergone extensive revision to improve such things as attendance taking and evaluation. For faculty who could not attend workshops, the trainers provided one on one support sessions. In addition, the trainers are collaborating with Human Resources to provide a single location for faculty and staff training needs. In addition, they are developing a responsible computing workshop for students, training for graduate students on formatting theses and dissertations.

### Support for Part-Time Faculty

Dr. Sharon Dole, Faculty Fellow for Part-Time Faculty sent welcome letters to new part-time faculty at beginning of each semester informing them of services of CFC and giving them directions to log on to a part-time faculty WebCT site. She also distributed packets of information to new part-time faculty. In addition, she analyzed data from needs-assessment survey of part-time faculty and sent a list of suggestions for part-time faculty support to deans and department heads. The WebCT site was updated weekly with information on CFC activities, grading policies, Banner, and other information. Dr. Dole completed part-time faculty handbook and uploaded it to a WebCT site. Contacts included 22 part-time faculty used WebCT site during the 2005-06 year, 5 meetings with individual part-time faculty as well as several emails and phone conversations with part-time faculty

### New Initiatives since January 1

For the first time, the University awarded an Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award coordinated by the Coulter Faculty Center. This award is open to all faculty and this first year, a fixed term faculty member, Leah Hampton won. Other teaching awards are not open to part-time faculty.

In addition, Dr. Sharon Dole suggested that a part-time faculty member step into the Faculty Fellow position for 2006-2007. Dr. Jayne Zanglein who is fixed term in the College of Business will step into this role with the following initiatives related to communication, a new Faculty Learning Community, a survey on contingent workers, social activities, and the seeking of grants and funding.

Also, the Coulter Faculty Center added to the CFC website a section of video streamed workshops and presentations that many part-time faculty cannot attend.

## Support for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The following activities were in place in the fall and continued as a part of the CFC Redesign.

**Year of Significant Student Learning:** The CFC is designated 2005 – 2006 as the “Year of Significant Student Learning” for all its work with faculty. Selected points of emphasis included



- Creation of the first CFC Faculty Fellow for Significant Student Learning, Dr. David Luginbuhl
- Readers Roundtable selection of Leamnson’s Thinking About Teaching & Learning
- Leamnson’s September 2005 workshop based upon his book
- Workshop prior to the SoTL Faire by Dr. John Zubizarreta on Student Learning Portfolios based upon his book of the same name
- Creation of a new faculty group, Faculty Group on Course Design, as a consequence of Dr. Dee Fink’s book and workshop on Creating Significant Learning Experiences through course design or re-design
- Applications and dissemination by faculty participating in the Summer Institute, the SoTL Faire, and the Faculty Learning Communities
- Visiting Scholar- Dr. Michael Loui
- The development of a WCU Student Learning Research Project as part of the work of the Student Learning Committee

**MountainRise:** The CFC published the Vol.3, No. 1 issue (4th issue overall since 2003) in January 2006 at <http://mountainrise.wcu.edu/archive/vol3no1/issue.html>.

With Alan Altany’s departure to Georgia Southern University, John Habel became the new editor and Laura Cruz became the Managing Editor in spring 2006. MountainRise was featured in the first newsletter (The International Commons) of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching

### Second annual SoTL Faire, February 23, 2006



The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual SoTL Faire was held on February 23, 2006 in the Hinds University Center. Approximately 70 faculty and student presenters came from 16 schools and 7 states (Wisconsin, New York, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina) and gave 22 presentations and 5 poster displays.

The presentations were co-chaired by 23 Western faculty co-chairs and 22 Western student co-chairs

Registrants totaled nearly 160 people from 8 and 23 different schools.

The 22 presentations were attended by some 287 people for an average attendance per session of 13. [Attendance at the 2005 inaugural Faire was around 5 per session].

Attendance at the Keynote Session featuring Dr. Randy Bass was close to 90.

