**History and Continued Development of the Center for Teaching and Learning**

Institutional growth and support for faculty development has been progressing steadily since the last Amarillo College reaffirmation. Significant emphasis has been placed on the vision, expansion, and depth in the past few years to provide increased institutional support for training and advancement for faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners. The following paragraphs will guide reviewers through the transition since our last review.

A professional development program for all faculty, staff, and administrators, directed by the department of Professional and Organizational Development (POD) and representative committees for each employee group, had been internally supported for many years. The department was, most recently, part of the Division of College Advancement. The department was supported by a director, one staff assistant, one technology specialist, and one student worker.

The Dean of College Advancement, Dr. Brad Johnson, accepted a position as a President at Northeast Texas Community College and left AC during the summer of 2008. As a part of his final duties, he created a plan to reassign the areas of responsibility previously reporting to the Division of College Advancement. With the support and vision of the Vice President and Dean of Instruction, Dr. Paul Matney (currently the President at AC), the Center for Teaching and Learning was created. [1]

The new structure was assigned to report to the Division for Academic Instruction reporting to the Vice President and Dean of Instruction. Areas of responsibility, previously assigned to others, were moved to strengthen AC resources for internal training. Patsy Lemaster was reassigned as the Associate Dean for the Center for Teaching and Learning. The composition of the center included the departments for Professional and Organizational Development, eLearning, and Technology Training. As a result, staffing was combined, adjusted, and increased to include one administrative assistant, one project/event specialist, two instructional designers, a director for eLearning, one technology specialist, one technology trainer, one graphic arts student intern, and one student worker. Searches were conducted to fill positions for the director and instructional designer as identified in subsequent information.

Spring 2008

* Career Clusters Development [2]

Institutional activities to develop Career Clusters was begun simultaneously with movement to create the Center for Teaching and Learning,. As a part of the original team working to develop Career Clusters, the Associate Dean for CTL continued to work with the Director of Tech Prep to implement AC clusters.. As Plans were progressing, the Director for Tech Prep, John Smoot, left the college. The responsibilities for the development of Career Clusters were moved under the umbrella of CTL and Dr. Lana Jackson, an AC faculty member from the department of Mass Communications, was identified and granted reassigned time for fulfilling the duties as the director of career clusters development. Cluster development activities were expanded to include the examination of all course objectives to identify core curricula for each cluster using Worldwide Instructional Design Software [3] under Dr. Jackson’s leadership. Amarillo College will develop eleven areas for career clusters. [4]

* New Learning Management System

As the new organizational structure for CTL was evolving, AC was concurrently working with EduCause consultant, Sherry Hendrix, academic faculty representatives, and other support staff to identify an updated learning management system to be implemented Summer 2009. EduCause was contracted for leadership to handle negotiations and lead faculty discussions to replace WebCT due to the sudden death of the AC Director of eLearning, Angel was selected by faculty and used with pilot courses scheduled the second half of Spring 2009. Workshops and training were conducted and sandboxes were monitored, and courses were successfully migrated with support led by CTL personnel and faculty trainers. Learning management tools were extended to all faculty to allow use in traditional, hybrid, enhanced online courses, as well as online classes. CTL and the Division of Information Technology Services, directed by Lee M. Colaw, CIO, have continued to collectively support the LMS and related activities. [5]

Fall 2008

* CTL Training Lab Funded and Created

Funding was identified and the first dedicated employee technology training lab was created. It was located on the third floor of the library located on Washington Street Campus in Room 309. [6]

* Angel Learning Management System Goes Live

The new LMS, AC Online, launched successfully. Electronic training and student tutorials were created and assisted to effectively transition students, courses, and faculty effectively. [7] [8]

* Faculty Internship Opportunities Created

Faculty internship opportunities were created for AC faculty to promote greater sharing and networking among peers using AC Online and/or other technologies supported by the AC. Faculty interns coordinated activities and projects with CTL staff while supporting peers and learning new, interactive instructional strategies. [9] [10]

