Tooling CTLs:
A Message from the Coeditor-in-Chief

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A good number of this journal's readers, I would bet confidently, arrive here already with strong notions of a Center for Teaching and Learning's (CTL's) functions—providing programming and consultations that enhance teaching, selecting teaching award winners, coordinating multiple measures of teaching effectiveness, providing grants for teaching-related projects, facilitating the scholarship of teaching and learning, etc. Essays in this issue of *JCTL* represent new articulations of some of these operations, but they also, to various degrees, highlight artifacts/tools that CTL workers develop to ensure the productive engagement of participants along CTL functions. At the same time, tools that CTL staff members develop shape the CTL itself and the role it might play in its specific institutional context.

In this issue, **Anna M. Donnell, Sara M. Fulmer**, **Tracy W. Smith**, **Anna L. Bostwick Flaming**, and **Ania Kowalik**'s "Educational Developer Professional Development Map (EDPDM)" provides faculty developers with a series of heurisitics to help them map their professional neworks and, at the same time, chart new directions for new connections. These new connections can improve staff members' approaches to educational development and extend a CTL's influence through strengthened connections with other units on campus. Extending the reach of Mishra and Koehler's (2006) "Technological Pedagogical and Contet (TPACK) model for instructors' use of technology," **Benjamin D. Espinoza** and **Makena Neal**'s "Incorporating Contextual Knowledge in Faculty Professional Development for Online Teaching" introduces a tool to help faculty develop context knowledge (ConK) in regard to the web of factors shaping their transition to online instruction. This web includes, among other things, concerns about increased workload and the legitimacy of online learning itself.

For **Charlie Sweet**, **Hal Blythe**, **Russell Carpenter**, and **Taylor Cecil**, an online system of courses represents a set of tools they have developed to re-

position their CTL's role on campus. In "Approaching the Holy Grail of Faculty Development," they describe elements of their Developing Excellence in Eastern's Professors (DEEP) program that mark their CTL's transition, from a unit basically assigned with gathering and disseminating information, to one that meets the contours of faculty schedules and workloads as well as their institution's commitment to faculty development in order to encourage teaching innovations and gauge the actual impact of those innovations. In our continuing series on the practicalities of CTL work, **Todd Zakrajsek** suggests ways teacher centers might gauge the effectiveness of their operations by thinking strategically about how they document activities. Zakrajsek indicates that artifacts such as data on the number of opens an email receives and, even, photos of leftover foods can reveal to CTL workers ways their programming might function more efficiently, more broadly, and more impactfully.

In their own way, each of the pieces collected here depicts an aspect of what I am calling a "Tooling CTL." I hope my introduction's title provides a generative frame that calls out and unfolds the degrees to which the articles encourage readers to explore more intricately the functions of CTLs, looking particularly at the artificats they develop in service of their work. In this sense, "Tooling" serves as both a verbal and as an adjective. As adjective, "Tooling" refers to the CTL's production of tools, heuristics, artificats that structure teachers' engagement with pedagogical principles—not structure in a way to restrict exploration but to invite innovation in that tension between pedagogical goals and the realities of institutional contexts and student lives. As a verbal, the tooling CTL, then, imprints as it is imprinted by these contexts, lives, and goals. Through this dynamic, centers function often as re-toolers, helping teachers draw on their experiences and available resources to innovate and also to assess the impact of those innovations on student learning. In this sense, tooling CTLs reflect the dynamic relation between pedagogical goals and insititutional realities and persist as one of the last best places to create the tools we need to negotiate, enhance, and alter those realities.

References

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technical pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record, 108*(6), 1017-1054.