Session Assessment Forms were distributed at the conclusion of each session. The attendees' overall assessment of each session is given below using a 5-point scale. Two of the 22 sessions scored below 4.1 with 20 sessions scoring between 4.1 – 5.0.

[4<sup>th</sup> annual Summer Institute for Teaching & Learning](#), May 15 – 18, 2006 (guest facilitator: Dr. Donna Llewellyn, Georgia Tech) There were 50 participants at the May 2005 institute.

Summer Institute 2006 Evaluations  
Scale 1-4 (4 being highest)

Criteria	Average Evaluation
1. Do you feel that the goals of the Summer Institute stated below were met? Please rate each separately.	
A. Contribute to expanding the pedagogical imaginations of faculty participants.	3.7
B. Encourage faculty to approach their teaching as interesting and challenging form of scholarship	3.7
C. Promote interdisciplinary collaborations among faculty	3.7
D. Support faculty innovation and experimentation in their teaching	3.7
E. Develop an open and collegial academic culture where dialogue and interaction among faculty about teaching practices, resources, experiences and experiments are the norm	3.9
2. Content was relevant to my needs.	3.7
3. There were sufficient opportunities for interaction with the facilitators & other participants.	3.8
4. There were sufficient opportunities to work on individual projects.	3.4
5. The facilitator of my focus group was effective.	3.7
6. My expectations concerning what I hoped to accomplish during the Summer Institute were met.	3.6
7. The strategies I've learned will help me improve my teaching.	3.7
8. The whole-group activities provided information relevant to my teaching.	3.6
9. Overall, the Summer Institute was useful.	3.8

## Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)

Since the beginning of the Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) program at WCU, initiated and facilitated by the Coulter Faculty Center, faculty participation has increased significantly. The FLCs program was designed to be an anchor for a peer-based, dissemination model for professional development where faculty, with the initiative, support and guidance of the Faculty Center, work together on teaching and learning issues, apply the results of that learning and experience to courses and their work with students, and disseminate to colleagues across campus what is learned about how to teach for significant, enduring student learning. Each FLC, if its topic is appropriate, is to submit a proposal to give a presentation at the annual SoTL Faire. The FLCs are also encouraged to consider disseminating their work other ways such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Publication of an FLC article in WCU's ejournal on SoTL, MountainRise
- FLC presentation in the Faculty Series held each semester
- Writing a booklet for the Renaissance of Teaching & Learning Booklet Series
- Creating a FLC web site for its work that is shared with the campus
- Publishing in a SoTL or pedagogical journal
- Conducting presentations or workshops for departments
- Giving a presentation at a regional or national conference
- Publishing an essay in the Faculty Forum

The FLC program is the manifestation and epitome of that model as Western faculty have strongly and positively responded to the initiative. The program began with 3 FLCs and 24 faculty in 2003-2004, grew to 4 FLCs and 32 faculty in 2004-2005 and expanded to 10 FLCs with about 100 faculty in 2005–2006. FLCs for 2005 – 2006 were

Assessing Student Learning  
 Civic Engagement  
 Department Heads  
 Graduate Faculty  
 Online Teaching & Learning  
 Scholarship of Teaching & Learning  
 Service Learning  
 Student Learning Through Writing  
 Teaching Critical & Creative Thinking  
 Teaching, Learning & Technology

## Faculty Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Dr. John Habel worked with faculty from across the university to help them systematically investigate questions related to student learning with an eye to improving their teaching. He served as Chair of the Coulter Faculty Center Advisory Committee and Chair of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Leadership Team. He was WCU's representative in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) "campus cluster" "Organizing to Foster the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." In 2005-2006 he attended two CASTL meetings with representatives from the 200 colleges and universities in CASTL and, most importantly, with representatives from the nine other colleges and universities in the "cluster" in which WCU is a member. He also represented WCU at the annual meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Habel made 5 presentations at SoTL conferences. The SoTL initiative at WCU continues to gain momentum among the members of the faculty and support from administrators at the departmental, college and institutional levels. SoTL was formally acknowledged as a form of scholarship in the Guidelines for Conferral of Academic Rank, Promotion, and Tenure that were approved by WCU's Faculty Senate in the spring of 2005. Over 20 members of the faculty at WCU have engaged in course-