Spring 2009

* Strategic Plan for Distance Education

Faculty focus-group participants led discussions and assisted to develop the strategic plan for distance education during Spring 2009. Planning activities were supported by the Acting Vice President/Dean of Instruction, Faculty Senate, and the institutional divisions for Assessment and Development, Enrollment Management, Workforce and Economic Development, Technical Training Solutions, and CTL. The plan continues to provide direction for CTL and other entities supporting learning at a distance and related training for AC faculty. [11]

* A New Director for eLearning

Brian Nixon joined the CTL team February 2009. He served previously as adjunct online faculty and president of a private business in Vermont before coming to Amarillo. [12]

Fall 2009

* Student Help Desk and Student Help Center

With the adoption, pilot, and greater support afforded for faculty using the new LMS, the next logical step was to create comparable support for the transition of students using the system. The CTL HelpDesk was created and services were initiated prior to the beginning of the semester Fall 2009. Dale (Buster) Bonjour was assigned the responsibilities for assisting students by phone as needed. Hours for contact were extended to evenings and weekends to support students beyond the routine working hours of the institution. [13]

* Faculty Instructional Designer Added to CTL Staff

After a lengthy search, Heather Voran was hired as CTL faculty and began working at the start of the 2009-2010 academic year to provide increased assistance and training for AC faculty in academic areas. Heather had previously been an Instructional Technology Specialist for Region 16 Service Center located in Amarillo. She also serves as an AC Angel administrator and course designer/instructor for the Online Faculty Certification being offered by Eastern New Mexico University. [14]

* Adjunct Faculty Membership Increased on Faculty Development Committee

The adjunct faculty membership was increased on the Faculty Development Committee to provide greater vision from the perspective of AC part-time faculty. Results have been positive and have resulted in changes in scheduling and recognition of the significant roles of adjuncts. [15]

* Extended CTL Hours to More Effectively Serve Adjunct Faculty

CTL extended consultation and training hours to accommodate adjunct faculty more effectively. Instructional designers currently work extended hours one night each week. As a result, CTL assistance and training is available from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday during fall, spring, and summer terms. Formal trainings have also been scheduled for the benefits of adjuncts and/or other faculty unable to participate during normal workday hours. [16]

* Student Help Desk Transitioned to Student Help Center

The CTL Helpdesk pilot was very successful. However, it was acknowledged that many students needed individual, hands-on support rather than telephone interaction. As a result, services of the CTL HelpDesk were transitioned and extended to the current resource, CTL Student Help Center. The CTL Student Help Center was originally located on the third floor of the library in close proximity to the CTL technology lab and was staffed by the Coordinator, Dale (Buster) Bonjour, and two student-workers who offer individualized services through personal, electronic, and telephone contact from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Friday. Support for weekend contacts (for students and faculty, as needed) is provided by the Coordinator as a routine part of his duties. Services of CTL are integrated as a part of the support provided by AskAC and Technology Information Services (TIC). [17]

Spring 2010

* WIDS Activities Initiated to Strengthen Career Clusters Development

Cluster development activities were expanded to include examination of all course objectives to identify core curricula for each cluster using Worldwide Instructional Design Software (WIDS) under Dr. Jackson’s leadership. Training has been conducted as each cluster is being developed by instructional areas.

[18] [19] [20]

* Increased Training and Resources by CTL

CTL training classes were expanded to include new topics, resources, and services for faculty. Classes were replicated for daytime and evening hours. Individual consultation times were also scheduled by CTL instructors traveling to other campuses and faculty offices as needed/requested. Online tutorials were developed for AC employees and shared with students through the Student Help Center. Most electronic tutorials for technology were created by the CTL Senior Trainer, Charles Hendrick. Additional resources were developed by other CTL personnel. [21]

* Leadership for House Bill 2504

CTL organized and led activities supporting the task force of divisional faculty representatives developing the institutional plans for compliance with House Bill 2504. The documentation and related reports were submitted and posted as required in August 2010 and January 2011. [22]

