

~Special Feature~

**Oh, the Places Your Center Can Go:
Possible Programs to Offer**

Todd Zakrajsek

Dr. Todd Zakrajsek began his career as an adjunct professor, teaching at a small private college, a technical school, and distance education classes. Securing a tenure-track position at a small regional college in the Pacific Northwest in the fall of 1994, Todd started a center for teaching and learning in his third year at that institution. For his efforts he received a budget of \$50 his first year. The next year it went to \$5,000 and a one-course release. In year three, the budget was \$20,000 with additional release time. While there he was promoted to associate professor and tenured, partly for his campus-wide faculty development work. In 2001, Todd resigned tenure to take a position as the founding director of a center for teaching and learning at a research university in the Midwest. With a staff of himself and an office professional, he began to develop resources for a campus with approximately 650 full-time faculty members. In 2003, the faculty development center he was leading was merged with the learning technologies group, and Todd was asked to be the director of the combined office, with a greatly increased budget and staff. About this time he also served as Co-PI on a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant to provide resources to distance and adjunct faculty. In 2008, Todd resigned his job as faculty development director to accept a position as the Executive Director of a large research extensive university in the South. There, he was successful in assisting with the transformation of a long-standing and successful teaching center

into a center providing support in teaching, research, and leadership; he was responsible for hiring six positions and managed a budget of \$1.2 million. In 2012, Todd began working in the School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, as an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and also in the Academy of Educators to assist in building resources for faculty in the School of Medicine.

Given Todd's extensive experience in faculty development for 20 years in a variety of types of institutions, regions, and faculty served, we have asked him to write a series on essential issues needed by directors of faculty development efforts. This series is designed to suggest areas for faculty developers to consider along with tips and techniques Todd has found to be helpful along the way. In this issue Todd focuses on what programs to offer. Possible future topics will include how to get and maintain support on campus, bringing outside experts to campus, assessing/documenting your successes, and strategic planning. If there is a specific topic you would like to see addressed, contact the Editor-in-Chief at tassonjp@mi-amioh.edu.

Overview

Your CTL may be the Center for Faculty Excellence, the Office of Instructional Support, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, or one of the other multitudes of names signifying the support of faculty members to create effective learning environments for students. The question quickly becomes and then continues to persist: Where should you direct your limited amount of effort and resources? What you choose will go a long way in determining the extent to which you will be successful, whatever that metric turns out to be. There is no way to do everything. This article is written simply to give you a few ideas about a few directions you can take and also to help you to think about how those directions might be modified.

Background Work to Focus Your Efforts

Mission and Vision of Campus

Every campus has a mission, vision, and goals. Read these at least once per semester and make sure the work you are doing is directly supporting the institution. It does not matter how popular a program is if it does not help to support the campus. Often, documenting efforts that support the campus goals can be used to garner more support from the administration.

Mission and Vision of Your Center

Every department, division, college, center, or unit has a mission and vision. These statements demonstrate individual entities across the campus support the overall mission and vision of the campus. As with the campus wide materials, read your own mission and vision at least once per month. It is actually a fairly common practice for directors of centers to print out the mission and vision and frame it or hang it somewhere that can be seen regularly. It is very easy to be pulled in so many different directions. For a CTL to be successful, a path must be laid out, and although some efforts may be directed to ancillary projects, the bulk of the resources and efforts should be along that designed path.

Accreditation Documents

Most centers that support educational and faculty development fall along a specific and strategic component of the campus accreditation efforts. For example, if you are in SACS, you may find your center directly supporting the QEP. Doing so helps to draw higher administrative support and demonstrate very real benefit to the campus.

Read What Administrators Say On Website

When a campus president, provost, dean, or chair writes on a website that she or he supports teaching and learning it is a very clear opportunity for CTLs to support those administrators with both vision and resources. Campus leaders may have a fantastic vision, but if the campus resources do not

get behind that vision, nothing will be accomplished. You can be proactive by reading what is being written and then point out periodically the data that you have supporting their words. A leader will never turn a nose up at data supporting a publically stated position. Once your value has been demonstrated, additional resources are much more likely to follow.

Interview Key Administrators

It takes relatively little time to have a conversation with the president, provost, associate provost, deans, and chairs on campus. If there are many, it may be that you interview even one-fourth of the higher-level administrators each semester. That means a conversation with each person only once every two years. On a smaller campus, it may well be possible to interview each person once per year. Not only does this help you to align your efforts with the direction desired by higher level administrators, it demonstrates to those individuals that you are proactive and that you desire to help support their vision.