based or program-based SoTL projects since the fall of 2004. WCU was a leading participant institution in the CASTL cluster, Organizing to Foster SoTL, and submitted a proposal to assume a leadership role in a new thematic group as CASTL reorganizes. In addition, the recent gift by Myron and Barbara Coulter, creating an endowment establishing a fund that will support faculty members and graduate students in the study and practice SoTL, will provide additional incentives for faculty members and students to engage in SoTL.

### New Initiatives since January 1

John Habel coordinated the development of and was the lead writer of WCU's proposal for the newly established Carnegie Association for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Leadership Program. The proposal was submitted on March 15, 2006 and WCU was recently notified of its acceptance.

At the May Summer Institute for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Habel spent time with each focus team to discuss how to examine their teaching through SoTL research projects.

Dr. Myron Coulter, Chancellor Emeritus, who established the CFC and his wife Barbara, announced at the Faculty Appreciation Banquet, an endowment gift of \$100,000 for the support of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The formal announcement will be made in the fall as a part of the kick off of WCU's capital campaign.

## Support for Department Heads in the Improvement of Instruction

### Department Head Faculty Learning Community

A new Faculty Learning Community was formed and led by Dr. Lisa Bloom, Head of the Department of Human Services. This group spent the year exploring their role as leaders of instructional change.

### New Initiatives since January 1

Dr. Anna McFadden and Dr. Beth Tyson-Lofquist have discussed the development of a workshop for department heads on the supervision of instruction as well as one on one assistance.

## Graduate Teaching Assistants

All Center Services are open to Graduate Teaching Assistants but have been underutilized. The CFC conducted a teaching workshop in the fall for GTA's and began more discussion about support.

### New Initiatives since January 1

Dr. Anna McFadden and Dr. Laura Cruz met with both Dr. Scott Higgins, Dean of the Graduate School and Dr. Gibbs Knotts, Associate Dean. The result is a new program GATE (Graduate Assistant Teaching Experience) which will involve a series of workshops for GTA's. This effort will begin in the fall.

## A Rethinking of How We Communicate and Provide the Opportunities Offered at the Coulter Faculty Center

This rethinking will involve initiatives in three major areas:

### Email

Because of complaints about multiple lengthy emails from the CFC, the interim director initiated a once a week short email entitled This Week at the Coulter Faculty Center. Other divisions on campus who offer services to faculty have asked us to promote their programs in this email and we have gladly done so.

### Web Redesign

The interim director is working this summer with Web Services to redesign the CFC site. The site will become a one-stop repository for faculty for all of their needs at WCU.

### Professional Development at a Distance

As WCU puts more courses on line and hires more faculty who may live or work at a distance, we have initiated video streaming of faculty development opportunities on campus. Currently, there are 7 videos on the Center site. The interim director visited the Enka Campus to determine support needs and we are exploring the use of such tools as Centra for synchronous communication.

### Other Center Services and Initiatives

#### Consultations



Consultations include teaching strategies, syllabus construction, classroom assessment techniques, course design and redesign, alternative assessments including rubrics, developing student learning objectives, cooperative learning activities, activators and summarizers for classes, classroom management techniques, digital video, use of PowerPoint, Respondus and other online testing, transitioning face-to-face activities to WebCT, accommodating different learning styles and levels in one class, and active learning strategies. With the reorganization of the Center as of January 1, these total numbers were difficult to determine but the 272 letters issued to faculty for their AFE files would be a good indication.

#### Videotaping of Classes



The CFC continued this service to enable faculty to see themselves teaching as their students see them. Full and part-time faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants can request the Faculty Center to videotape a class. This service helps give a teacher a new perspective upon classroom teaching and learning- to see oneself as seen by students. It has potentially significant benefit for the continuous development of one's own teaching. This service is free and completely voluntary, formative and confidential. Twelve faculty took advantage of this service.