Summer 2010

* Vice President of Academic Affairs Hired – CTL Direct Report

Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart was hired as the Vice President of Academic Affairs effective July 2010. CTL is a direct report and is represented on the Deans Council. Dr. Lowery-Hart has a tremendous passion for students and their success at AC. The focus of institutional faculty development efforts are being aligned to coordinate with those being implemented which reflect greater student engagement, retention, opportunities, and achievements. [23]

* Technology Development Course Developed for Students

With collaboration among the CTL Student Help Center, AskAC, Technology Information Center, and numerous focus group conversations, a technology development course for students was developed with enrollments beginning Fall 2010. CTL staff and leadership led the initial stages for this development. The course was developed and is currently being offered by the Office Technology Department, POFI1204, Computer Fundamentals. [24]

Fall 2010

* New AC Strategic Plan ---2010-2015

A new, five year AC Strategic Plan was implemented Fall 2010. With the core purpose, “At AC, we help each student to succeed,” and a vision stating, “At AC, we aspire for every student to have a success story.” The Center for Teaching and Learning has been included in many of the efforts targeted to achieve the goals as identified. [25]

* Faculty Instructional Designer Added to CTL Staff

Kay Taylor was hired as part of the CTL team Fall 2010 to provide greater assistance and training focused in areas of internal and external continuing education. Kay was previously an instructor of developmental reading, writing, and mathematics for the ACcess Division at AC. She earned a Masters of Education and Instructional Design Technology degree while working for Access and applied for the faculty position in CTL. Kay was instrumental in leading and creating online content and electronic resources for New Faculty Orientation/Academy and Adjunct Faculty Certification. She also helped to support the 2011 Amarillo College Teaching Seminar. [26]

* New Faculty Orientation and Academy—Online Resources and Content

New Faculty Academy was migrated to a hybrid format for 2010-2011. Much of the content for the two-semester course was delivered online using through Angel. Faculty were required to develop online modules and deliver videotaped presentations for peers. [27]

* Faculty Workshops Offered General Assembly Day

To support the vision of the new VPAA and AC Strategic Plan, CTL successfully organized and hosted faculty workshops for the first day faculty returned Fall 2010. Topics included service learning, student success and engagement, online instructional resource development, and course assignments. [28]

* Online Instructor Certification

CTL led activities to create and develop curricula for a new faculty development training program, Online Instructor Certification, implemented Fall 2010. This program consists of four, three-credit courses. Upon completion of all four, faculty are credited with 15 hours for salary advancement. The four courses (12 total hours) may also be counted toward requirements for rank and promotion. Graduate credit is being offered by Eastern New Mexico University for the certification courses being developed and taught by CTL faculty. Courses included in the certification are as follows: Effective Online Instruction, Effective Instructional Design, Authentic Online Assessment, and Software and Media for Online Instruction.

[29] [30]

* Title V – “Revitalizing Student Success at Amarillo College”

Amarillo College was awarded funding for a Title V project to begin September 2010, “Revitalizing Student Success at Amarillo College.” The project is being led and directed through the Center for Teaching and Learning. During the fall semester, the position for a Director of Title V was posted. Cara Crowley, previously the Director of Grants for AC, accepted the position. The Curricula Enhancement Specialist, Dale McCurdy, was hired April 2011. Responsibilities for existing personnel from CTL were also expanded to include responsibilities for Title V. Title V will promote curriculum enhancement and provide construction for a new, state-of-the-art faculty development center during funded project years. [31] [32] [33] [34]

* Dr. Mark Taylor Presentations, Generation NeXT

Dr. Mark Taylor, nationally recognized educator, expert, speaker, and consultant presented two sessions to promote greater understanding and service for students for learning development, persistence, and successful integration into the “after college” world. [35] [36] [37]

* Master Course Development Stipends for Faculty

A process was created for awarding stipends to faculty for master course development. Master courses are “model” courses created for universal use by faculty in the content area in which they are developed. Courses qualifying for the master course stipend can be traditional, online, hybrid, or enhanced online delivery. [38] [39] [40]

* Change of Leadership for Career Clusters Development

Dr. Lana Jackson accepted responsibilities as the Director for QEP and continues to participate as a consultant for career cluster development. Becky Burton assumed responsibilities as Director of Career Clusters effective Spring 2011. A new assistant director will be identified for Summer 2011.