Focus Groups with Faculty

If your budget will allow it, invite eight to 10 faculty members to lunch once per semester. By selecting a good representation of faculty you will be able to get a strong sense of needs and desires of your direct constituents. One caution I would note is that faculty members often do not understand the field of educational development and as a result may not know exactly what they need in terms of resources and support. It is best to ask areas of challenge rather than areas of need. By identifying the challenges the faculty members face on your campus you will be able to design the programs and efforts to address those challenges. As an example, I once had a faculty member ask me how to get students to more regularly attend class. She had tried giving attendance points, but her students seemed resentful to be in class. She tried pop quizzes, but attendance stayed low. After speaking with her, I noted that it may well be a combination of classroom culture and the pacing of the class that was the underlying issue.

Talk to Students

Similar to the faculty conversations, periodic discussions with student groups may also give you valuable information. It is helpful to offer food if

you intend to have focus groups, and pizza is inexpensive. That said, it is also possible to find food that is of better quality than pizza for perhaps only slightly more money. Another option is to ask faculty if you can have just five to ten minutes at the end of a class to speak to the students. I have done this on a number of occasions and students are typically impressed that their faculty member cared enough to allow for the conversation. In most cases, I ask the faculty member ahead of time to leave the room when I start to address the students in the class. I then clarify quickly to the students that as the faculty development director my job is to help all faculty to be better teachers and that their instructor accepted my request to speak to the class.

Always Be Thinking Assessment

Measure Whatever You Do

Before you devote any funds from your budget or expend any of your staff time determine how you will be able to demonstrate a return on investment. Think of each activity as though you received a small grant to complete the effort. If someone gave you \$5,000 to do classroom visits for a year, how would you demonstrate that the visits were helpful. If you received \$10,000 to organize a faculty learning community, what would be your outcome measures for success. If you approach each effort with assessment in mind, it will be relatively easy to document impact at the end of the year. It is highly likely you will be asked to summarize activities at the end of the year, and having slightly more data than expected is always a very positive thing. One option is to collect data according to Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Model.

Share Your Data

One thing that has been a constant every where I have been is that data are seen by administrators as gold. It can be used to make budget decisions, meet accreditation standards, and address campus concerns. Overall, information is power, and it is relatively easy to get that information.

Get as Much Help as Possible

As you move forward in your efforts to support faculty members on your campus, keep in mind that there are individuals throughout your institution who very much want your center to be successful. There are times in which you and your staff will be the individuals to deliver the actual support and resources. But in most cases, it is beneficial to have others work with you. There are individuals all over campus who would be very happy to assist and provide specific expertise and even money, if someone would simply ask for their assistance. I have learned so much from my colleagues, and they continue to be my best source of growth.

Departments

I have had occasion to help departments and colleges spend funds they had allocated for faculty enrichment but lacked the knowledge or time to complete the task. In one case, I spoke with a business college with close to \$20,000 set aside for faculty development events. Their faculty development committee was very busy so I offered to find an outside speaker and complete the necessary arrangements. My only ask was that they pay for all costs associated with the event and open the event to faculty outside the college of business if seats remained available two weeks prior to the event. This was a total win-win, as they sponsored a very well-received event and about 15 faculty from other colleges were able to attend. The best part was that at the end of the year I listed that event as one of the events we completed, which we did, along with assessment. The college of business was happy for the campus-wide exposure, having a successful event for their faculty by an outside expert I knew well, and the data provided by my office following the workshop. They quickly asked me who I knew in another area of interest to them and whether I would facilitate the delivery of that event as well.

There are many ways in which you can work directly with department chairs and be assisted in your faculty development duties at your institution. I have run workshops for nearly 30 years and there are times when I market, plan, and beg faculty members to come, only to have a disappointing attendance. Department meetings are typically fixed audiences with opportunities to connect. Let the department help you by delivering an audience with essentially no additional effort on your part. The plus of working with a fixed group from a given discipline is that you can hone your message. One program that I have used with solid success is the five-minute workshop. This

program involves visiting a department and delivering a short “workshop” during the regularly scheduled faculty meetings. Some department chairs like that they can “check off” faculty development, whereas others very much enjoy the conversations such a presentation can spark. There are multiple ways to run a five-minute workshop, but the key points are to limit it to five minutes and make the message meaningful. Companies pay a lot of money for 30 seconds of a tv commercial during a big game in hopes of changing the behavior of others. Imagine what they could accomplish in five minutes. Other areas in which your efforts could directly assist a department might include new faculty orientations, grant writing, retreats, and directed resources. As noted previously in this article, departments may also be able to help provide funds for your activities when you direct efforts to their needs. Particularly when a Center has a very small budget, some directed assistance can result in additional operating funds.