## Certificate of Professional Development in Teaching & Learning (CPDTL)



The CPDTL is a voluntary opportunity open to all part-time, non-tenure track and full-time WCU faculty to actively, reflectively and collaboratively engage in professional development as teachers and as creators of learning experiences for students. Listening, talking, observing, reflecting, self-assessment, facilitation of student learning, instructional design and delivery, course management and writing about teaching & learning set the foundation for the one-year certificate program. The CPDTL will enable faculty to further develop their skills in many or all of the seven dimensions of teaching as identified in the WCU Faculty Handbook. Fifteen faculty are working toward this certification.

### Small Group Analysis

Small Group Analysis involves a CFC staff member going into the instructor's classroom without the instructor present to collect and discuss with students what is working well and what can be improved in a course. The process is formative and confidential. Small Group Analysis and the Faculty Center are not part of any evaluation process. We focus on facilitating student feedback for faculty who wish to obtain information from students on their learning in the course and in time for faculty who may decide to make some changes that will improve learning during the remainder of the semester. Seven faculty participated this year.

### Grants

#### Microgrants

The CFC facilitates the work of a faculty selection committee for travel grants that are awarded monthly during the academic year. 29 faculty received funding awards to enable them to enhance their abilities in teaching and educational technologies. The total budget for 2004 – 2005 was \$10,000 and those funds were awarded by the committee to 23 faculty members. Dr. Irene Mueller chaired the committee.

#### The Provost's Instructional Improvement Grants

The purpose of the Provost's Instructional Improvement Grants is to promote curriculum or course development by giving support for innovative projects aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of instruction within a single course or group of related courses. The CFC facilitates the work of a faculty committee that reviews proposals and determines awards from the total grant budget of \$6,000. The committee, chaired by Dr. Brad Sims, made awards to 5 faculty members.

### Awards

#### Board of Governors' Excellence in Teaching Award

This year's winner was Dr. Scot Philyaw. The committee was chaired by Dr. Grace Allen.

#### Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award

This year's winner was Dr. Jay Scifers. The committee was chaired by Dr. Peter Bates.

### Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award

This year's winner was Leah Hampton. The committee was chaired by Dr. Brent Kinser.

### Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award

The award was not given this year. The selection committee made a decision to better clarify guidelines for next year. The committee was chaired by Dr. John Habel.

**Readers' Roundtable:** About 75 faculty in three 7 different groups read 6 different books related to teaching and learning.

**Wisdom Project:** Chip Fergusson continued the work of interviewing and chronicling the wisdom of experienced faculty at WCU.

**Open Classroom Circles:** 20 Faculty members open their classrooms and visited each others classes in this peer-based experience.

## Other Faculty Groups Sponsored by the CFC

### UFO (Untenured Faculty Organization)

Facilitated by Dr. Sean O'Connell, the UFO (Untenured Faculty Organization) was created during the summer of 1999 to provide a way for untenured faculty to meet in a variety of settings. The goal is to provide a support network for untenured faculty, and to share ideas on going through the tenure process. Events included such things as picnics for families, social events, and informational gatherings.

### Qualitative Research Group

Coordinated by Dr. Meagan Karvonen, Participants in the QRG gave students and faculty support and feedback on their qualitative research projects, including the formulation of research questions and help with data analysis. In addition, this group researched and recommended to the university a qualitative research software package for faculty and student research use.

### Forum for Quantitative Research

Coordinated by Dr. Chris Cooper, the Forum for Quantitative Research is a group for faculty interested in the application of quantitative research to a variety of questions in the social, natural and health sciences, education, business and other disciplines. The group provided a support network for those working in quantitative research and an interdisciplinary and supportive forum for presenting quantitative research and asking questions about various methods.