* Marketable Skills Certificates Promoted for Career Clusters Development

Marketable Skills Certificates (MSC) are success measure certificates recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. A request was initiated by CTL Career Clusters leaders, Dr. Lana Jackson and Becky Burton at the end of the Fall semester and approved by Academic Affairs at the beginning of the spring semester. MSCs increase opportunities to provide short-term CTE certificate options and address the requirements of the Career Clusters initiative by allowing secondary and postsecondary faculty to articulate a coherent sequence of courses which lead to a MSC and parallels high school graduation requirements [41] [42]

Spring 2011

* Adjunct Faculty Certification – A New Hybrid Format

Adjunct Faculty Certification was transitioned to a one-semester, hybrid course for Spring 2011. The hybrid format acquaints adjuncts use of online tools and allows for greater content in the course. [43]

* Training for Faculty First Day Back

CTL organized the agenda and presented many of the workshops offer Spring 2011. Sessions included legislative updates, gender equity, multimedia resources, online tools, and syllabi development. [44]

* Academic Leadership Retreat

The first Academic Leadership was conducted for faculty division chairs, department chairs, and program directors during the first week back. This day-long retreat featured interactive discussions for active and collaborative learning, institutional cost savings, and graduation/retention rates. [45]

* LMS Sessions and Related Open Lab Opportunities

CTL and ITS have begun leading the initiative and hosting opportunities for faculty to, once again, become actively engaged in the selection of learning management system upgrade to be implemented Fall 2012. Faculty are leading the institutional to determine whether the LMS will be migrated from Angel 7.4 (originally began with Angel 7.3, upgraded to 7.4 Fall 2010) to Blackboard or to Moodlerooms. Both systems are being presented to faculty by respective vendors during April 2011. Faculty questions provide the structure for the presentations and responses will be confirmed through their participation in sandboxes before the decision is made. CTL is currently scheduling open workshops for faculty to explore and learn with peers in the CTL lab. [46] [47] [48] [49] [50] [51]

* ACTS 2011

The Amarillo College Teaching Retreat was conducted May 2011 at Talon Point in Channing, TX, Approximately 50 participants attended. Workshop topics and discussions focused on institutional projects related to instruction including SACS, QEP, Title V, First-Year Experience, AVID. And Achieving the Dream [52]

* Support for SACS and QEP

CTL partnered with other institutional entities to support efforts for SACS and QEP. Training and other events were hosted and electronic resources were developed as a part of this support [53] [54] [55]

* CTL Student Help Center Moved to Library First Floor

The CTL Help Center was moved to the first floor of the Library, Suite 111, to provide greater service and visibility for student and faculty assistance. Updated information may assessed at the following. [56]

* Title Change – Patsy Lemaster, Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning

The title for leadership for CTL was changed to align with other institutional titles from “Associate Dean for the Center for Teaching and Learning” to “Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning”) [57] [58]

Conclusion

The Center for Teaching and Learning continues to develop and evolve as institutional strategic goals and innovative instructional goals are identified. At this time, institutional support for activities and training related to Title V, SACS Reaffirmation and QEP, First-Year Experience, Achieving the Dream, Career Clusters, and AVID are among the top priorities. CTL is proud and honored to be recognized as a supporting mechanism for the growth, development, and advancement of Amarillo College’s faculty as teachers, scholars and practitioners.