Faculty

One thing I realized several years ago is that for any duty or obligation faculty members are expected to complete, there is someone on campus who has disciplinary expertise in just that area. As a director of faculty development, find those individuals and partner with them to provide resources to the campus. Faculty members are typically happy to use their expertise to help their colleagues. Actually, in many cases faculty are happy to be recognized for their expertise as it is often ignored by peers throughout their institution. English faculty have fabulous tips on grading writing assignments, oral communication faculty are experts in setting up assignments for presentations, business faculty have special knowledge in the area of working in groups, philosophy faculty are trained to work in the area of critical thinking. The list is long and impressive. Faculty members can also be wonderful co-authors of journal pieces or conference co-presenters. Let the faculty member know that you will be the lead presenter on the topic and draft the presentation and do all of the prep work. The faculty member with the specialized expertise can adjust and add to your presentation and then be at the session to provide specialized tips and examples. This makes it easy for a faculty member to agree to co-present with you and you end up with perhaps a national expert in a specific area that can be delivered as a workshop to faculty throughout your institution. Faculty can also lead learning communities, book groups, and a host of other activities quickly summarized later in this article.

Students

The primary reason we are all working so diligently on teaching and learning resources and support is to make better learning environments for our students. It is surprising to me that so few CTLs make good use of student workers and volunteers. I am not talking about hanging up signs for a workshop, managing a website, answering phones, and the host of other duties typically assigned to student workers. To me, the students are the consumers of the end product we are striving to produce. Yes, there are times that students do not know precisely the best strategies to help them to learn, but they do certainly know some things about good teaching and what helps them to learn. Students can be employed as content developers, workshop co-facilitators, and focus group participants. Faculty are often fascinated to hear what students think about teaching and learning efforts. Of course, this is ironic, as faculty have students in their classes regularly. Often, faculty don't think to ask their own students about the learning processes in the room. You may well be able to model potential conversations by the way you conduct student co-facilitated offerings.

Other Offices of Educational Development

When deciding on resources and activities for the coming months, make a list of all offices at your institution who work with faculty or provide faculty assistance. These offices make fantastic collaborators. I have worked with HR, counseling centers, grants offices, public safety, libraries, service-learning programs, diversity programs, student resource centers, study abroad, and writing centers. Actually, this is just a partial list. One method I have found to be very beneficial involves doing two workshops within an academic year. You take the lead on one and the office with whom you are collaborating take the lead on the the other. That way you both get to focus the efforts specifically on your individuals missions, you both support the other office on their mission, you both list two activities in your end-of-year report, and you both demonstrate to upper-level administrators that you have collaborative spirits. A total win for both entities.

Conferences and Web Searches for Experts

For any area you can think of with respect to educational development and faculty support, there are individuals who have and will devote their

lives to developing resources in a very specific area. Groupwork, portfolios, engaged learning, service-learning, educational applications of cognitive neuroscience. Even in areas that are considered new and trendy—flipped classrooms at the moment—there are individuals who have been working in this area for many years. Attend educational developer conferences (e.g., POD Network) and teaching conferences (e.g., Lilly Conferences) with a specific goal of finding national experts in an area in which you wish to focus. For example, if you select a theme of the year for your center, conferences can be a place filled with the leading individuals working in that area. Individuals can also be found from webquests and digging a bit in the area of interest. The advantage of the web search is that it is quick and relatively inexpensive. The advantage of the conference is that you have the opportunity to see the person present and speak with her or him in person. In either case, find time to speak to those individuals, ask if it is okay for you to call them for a quick phone consult, and perhaps invite the person to campus. Always keep in mind that a very well structured 20- to 30-minute phone conversation can be extremely valuable.

Activities

Below you will find an annotated list of specific activities your center may provide. Some are obvious, and for those I have added some twist and options. Others, are less obvious and relatively rare. There is no doubt that what you offer will depend heavily on your budget, staff, time, and obligations. The point here is simply to give you a few things to think about so that you can assemble a composite of offerings that best meets the needs of your institution.

