

Supporting Teaching Excellence: A CTLA Case Study

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Across the higher education landscape, the missions of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) are often associated with advancing teaching excellence across their institutions. Yet many institutions fail to establish a clear, common conceptualization of teaching excellence. In the context of uncertainty, CTLs may struggle to align their offerings to achieve their missions. Using a case study approach, the authors explore how one institution established an institution-wide conceptualization of teaching excellence through shared governance and how its CTL supports teaching excellence. The authors discuss planned initiatives and offer suggestions for CTLs.

Introduction

Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) have long focused on developing faculty pedagogical competencies, with increasing attention to researching, identifying, and developing evidence-based instructional practices. What CTLs have not always done effectively is strategically design and deliver programs supporting competency development with concurrent assessment and evaluation of their work given competing and, at times, contradictory definitions of effective teaching. Moreover, "systemic adoption of such practices remains elusive, leaving unrealized their full benefits for equity and excellence" (Boyer 2030 Commission, 2022, p 26). Elevating and formally defining teaching excellence, then providing pedagogical training

and development opportunities with systemic rewards for participation, is a critical component of the "equity/excellence imperative" included in the title of the Boyer Report.

This article aims to explore how CTLs can support defined conceptualizations of teaching excellence through their mission, offerings, and planning. Using a case study approach, the article explains how one institution established an institution-wide conceptualization of teaching excellence through shared governance and how its CTL offerings deliberately support teaching excellence. The discussion contributes to existing literature by highlighting the importance of clearly defining teaching excellence at an institutional level, underscoring the role that CTLs play in advancing teaching excellence, and offering suggestions for evaluating the extent to which CTL offerings align with institutionally defined teaching excellence.

Conceptualizing and Operationalizing Teaching Excellence

For decades, conceptualizing teaching excellence has been widely debated and explored globally across the higher education sector (Skelton, 2009), particularly in the face of external pressures to demonstrate value, accountability, and outcomes across the higher education landscape (De Courcy, 2015). In response, institutions have developed teaching excellence schemes as one way to assure stakeholders of the quality of teaching at higher education institutions (Chan & Chen, 2024). For example, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in the United Kingdom is a national system for recognizing excellent teaching in higher education (Office for Students, 2023) that has faced both criticism and praise (HEPI, 2017). Similarly, extant research suggests faculty, administrators, and developers in Canadian universities and colleges have been increasingly pressured to demonstrate proficiency and excellence in teaching and learning (De Courcy, 2015).

Individual institutions of higher education also offer institution-specific conceptualizations of teaching excellence. Penn State's Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence describes teaching excellence at Penn State, where it is viewed as "an academic process by which students are motivated to learn in ways that make a sustained, substantial, and positive influence on how they

think, act, and feel; and "a process that elevates students to a level where they learn deeply and remarkably because of teacher attributes" (Baker et al., 2005). The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (2024) defines teaching excellence as possessing four characteristics: well-designed, well-delivered, inclusive and ethical, and reflective and evolving. Purdue University (2024) offers its "Framework for Teaching Excellence" using five levels of excellence - exemplars, enthusiasts, and educators (for all instructors) and experimenters and explorers (for instructors whose research includes teaching and learning) - to encompass elements and descriptors of teaching excellence at Purdue.

Although the body of teaching excellence scholarship indicates that concepts of teaching excellence vary across institutions and contexts globally, research suggests commonalities exist. To build upon current application and to avoid duplication in practices that could be ineffective, consulting the SoTL literature, including peer institutions and academic writing, has resulted in a systematic and introspective look at teaching and learning, which has encouraged replication and improvement of the practices at this institution and will hopefully provide a foundation for efficient duplication by others in the future (Shulman, 2000).