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Supporting Information and Links

[1] Center for teaching and Learning Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php>

[2] Career Clusters Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=27>

[3] Worldwide Instructional Design Software

<http://www.wids.org/Home.aspx>

[4] The 11 Career Clusters

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=31>

[5] LMS Implementation Team Minutes

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/94>

[6] CTL Student & Faculty Help Center Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=206>

[7] Angel Instructor Training Resources

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/20>

[8]How to Use AC Online (Student Tutorial)

<https://actx.angellearning.com/section/default.asp?id=WELC-0102-BJDAVIDSON-FC_OL&ts=1271072362>

[9] Faculty Internship Application

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/89>

[10] Faculty Internship Guidelines

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/90>

[11] Strategic Plan - Distance Learning through 2011

<http://www.actx.edu/archives/files/filecabinet/folder7/Strategic_Plan_Distance_Learning.pdf>

[12] Director of eLearning Job Posting

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/95>

[13] Student & Faculty Help Center

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=178>

[14] Faculty Instructional Designer Job Posting

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/99>

[15] Faculty Development Committee

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=161>

[16] Instructional Design Assistance for Adjunct Faculty

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=208>

[17] Student & Faculty Help Center

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=178>

[18] WIDS (Worldwide Instructional Design Software) Home Page

<http://www.wids.org/Default.aspx>

[19] WIDS Implementation Planning Worksheet

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/97>

[20] Curriculum Development Process

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/96>

[21] Technology Training Resources

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=158>

[22] House Bill 2504 – Report of Activities and Plan for Implementation

<http://www.actx.edu/collegerelations/files/filecabinet/folder14/After_Committee_Review_House_Bill_2504.pdf>

[23] Vice President of Academic Affairs

<http://www.actx.edu/programs/filecabinet/2>

[24] Computer Fundamentals

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=203>

[25] Strategic Plan Through 2015

<http://www.actx.edu/strategic/index.php?module=article&id=43>

[26] Faculty Instructional Designer Job Posting

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/100>

[27] New Faculty Academy

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=180>

[28] Faculty Workshops

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/69>

[29] Online Instructor Certification Orientation

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=204>

[30] Online Instructor Certification - Enrollment Steps

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=205>

[31] Title V Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=28>

[32] Director of Grants Job Posting

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/103>

[33] Curriculum Enhancement Specialist Job Posting

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/101>

[34] CTL Organizational Chart

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=160>

[35] Dr. Mark Taylor Bio

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/84>

[36] Meet Generation NeXT Video

<http://192.120.246.152/vod/taylor/player_v2.html>

[37] Meet Generation NeXT PowerPoint

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/88>

[38] CTL Procedures for supporting Approved Stipends

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/87>

[39] Course Completion Form for Master Course Development

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/49>

[40] Application for Master Course Development

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/26>

[41] Career Clusters Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=27>

[42] Marketable Skills Information

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=207>

[43] Adjunct Faculty Certification

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=183>

[44] Spring 2011 Kickoff Activities

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/91>

[45] Spring 2011 Opening Activities for Faculty

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/69>

[46] Agenda/Scenarios for Vendor Demos

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/75>

[47] Questions for LMS Vendors

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/76>

[48] Blackboard Evaluation Sheet

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/77>

[49] Moodlerooms Evaluation Sheet

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/78>

[50] Process and Timeline (Fall 2011)

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/79>

[51] SACS Best Practices of Electronically Offered Degrees and Certificates

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/80>

[52] ACTS Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=185>

[53] QEP Group in AC Online

<https://actx.angellearning.com/Section/default.asp?format=GROUP&id=Quality_Enhancement_Plan&TITLE=QEP>

[54] Reaffirmation Group in AC Online

<https://actx.angellearning.com/Section/default.asp?format=GROUP&id=Reaffirmation_2012&TITLE=Reaffirmation+2012>

[55] Dr. Mark Taylor Generation NeXT

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/84>

[56] Student & Faculty Help Center Home Page

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/index.php?module=article&id=178>

[57] Patsy Lemaster Title Change (2010 Organizational Chart)

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/images/filecabinet/folder1/CTL_Org__chart__Aug_2010_.gif>

[58] Patsy Lemaster Title Change (2011 Organizational Chart)

<http://www.actx.edu/ctl/filecabinet/93>