Workshops

The first thing to keep in mind is that there is fairly consistent evidence that one-shot workshops rarely lead to productive changes in faculty members' teaching effectiveness. That said, workshops may well be valuable if they are not one-shot efforts, as a way to simply bring faculty together to create a better campus community, and to meet administration expectations for your center. As noted previously, co-facilitating with a faculty member can not only help you to build your expertise in that area, it may well start new conversations among faculty within that department or even across

campus. On a small campus, this is an outstanding way for faculty to come to better understand the expertise of their colleagues.

The timing of workshops is something worth consideration. I have always held that the workshop should be as short as it can be and still deliver something of value. A reputation on campus is never enhanced by having sessions that are longer than absolutely needed. Complex concepts, such as effective team-based learning with the faculty having the experience of working on teams may well require the session to be at least two hours in length. A tips session on how to integrate metacognitive strategies into the course may well be possible with 30 minutes of content, which is the typical amount of time if you have lunch with a workshop and hold a bit of time at the end for questions. One option is to start the workshops at 10 minutes after the hour and end at 10 minutes before the next hour, making a 40-minute session in which people have time to get to your session by the start and leave in time to make their next class or appointment.

Workshops may be offered in a series to build on ideas and even have participants try concepts from the early workshop and deliver outcomes in later workshops in the series. The goal here is to have participants sign up for the workshop series. Even if each faculty member cannot attend every session, those who are able to attend multiple sessions have additional support.

Workshops may be paired with other activities. If you have workshops at present, or intend to have workshops, look through the list of activities to see how workshops can be paired with other offerings to increase the overall benefit. For example, if your budget allows, have a workshop with books given to those faculty members at the end of the workshop who desire to participate in a book discussion on the topic. Not all workshop participants receive books and if more are interested than books available you could tell participants to send you a short paragraph describing why they wish to participate. You then select the number you can accommodate. I know we would very much like to include everyone, but there are very strong advantages to selecting only a subset of those who desire to participate. First, not all faculty get everything they want (e.g., teaching schedules, internal grants, teaching awards), so it is totally fine for some to be accepted and others told not enough spaces are available. The advantage to having a selection process is that those who are selected are more likely to attend as they have taken a slot another person could have had and they feel they have “won” the opportunity to participate. When a person lands a job for which

there was intense competition she or he typically feels differently about that job relative to one that is very easy to secure.

Book Groups/Journal Clubs

Book groups can be an effective way for a group of faculty from different disciplines to have a serious discussion about a specific topic. It may be possible to have multiple book groups, depending on funding and time. My preference is to find a faculty member to facilitate the discussion and for me to sit in on the group as a participant. This allows for others to draw on their expertise. Of course, if the book pertains to my area of expertise then I might be the facilitator. The point here is simply that it is likely best if you are not always the facilitator. The difficulty is to find faculty members who make good facilitators. The individual should have expertise, but also one who encourages others to participate in the conversation. One additional consideration is to co-author a review of the book with the person who is the facilitator of the book group. There are several publications that publish book reviews, and there is no easier way to provide a review than at the conclusion of a book group.

Book groups may meet several times throughout the semester or meet only one time. It totally depends on the book and the type of discussion desired. For some shorter books, it may be totally fine to meet only one or two times. For longer books it might be necessary to meet every other week for an entire semester. Keep in mind that individuals will drop out of the group as the meeting progress. It always happens. Therefore, keep the number of meetings as small as possible and yet have a meaningful experience. It is also helpful to run the book group similar to an effective meeting. Set an agenda, have someone keep time, and another person take notes, and note any action items that might need follow-up. Send the notes to the group following the meeting so that if a person was not able to attend the topics of conversation are noted.

Journal clubs are extremely common in the health professions, but still relatively rare in other disciplines. I have become a big fan of journal clubs. A series can be set up of three to five meetings within a semester. The articles are posted on a learning management system, and faculty attend based on the topics that hold interest for them. The cost is much less since books do not need to be purchased, and the format allows for very busy faculty to participate when available. If you are uncertain as to how to best run a jour

nal club, a quick web search of “effective journal club” will quickly yield good publications on the topic.

Faculty Learning Communities

Faculty learning communities bring together eight to 12 faculty members monthly for an entire academic year. The most common structure is for there to be a common theme for the group with each participant completely a project or some research on one aspect of the common theme. The idea here is that the group, through the forming of a community, supports one another as each person completes a project. There is often food involved, and in my own experience I have found dinners to be the most effective. One important aspect of the learning community is that there is an application process and a selection of participants. A learning community is a large commitment, and it is important that the individual feels connected to the group. Being selected increases that sense of being in a specific cohort and reduces the probability of an individual dropping out. That said, it is very important that group meeting times are used very effectively, at times to build community and at times to provide resources.

