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"Sitting Down" on Our Programming: A Message From the Editor-in-Chief

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CTL workers involved in the martial arts (I'm sure there are more of us than most would guess!) know the expression "sitting down on your punches." Trainers will often have to remind fighters who employ a lot of footwork that, to assure their punches have any authority, they will need to plant long enough to feel their weight through their feet and legs as they pivot into their blows. I often have used a version of the expression with beginning teachers: "Sit down on your teaching." I use the phrase in response to course observations where I have seen sophisticated exercises paraded, so to speak, through class sessions seemingly without any regard as to whether students have joined (or even noticed) the spectacle. To sit down on one's teaching, the instructor needs to encourage, recognize, and assess their students' engagement with classroom practices. A parade of cleverly designed activities—marching bands, floats, dignitaries, clickers, group work, sticky notes on a whiteboard—might make for good optics; but if students just witness or sleepwalk through them, all the pageantry in the world could still prove worthless. To return to my opening metaphor, boxers who do not sit down on their punches might indeed strike their targets, but chances are those targets will hardly detect they have been touched at all.

In this sense, contributors to this issue of *JCTL* consider how faculty developers might "sit down" on their programming. In the issue's opening article, "Framing Faculty Development as Workplace Learning," **Gary A. Smith** questions traditional approaches to the timing and location of faculty development programming and indicates how we might take faculty development closer to where teachers do their work—in task. The following article, **Andrea Aebersold's** "The Active Learning Institute: Design and Implementation of an Intensive Faculty Learning Institute," describes the programming that constitutes a CTL's efforts to develop a culture of active learning. This culture is sustained through the institution's very architecture, as teachers pursue access to active learning classrooms, through the center's long-term development program, and through the program's own alumni group, spurred by participants who wanted to continue to share ideas even

after the formal training had ended. Among other components of their interactive faculty development programming, **Diane J. Salter**, **Shannon E. Rushe**, and **Glen Jacobs**, in “Basics and Beyond: Faculty Development as a Professional Learning Journey,” describe a series of post-session program activities that mutually reinforce and extend the learning of faculty participants as well as CTL staff. In the issue’s concluding article, “The Impact of Getting Caught in the Act: Assessing the Institutional Impact of a Teaching Award,” **Deborah South Richardson**, **Robert S. Bledsoe**, and **Ashley Kalle** describe an award that recognizes, on-site, instances of teaching excellence. In addition, their contribution maps out for CTLs an assessment process to determine the impact of this practice not only on teachers’ morale but also faculty’s continued involvement with CTL programming.

All in all, the essays collected here offer descriptions of effective programs, ways to gauge the impact of programs, and expanded views of where and when programming should take place. While they expose us to activities we might consider for our own centers, the articles indicate for us how we might “sit down” on that programming, shift our weight in ways to truly move the cultures in which we teach and learn.