Using a range of qualitative data collection tools, including an analysis of the criteria of award schemes, Parker (2014) identified four key themes associated with teaching excellence: personal attributes (e.g., passionate, inspiring, and communication skills), promoting learning success, relationship with students, and scholarship/professional development. Similarly, using the conceptualization of teaching excellence in 95 award documents from higher education institutions and regional/national awards, Chan & Chen (2023) constructed a matrix of teaching excellence using (a) six aspects of teaching, including pedagogy, curriculum planning/design, assessment, student support, service to communities, and professional development and (b) five dimensions in which teaching excellence can be demonstrated, including innovation, impact, inclusivity, scholarship of teaching and learning, and student-centeredness.

Creation of these teaching excellence-focused comprehensive frameworks highlights the complexity that requires a holistic approach to maximize impact for both the educator as well as the student. Educators with insights

into the needs of their students are perfectly positioned to engage in pedagogical research (Tierney, 2020). When given a well thought out and clear explanation of teaching excellence, educators can confidently enhance their teaching practices, and they can further align SoTL with their personal and professional missions, knowing that their SoTL work is valued by their institution. (Canning and Masika, 2022). They can then contribute to the broader academic community's understanding of teaching excellence as they document their experiences and impact.

Teaching Excellence @ OHIO

At Ohio University (OHIO), establishing a shared conceptualization of teaching excellence began as a university-level committee project in 2019. Broadly, the original goal was to offer suggestions for documenting teaching effectiveness beyond student evaluations of teaching (SETs), given the limitations commonly associated with SETs (Uttl, White, & Gonzalez, 2017), and using the dimensions of activities related to teaching (Kern et al., 2015). After the shift in teaching modalities during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ohio University adopted the committee's initial suggestions as formal recommendations for documenting teaching effectiveness when the university shifted SETs to optional (rather than required) evidence of teaching effectiveness in April 2020. This policy of optional SETs continued until the end of the pandemic in 2021.

Based on the foundations developed during the COVID pandemic, the committee reengaged the efforts in 2021, further shifting the focus from suggesting evidence of teaching effectiveness to conceptualizing a formal, common university-wide framework of teaching excellence grounded in the University's stated mission. A draft proposal was presented to various groups in late 2021 based on scholarly research and other universities' conceptualizations. After collecting and aggregating feedback, a final proposal was presented to the Faculty Senate in May 2022. In December 2022, the Faculty Senate voted to endorse the proposed conceptualization through a resolution; the resolution was subsequently signed by the Executive Vice President and Provost (Ohio University, 2024a).

In January 2023, Teaching Excellence @ OHIO was established as a university-wide conception of teaching excellence using six descriptors:

well-designed, well-delivered, inclusive, learner-focused, reflective, and evolving (Ohio University, 2024b). Based on the six descriptors, eight criteria of Teaching Excellence @ OHIO (Figure 1) were identified: preparation – the ability to plan for teaching; engagement – the ability to deliver content and manage the student learning experience; inclusion – the ability to serve the needs of all students; subject expertise – the ability to develop and maintain subject knowledge; pedagogical competence – the ability to develop and maintain knowledge and skill in teaching and learning theories and practice; outcomes – the ability to achieve desired results of teaching and learning; improvement – the ability to revise teaching and learning practices over time; and adaptability/innovation – the ability to navigate the evolving nature of teaching.

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Figure 1
Teaching Excellence Criteria



To operationalize Teaching Excellence @ OHIO, a university-wide committee recommended changes to university policies and practices,

including (a) modifying language in the Faculty Handbook to include specific references to the teaching excellence criteria and corresponding evidence and (b) align CTLA future offerings with the Teaching Excellence @ OHIO criteria (Ohio University, 2024a). In December 2023, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution to modify Handbook language according to the committee's recommendations, and the modifications were subsequently signed by the Executive Vice President and Provost.

In August 2024, the CTLA began offering suggestions for demonstrating teaching excellence across the eight criteria using multiple sources of evidence from four domains developed by The Career Framework for University Teaching (2018). Evidence to demonstrate teaching excellence included (1) self-assessments such as instructor narratives and sample course materials, (2) professional activities such as participation in professional development programs, and Discipline-based Educational Research (DBER), and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) intellectual contributions, (3) outcomes, including direct or indirect assessments of students' knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes, and (4) evaluations of instructor teaching, learning, and assessment practices from internal and external peers. Table 1 provides a list of example evidence across the eight criteria.