Learning communities can take on many different forms and function at a variety of levels. These communities can be high budget items (e.g., course release, meals, books, resources, travel as a community to conferences), or relatively inexpensive (e.g, lunches, resources being journal articles). Keep in mind that it may be possible to get funding from upper-level administrators if the learning community is on a topic that is important to the institution. For example, if the campus is facing accreditation a few years out and lagging in the area of assessment, the provost office may well fund a faculty learning community on the specific topic of assessment.

Of all the potential CTL offerings, faculty learning communities have some of the best outcome data. A quick search of effectiveness of faculty learning communities will provide many publications in this area. FLCs are also fairly time intensive and, as with book groups, it is often ideal to identify someone to serve as the lead facilitator. One of the most effective learning communities I ever helped to arrange on my campus was facilitated by the immediate past chancellor of the university. Being the lead facilitator for an FLC on leadership afforded him the opportunity to do something personally gratifying and significant for the campus. It also allowed us to draw on his many contacts to provide fantastic guest presenters. At the conclusion of the year the group presented to the Board of Trustees. We had some funding

support from other offices and in the end it was a very high impact at a very low overall cost.

Classroom Visits

One of the most common activities completed by CTLs involve visiting the classroom of a faculty member to provide feedback on teaching effectiveness. Classroom visits may be done for formative reasons (e.g., personal growth or to address a specific area of concern in the area of teaching effectiveness) or for summative reasons (e.g., peer evaluation of teaching for promotion and tenure). There is a long history of discussion among faculty and educational developers pertaining to summative versus formative reasons to visit a classroom. I have long held that there are times it is appropriate to do either, but that it is imperative that you be very clear which type of evaluation you are conducting. As long as you are clear and the faculty initiates the request, I have never run into problems with perceptions of my center. That said, summative evaluations do come with their own set of issues. Keep in mind that a person may receive or be denied promotion or tenure based on your evaluation. That certainly comes with responsibilities and risks. However, you may well be the one person on campus who is trained in the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, and it seems awkward to me to say the most skilled person for such an important decision should not be involved. Again, the point here is simply that you be well informed and keep the process extremely clear. For example, when I write a formative evaluation of teaching effectiveness for the faculty member in addition to being very clear in e-mail correspondence, I also note at the top of my written comments that the evaluation "May not be used for inclusion in promotion and tenure portfolios as that was not the intention of this review."

Much has been written about ways to conduct classroom visits and peer evaluations of teaching. Search for Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) for the best detailed and longest supported methodology for completing a visit. There are many variations on a SGID, but in essentially all forms it is a valuable process.

One option is to set up a faculty formative peer observation system. To do this simply identify faculty who are willing to sit in on one another's classes and provide feedback. An additional consideration with this type of system is to have a new or struggling faculty member sit in on classes of effective faculty members prior to being viewed in her or his class. There is no value to observing a struggling faculty member if that individual does not have a

solid sense of what good teaching looks like. I have used this method in the past specifically for individuals who lecture all the time and who would like to use more active/engaged techniques. Rather than sitting in on that faculty member's class and suggesting how to integrate pedagogical techniques that seem foreign, I have the faculty member first sit in on an engaged class and then we discuss which aspects might be implemented.

Other Activities

I have focused the bulk of this article on foundational considerations and collaborative opportunities for activities, followed by four of the most popular activities undertaken by CTLs. I have also provided a few twists on these very common activities. Below is a briefly annotated list of other center activities that might be considered along with a few additional considerations.

Events for Faculty New to the Campus

CTLs often provide the delivery or assistance in delivering the campus "New Faculty Orientation." Over time, I have noted that faculty who come to campus with years of experience often do not see themselves as "new faculty," and in many cases resent the insinuation. For that reason, I have renamed such events "Faculty New to *Your Campus*." This allows everyone to be included in this event, and activities can focus, then, on what good teaching looks like within the community of the institution. This day is also the ideal time to ask faculty to list on a card or in some private way one challenge they expect to face with respect to teaching and learning. By collecting these cards you can later check in with those faculty on the issues noted.