## Faculty Dialogue

### Electronic Discussion List: TEACHING

CFC had created this archived list(serv) entitled TEACHING expressly for all full and part-time faculty and for GTAs to engage in an on going dialogue about any and all aspects of teaching & learning. The main goal of this discussion list is to have an asynchronous forum for faculty and GTAs to discuss any issues connected with teaching & learning. About 46 faculty members subscribed.

### Electronic Discussion List: NEWFACULTY

The CFC created an archived listserv entitled NEWFACULTY for faculty at WCU three years or less to discuss issues of common concern. 19 faculty subscribed.

### Faculty Recognition Banquet

The CFC's annual Faculty Recognition Banquet was held in the UC Grandroom on April 19, 2006. On this occasion, Dr. Myron Coulter and his wife Barbara announced a \$100,000 endowment gift for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning to the CFC. Around 120 faculty attended. The Jackson County Board of Commissioners declared this day Western Carolina University Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day.

### Western Faculty Blog

A Teaching and Learning Blog was created to enhance faculty discussion about teaching and learning through a new electronic venue.

### CFC Publications

#### Faculty Forum

Publication continued at the beginning of each month during the academic year of evocative essays by faculty. Examples of topics this year included the transition to online teaching, advising, what counts as research at WCU, and learning communities.

#### Notes & Quotes

Publication continued at the middle of each month during the academic year of responses to the previous Faculty Forum, Teaching Tips and promotion of CFC activities and events. Dr. Terry Nienhuis was responsible for both publications and has never missed a deadline.



MountainRise  
(<http://facctr.wcu.edu/mountainrise/about.html>)

The first issue of this eJournal was published in April, 2003 and with the Fall/Winter 2005 issue, it has become a peer-reviewed, international eJournal on SoTL.

### The Buzzard's Roost Road Review



This CFC newsletter was published for the first time in January, 2003, and is published once a semester with sections such as "Featured Department," "Featured Faculty Fellow / CFC Staff," "Featured Faculty Team / Faculty Learning Community," featured articles, web sites, CFC events, books from the CFC library and quotes and humorous stories.

### Renaissance of Teaching & Learning Booklet Series

Publication of the CFC booklet series continued as a way to stimulate research and dialogue about key aspects of teaching & learning and faculty development. The series is published both electronically and in hard copy with the first booklets issued in Fall, 2002. This year's booklets covered topics such as significant student learning as well as helping students find and evaluate information.

### Faculty Development Intern Program

A CFC initiative began in the spring, 2005 semester. Entitled the Faculty Development Intern Program, it is designed to allow potential or new faculty developers from other campuses to come to Western Carolina for a week and work with the staff of the Coulter Faculty Center. Our intern experience so far added outside perspectives. One intern this year came from England.

### Professional Development of CFC Staff

A strong focus has been placed upon the professional development of each CFC staff. The staff is encouraged to attend conferences, workshops and when possible and relevant, to take or teach WCU courses. Staff are asked to read about teaching & learning. The Center is a member of the Professional and Organizational Development in Higher Education Network, the National Teaching and Learning Forum, and the Southern Regional Faculty and Instructional Development Consortium.

### Collaborations

The Coulter Faculty Center partners with other campus divisions to provide support and assistance to enhance student learning. The Center this year worked with Student Affairs to co-chair the Student Learning Committee and to assist with the Service Learning Advisory Committee. The Center partnered with Educational Outreach to sponsor the E-Learning Retreat and to develop a self-assessment tool for faculty to enhance the quality of online courses. Working with the Institute for the Economy and the Future, the CFC sponsored a response panel to a WebCast on the Seven Revolutions Affecting Undergraduate Education. In conjunction with the Graduate School, the Center is developing a new training program for Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Contributions to support the work of the Coulter Faculty Center are welcomed and can be made by contacting the Office of Development by telephone (828.227.7124) or Brett Woods, Director of Annual Giving and Special Gifts (e-mail [bwoods@wcu.edu](mailto:bwoods@wcu.edu), or U.S. Mail at 410 H.F. Robinson Building, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C. 28723). Contributions are tax deductible and will be credited to the Coulter Faculty Center account.