Table 1
Examples for Demonstrating Teaching Excellence

Criterion	Self-Assessment	Professional Activities	Outcomes	Peer Evaluation
Preparation	Sample course and instructional materials	Participation in course and instructional design programs	Student evaluations of course organization or structure	Peer review of course and instructional materials
Engagement	Teaching philosophy	Participation in student engagement-focused development programs	Student evaluations of course engagement	Peer observation of teaching
Inclusion	Teaching philosophy	Participation in inclusive pedagogy programs	Student evaluations of class climate	Peer observation of teaching
Subject Expertise	Sample course materials	Subject-related research, scholarship, or creative activity	Student achievement of learning outcomes	RSCA recognition/award
Pedagogical Competence	Sample course and instructional materials	SoTL or DBER contributions	Student achievement of learning outcomes and evaluations of teaching effectiveness	Teaching recognition/award
Outcomes	Sample assessments	Participation in assessment development programs	Sample assessment outcomes	Instructor and peer review of assessments
Improvement	Narrative about improvements over time	Participation in assessment and continual instructional improvement programs	Evaluation of improvements in student learning	Peer review of course improvements
Adaptability & Innovation	Narrative about adaptations	Participation in TLA innovation and improvement programs	Improvements in student evaluations; student testimonials	Peer review of course innovations

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As conceptualized and operationalized, three key caveats of Teaching Excellence @ OHIO are important to acknowledge. First, the criteria for achieving teaching excellence represent a process. Faculty are expected to develop and maintain relevant criteria over time rather than achieve all criteria simultaneously. Second, the importance of the criteria may vary by discipline, context, expectations, stage of faculty/curriculum development, and/or teaching assignments. As such, disciplines are expected to refine each criterion based on disciplinary expectations, faculty expertise/role, and teaching and learning context, including student populations served. Third, the descriptors and criteria serve as an underlying framework for recognizing and celebrating teaching excellence across the institution. As such, faculty are able to utilize the framework for aspirational goal setting.

Supporting Teaching Excellence through CTLs

Arguably, supporting teaching excellence is central to the purpose of any CTL. Using CTL websites with a published mission or mission-like statements (~1,190 CTLs in 2020), Wright (2023) found that approximately one of every five CTLs (18%) referred to teaching excellence or effectiveness explicitly in their statements. More broadly, Tassoni (2023, p. 2) posits, "What a CTL does is help educators locate themselves in the nexus of best practices, draw attention to available tools and approaches, interrogate institutional histories and pertinent discourses, articulate and reexamine values and expectations."

To achieve their missions, CTLs provide faculty training in a critical function of their role, foster a culture of teaching and learning, symbolize the institution's commitment to teaching and learning, and serve to integrate faculty, staff, and administrators across an institution (Dickens et al., 2019). Key programs and services include consultations, institution-wide events, small-group programs, mentoring programs, academies, collaboration communities, resources, grants, teaching awards, policies/standards, and scholarship of teaching and learning programs/resources (Wright, 2023). As one example grounded in teaching excellence, the mission of the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence at Penn State is to "advance and inspire excellence in Penn State's teaching and learning" (Linse & Hood, 2022). To achieve this, they collaborate with the teaching and learning community

through consultations, course observations, workshops, conferences, research/publications, testing services, grants, collaborations, teaching communities, resource development, student ratings, and committee service (Linse & Hood, 2022).