Institutes

Day-long institutes provide an ideal way to do a deep dive on a specific topic. These are perfect opportunities to collaborate with others and can have a strong and impacting effect on campus. Finding a date where faculty can afford to take a day off from their busy schedules is always difficult. My favorite times are when the local school district is in session and the university is not. This typically happens in the fall just before classes start, over the winter break, and in the spring just after classes end. In these times, those with children cannot be on vacation because their kids are still in school and

the faculty member has no teaching responsibilities. Some faculty will be off campus, but keep in mind that nearly 100% of the faculty on campus can schedule the day. Another opportunity is on a Saturday. I realize this is tricky, but faculty will often attend a conference that goes over a Saturday. If you are bringing a nationally known person to campus, you include presentations by campus faculty, and you provide a long advance planning time, it may well be that a Saturday institute will work. Just be certain to check around campus to see if the possibility has merit and if you have a unionized campus that such an offering does not violate any rules or regulations.

Writing Groups

More and more writing groups have been emerging in CTL activities. These range from short periodic sessions to three- to five-day writing intensives.

Week-Long Summer Courses

Much like the institutes, summer courses would require a bit of prep work to determine desirability and potential attendance. I have seen these work well in a number of CTLs.

Grant Support

Many grants include some form of instruction or teaching evaluation. It will likely be valuable for your CTL to create a one- or two-page summary of information that can be used as a boilerplate for grant submissions. This could include the proportion of classes at your institution using active learning, the number of faculty who have attended workshops, or any other data that shows good teaching is happening at your institution. The idea here is that someone working on a grant who needs to demonstrate that your college or university has a strong reputation as a teaching-centered institution has some data. This might also allow the opportunity for you to join the grant as an evaluator or to somehow deliver training/education/assessment. Grants often allow 20 percent for evaluation or training. It might be that a portion of the grant could be directed to your CTL.

Teaching Award Facilitator

As with peer evaluation, the extent to which you are involved in the selection of teaching award winners will depend heavily on your campus culture and how you conduct the activities in which you are involved. Although proceeding with caution is always advised, there exist many possibilities here. While in one of my roles as faculty development director I was very pleased with the number of state-wide awards our faculty received. This happened due to a very proactive position I took whereby I would find an award and then search for faculty whom I thought met the criteria very strongly.

Mentoring Program

A CTL can set up any number of mentor possibilities—mentoring for new faculty, for faculty who just received tenure, and for faculty who are changing to completely different pedagogical strategies. One possibility that is often overlooked is to have newly retired faculty members serve as mentors. Newly retired faculty members know the system well and will not be voting for promotion and tenure, meaning the conflict of interest is greatly reduced. Although some newly retired faculty are happy to be done with their faculty career, others long for a way to be involved in a significant way. As with all such positions, it is important to check with the Provost office to confirm the acceptability of such a program.

Lead a Campus-Wide Teaching/Learning Initiative

Center directors walk a fine line between providing resources and support for individual faculty and also working on campus-wide initiatives that will make an impact on the entire institution. Campus-wide initiatives take much more time, but can also have a large and impacting effect. Watch for opportunities to share your expertise in developing and supporting systems that impact effective teaching and learning. This may be particularly important for accreditation visits and quality enhancement plans. Keep in mind that when it comes to overall effective teaching, you may be the most qualified person on campus. That comes with a great deal of responsibility.

Web Resources (Short Videos/Blog/Annotative Bibliography)

One of the most nebulous areas at present is the website for your CTL. Websites are no longer simply a place to document what your center does and list the activities that are forthcoming. Websites may deliver short videos of effective teaching by your award winning faculty, run blogs by you regarding effective teaching, link to resources developed by others, and provide annotated bibliographies of new books and teaching/learning technologies. I started doing faculty development just as the web emerged, so I have lived through essentially all aspects of web development. Throughout the entire process I noted that the web is an amazingly important tool and a massive time vacuum. It is necessary to have good web information and also extremely important to find the right people to do the work. Be careful to not try to do the things you cannot do well, especially if these things will take a ton of time only to deliver a mediocre product. Also, one consideration I have noted for the past 20 years is that most CTL websites are very well developed for those who know about teaching and learning. Watch your website carefully and do periodic focus groups with your faculty to ensure the website is really well designed for faculty members and not faculty developers.

Conclusion

The only limit to what you can do as a center director is your time and your resources. With careful planning and collaboration you can expand your time impact significantly. With cooperative efforts and meeting specific needs on campus you can expand your resources significantly. Overall, your goal is likely to have the best impact possible on student learning through providing support and guidance to your faculty members. That will best be accomplished by having a firm mission and vision, followed by pathological levels of optimism and a belief that with the right collaborative efforts you can make a significantly positive impact on the lives of a lot of people who believe education is fundamental to our collective future.