OHIO Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA)

In the fall of 2022, Ohio University revitalized and expanded its previous Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) into the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (CTLA) with a mission to support faculty needs and strengthen faculty competencies related to teaching, learning, and assessment (Ohio University, 2024c). Following Wright, Lohe, and Little's (2018) call for CTLs to function in a "hub" role that connects disciplines, resources, and educational constituents, OHIO's CTLA was designed to serve as a portal for information and services related to teaching, learning, and assessment and was charged with collaborating with a dozen named committees, offices, and services (Ohio University, 2024c). Unlike its previous configuration as a CTL, Ohio University explicitly included "Assessment" in the center's title to address an identified institution need and to emphasize the important role of assessment in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

To achieve its mission, the intended programming and services were initially organized into five functional areas: (1) faculty development, including designing and delivering workshops, academies, consultations, and a digital resource library, (2) faculty collaborations, including administering faculty learning communities, faculty fellowship programs, teaching and learning conferences, and a peer teaching observation program, (3) assessment of student achievement of learning outcomes, including training, consultations, and resources to advance program assessment, general education assessment, and student success, (4) scholarship of teaching and learning, including building faculty research networks, seminars, and scholarship highlights and (5) university policies and procedures, including consultations and collaborations through shared governance structures (Ohio University, 2022).

Paralleling the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education (2018) four-dimension lens – hub, incubator,

temple, and sieve - for evaluating CTLs, the intent was to provide opportunities to exchange ideas, collaborate, and network (hub), foster individual and community growth through development (incubator), innovate and inspire innovative teaching practices grounded in the scholarship of teaching and learning (temple), and encourage the development of university-wide policies and practices that support excellence in teaching (sieve).

Initiatives to Support Teaching Excellence @ OHIO

To advance the extent to which the CLTA offerings support the eight criteria associated with the conceptualization of Teaching Excellence @ OHIO, the OHIO CLTA continuously improves its existing offerings and develops new offerings to meet user needs based on user and academic leader feedback. As an example, the OHIO CTLA engaged in a qualitative analysis of faculty development needs upon its relaunch in 2022, engaging in 30-minute interviews with college deans and associate deans, as well as faculty leaders and collaborative partners. This process was repeated at the outset of CTLA's third year (2024-25) and included department chairs. Part of that process included soliciting feedback on and socializing the newly established teaching excellence framework. Broadly, the intent of collecting user feedback is to provide clear expectations about how to develop and document progress toward achieving teaching excellence. Based on feedback, three major CTLA initiatives to support teaching excellence are described.

Program Development

Since its relaunch in fall 2022, the OHIO CLTA has been successfully received by the Ohio University community. During its inaugural academic year (2022-23), the OHIO CTLA offered 36 workshops, presentations, panel discussions, and conversations (220 unique participants); two faculty learning communities (32 participants); two book groups (51 participants); and one conference (182 participants). During its second academic year (2023-24), the CTLA offered 38 workshops, presentations, panel discussions, and conversations (336 unique participants); four faculty fellowships, three

faculty learning communities (32 participants); two academies (62 participants); and two conferences (222 participants). Arguably, one of the reasons for the growth in participation is grounded in the ability of the CTL staff to interact with faculty and stakeholders through formal and informal socialization that highlights the CTL's knowledge, skills, and relational abilities (Yee & Hargis, 2012). Examples of select 2023-24 offerings are provided in Table 2.

Table 2
Select 2023-24 OHIO CTLA Program Offerings

Title	Type
Ramp Up to Instruction: A Workshop to (Re)consider Courses	Workshop
Pathways to Enhancing or Enriching Courses with Generative AI	Workshop
Online Course Design Institute	Workshop
Wellness Rhetoric for Students' Professional Development	Workshop
Integrating AI in Higher Education STEM Classes	Workshop
The ABCs of Gen Z	Workshop
Using Peer Teaching Observations to Support Teaching Excellence	Workshop
Documenting Your Teaching Effectiveness	Presentation
Assessment Lessons Learned	Panel Discussion
AI Coffee Hours	Conversation
Generative AI and Teaching and Learning	Learning Community
Teaching and Learning on the Regional Campuses	Learning Community
Inclusive Pedagogy	Academy
Graduate Student Instructor Teaching	Academy
Teaching the Disrupted Learner: A Fall Semester Kickoff	Conference
Spring 2024 Spotlight on Learning	Conference

In the future, the CLTA intends to develop new offerings primarily targeted to mid-career faculty to support faculty's ongoing development toward excellence in teaching. While mid-career faculty often find

themselves at a crossroads, lacking a clear direction for the future and trying to re-envision the next phase of their careers (Baker et al., 2019), they are also the keystone of the academy for advancing institutions in the face of opportunities and challenges (Balwin & Chang, 2006). To support mid-career faculty advancement toward excellence in teaching, the CLTA plans to launch at least two teaching certifications and at least two new faculty development programs that align with the institution's recently developed dynamic strategy goals. To evaluate program effectiveness, the CLTA intends to collect participant produced artifacts including post-program reflections, post-program course modification plans, and post-implementation assessments.

Program Alignment

To evaluate the extent to which the CLTA programs support the eight criteria associated with the conceptualization of Teaching Excellence @ OHIO, a small project team of faculty contributors and CLTA staff engaged in a program coding exercise using all CLTA programs classified as workshops, presentations, panel discussions, or conversations that were offered between August 14, 2022, and November 8, 2024. The sample included approximately 147 hours (8,850 minutes) of programming attended by more than 1,200 non-unique participants. After excluding repeated offerings of the same program, the project team members independently coded 72 unique CLTA offerings as directly related to one or more of the eight Teaching Excellence @ OHIO criteria using the offerings' names, topics, and descriptions. Differences in coding were resolved using majority agreement.

The analysis results suggested that the criteria most commonly associated with offerings were Preparation (n=55; 76%) and Improvement (n=43; 60%). Approximately one of every three offerings were coded as Adaptability & Innovation (n=28; 39%), Engagement (n=24; 33%), or Inclusion (n=21; 29%). Approximately one of every five offerings were coded as Outcomes (n=16; 22%), while approximately one of every ten offerings were coded as Pedagogical Competence (n=11; 15%). None of the offerings were coded as Subject Expertise. The average number of criteria associated with each offering was 2.8. The most common number of criteria was two criteria

(32%), such as a combination of Preparation and Outcomes or a combination of Engagement and Inclusion. Two offerings were not coded to any of the teaching excellence criteria while five offerings were coded as related to five or more of the eight criteria.

In the future, CTLA intends to mature its communications to emphasize offerings' connections to teaching excellence criteria. This emphasis is made possible through (1) adding a purposeful layer of transparency to offering descriptions during program planning stages to indicate alignment and (2) tagging events and activities with teaching excellence criteria addressed by content and stated outcomes. Tagging takes place through fields available in the platform used for event registration. The benefits of concurrent approaches are both forward-facing and internal. Instructors participating in CTLA offerings can connect their activities to their own purposeful and planned improvements and articulate more clearly how they have targeted development areas in their dossiers and other professional documents. For CTLA, tagging will provide evidence for the center's comprehensive approach to faculty support and data for center assessment and future gap and needs analyses, contributing to ongoing program development, refinement, and improvement. In addition, through coordination with institutional collaborators, workshops, sessions, and extended professional development opportunities offered by multiple centers and offices could be tagged in a manner that provides the university with institution-wide data.

In addition, the CTLA intends to develop two new measures to assess the impact of program participation on teaching excellence. The first step will be to collect data from participants immediately after each workshop, presentation, panel discussion, or conversation using a quick poll asking for an overall rating plus perceived usefulness of the engagement in improving one or more of the teaching excellence criteria. The second step will be to distribute an annual survey to all program participants who attend at least one engagement during to the previous year to collect general feedback about participation frequency, overall satisfaction with offerings, general usefulness of content, and any self-reported improvements in one or more of the eight teaching excellence criteria.

Communications

The CTLA's two primary communication channels – an electronic newsletter and the website – allow for examination of engagement trends based on topics and types. Given the consistent use of an enterprise-wide email marketing campaign platform for the CTLA newsletter since its launch in September 2022, performance trend tracking is possible. Initially, the newsletter was sent to 1,818 full-time instructors based on university data. Since then, adjunct instructors, instructional support staff, and collaborator staff have been added to the newsletter audience. In 2023-24, the number of recipients increased to 4,088, and, as of November 2024, the newsletter distribution audience numbered 6,040. Between Nov. 28, 2023, and Nov. 26, 2024, a total of 18 campaigns were sent comprising 66,370 emails with a delivery rate of 99.98%. The highest open (view) rate for CTLA newsletters included a campaign specific to new faculty (July 31, 2024, with a 70.19% open rate), and the newsletters at and prior to the opening of fall semester announcing programs and sessions to support “ramping up to instruction” (Sept. 25, 2024, with a 48.05% open rate, and July 31, 2024, with a 44.13% open rate). Overall, this communication channel's measure of engagement is highest at the beginning of academic semesters and prior to the university's annual Spotlight on Learning Conference mid-spring semester. Continued tracking will allow for greater insights and lessons learned to improve topical relevance and publication schedule. (An engagement heat map shows that in the last year, recipients were most likely to open emails between 9:30 a.m. and 12 p.m., for example.)

CTLA completed phase 1 of a website overhaul in October 2022, and the university's marketing and communication unit transitioned to a new web analytics dashboard in 2024-25. CTLA provisioned a new dashboard in November 2024, which comprises the baseline for future engagement analysis. As a baseline, 961 users visited the CTLA website (up 24.8% from the previous month) with total sessions (visits) of 1,448. The average length of visit was 06:23. Most visitors arrive at the CTLA website via a Google or organic web search (65.7%), followed by direct link to content (12.9%), and newsletter link (6.4%). The CTLA web page on teaching excellence is the third highest visit page behind the faculty digital resources hub landing page

and the CTLA homepage.

In the future, the CTLA intends to mature its communication strategy by assessing the effectiveness of its communications through the lens of the AIDA: Awareness - Interest - Desire - Action (Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999). Specifically, through interviews and surveys, the CTLA plans to assess impact of communications on creating awareness of CTLA offerings, generating interest in exploring upcoming opportunities and resources, building a desire to participate in programs, and moving potential participants to register and join programs. Data will be collected from faculty, academic unit leaders (e.g., department chairs, school directors, center directors), and participating staff (e.g., librarians, advisors, instructional designers, academic technologists).

Suggestions for Practices to Support Teaching Excellence

The case study of a single CTL affords an opportunity to provide suggestions to other CTLs, faculty development leaders, and higher education administrators interested in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of professional development programs. The following aligns closely with the Boyer 2030 Commission blueprint for undergraduate education (2022).

Developing the Concept

The first suggestion is to perform an institutional scan and solicit current conceptualizations of teaching excellence (or similar) from departments, colleges, and units. This critical first step acknowledges valuable grassroots or department-level work already existing. Incorporating and acknowledging this work in a broader, institution-wide conceptualization is a valuable strategy to increase acceptance and adoption after establishing a common conceptualization.

Following an institutional scan, CTLs should coordinate with existing systems to collaboratively develop a formal conceptualization of teaching excellence. Ideally, the conceptualization should be evidence-based, straightforward, and adaptable so that administrative leaders and faculty across colleges, departments, and disciplines can more easily adopt it.

Identifying, incorporating, and leveraging commonalities among unit-level definitions and those documented in SoTL and DBER to promote alignment with diverse disciplines is critical. If institutional factors or characteristics present an insurmountable challenge to establishing a formal university-wide conceptualization, CTLs should establish a working conceptualization relying on staff expertise to inform strategic and program planning. As noted in the Boyer report (2022), "definitions provide guidance for pedagogical training for graduate students, standards of evaluation for new faculty hires, and expectations for faculty development and reward" (p 27).

Through collaborations with academic units, the role of CTLs should be to (1) socialize the conceptualization and corresponding criteria to faculty and leadership on the department, college, and university levels; (2) highlight the potential for adaptability based on disciplinary differences; and (3) when possible, adopt the conceptualization formally through shared governance structures. As noted earlier, when formal adoption of a conceptualization through shared governance is not possible, CTLs should seek endorsement from academic leaders and faculty champions.

Recommending Evidence and Offerings

After developing the concept, CTLs should engage in activities to meaningfully operationalize the teaching excellence concept. Specifically, CTLs should recommend evidence for documenting teaching excellence as conceptualized. Ideally, CTLs should start with information from academic units about what data, documents, or activities are acceptable evidence for meeting or exceeding unit-level teaching/learning expectations. Recommended assessment or evaluative measurement methods should be multiple, flexible, and relatively easy for faculty to implement. Identifying evidence requires thoughtfully documenting examples and use cases and acknowledging the systems and contexts in which teaching excellence will be evaluated. For example, an institution might align student evaluations of teaching (SET) questions with elements of the conceptualization SETs can measure. Moreover, "holistic evaluation of teaching that includes multiple measures for promotion/job security" mitigates the drawbacks of well-designed and aligned SETs (Boyer 2030 Commission, 2022, p 27).

At the same time, CTLs should design, refine, and evaluate their own

offerings to align with the conceptualization of teaching excellence. Following backward design principles, faculty development leaders and staff should evaluate their programs - content, delivery, and facilitation - using relevant criteria. The process of aligning and evaluating offerings within the context of teaching excellence may result in refining, restructuring, or abandoning existing programming that does not directly support the conceptualization and developing new offerings. However, evaluating offerings through the lens of teaching excellence ensures efficient and effective CTL operations that support responsible stewardship of institutional resources focused on meeting institutional needs.

Building Communications and Community

To drive participation and engagement, CTLs should establish ongoing, transparent, purposeful communications. Given the strong evidence connecting faculty development to student success (Wright et al., 2018), CTLs serve as an essential infrastructure for student success (Boyer 2030 Commission, 2022, p 28). Accordingly, CTLs should clearly communicate how their offerings align with teaching excellence criteria and, ultimately, advance student success. Communications should showcase opportunities for faculty to create new or diverse evidence of teaching excellence for annual evaluations or promotion and tenure processes.

To influence and sustain culture change, CTLs should build community and connect faculty around teaching excellence to encourage peer-to-peer influence that sustains engagement and involvement over a career. As noted in the Boyer (2022) report (p. 28), connecting faculty at the beginning of their careers with an institution and developing collective approaches to teaching excellence in departments may have equal, if not more, influence on adopting evidence-based practices than other rewards.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This case study illustrates a collective effort to define and operationalize a university-wide conceptualization of teaching excellence through shared governance with a concurrent re-envisioning and relaunch of an institution's CTL. First, the case describes the importance of conceptualizing and

operationalizing a common, adaptable framework for teaching excellence that is broadly supported across an institution yet can be modified to fit local contexts and structures. Specifically, the case study illustrates one mechanism for establishing a common understanding through informal and formal shared governance processes. Second, the case explains how CTLs can then use an institution's accepted framework as both a compass and a lens to align offerings and communications to directly support teaching excellence. Specifically, the case describes three current and planned initiatives – program development, program alignment, and communications – to better support stakeholders' teaching excellence development.

However, the work remains in relatively early stages, which creates the opportunity for further development and evolution. Specifically, the OHIO CTLA intends to continue exploring new offerings to meet the needs of its faculty and advance teaching excellence across the institution; align existing and new offerings explicitly and deliberately to individual teaching excellence criteria; and build awareness, interest, desire, and action through communications. To evaluate its effectiveness and impact on the advancement of teaching excellence, the OHIO CTLA intends to launch a portfolio of program and center assessments, including (but not limited to) collecting and evaluating artifacts produced before and after program participation, post-program quick polls, and annual surveys of faculty and staff. Broadly, the goal of assessments is to identify which criteria are most easily developed through the CTL and which require additional support outside the literal and figurative center walls. Similarly, assessments will be used to evaluate the types of programs (workshops, presentations, FLCs, teaching certifications, extended academies) that are most effective in the short- and long-term as well as which are most relevant to faculty at various points across an academic career.

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