Preface
Since Georgia Southern gained university status in 1990, the institution has undergone significant growth and transformation. Most recently, there has been an added emphasis placed on moving the University from a Doctoral/Research University (DRU) to a Research University (high research activity—RU/H) as defined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Simultaneously, the University seeks to gain Elective Classification on Community Engagement (also through the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) and earn designation as a Military Friendly University. While these goals are all noteworthy, there is an underlying concern that such pursuits will compete with the institution’s teaching mission and erode what is commonly perceived as Georgia Southern’s strong teaching ethos.

To protect and preserve the University’s teaching mission and ethos, President Keel convened the Teaching Legacy Task Force on September 22, 2011. The Task Force was charged with reviewing the missions and current organizational structures of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship (CTLS), the Center for Online Learning (COL), and the Center for Academic Technology Support (CATS) and recommending a new structure and mission to support and ensure continued teaching excellence as the institution evolves. Additionally, the committee was tasked with preserving the institution’s strong teaching ethos by creating a foundation for a long-standing committee to be the representative voice of Georgia Southern’s faculty and their teaching needs.

At the initiative of President Keel and Provost Moore, the Task Force undertook the charge of discussing, reflecting, and examining the roles, functioning, and missions of the three centers. In crafting a report with recommendations, the committee began with the recognition that teaching and learning are the sine qua non of Georgia Southern University. As such, whatever is done with regard to the three centers will reflect what is first at the center of the University’s identity. Within this guiding principle, the committee began its work with two principal and interrelated elements, namely teaching excellence and teaching ethos as central.

In considering a structure to support teaching excellence and preserve Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos, it immediately became apparent that we need to understand what is meant by teaching excellence.
- How will we know when we have achieved teaching excellence?
- How is it measured?
- What are the activities and/or characteristics of teaching excellence from which we could design a faculty development support structure?
- What is the University’s teaching ethos?
- How does the perception of Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos differ between faculty and students?

Teaching excellence and ethos are nebulous traits and difficult to define. Task Force members conversed at length on these topics, as well as surveyed the literature. The outcome of their work forms the first half of this paper and provides the foundation for the recommendations which follow.

In recognition of the paucity of material available on “teaching ethos” within academic institutions and the belief that as an essential component of our self-identified guiding principles this issue needs to be attended to by Georgia Southern as we move forward, the Teaching Legacy Task Force recommends that
we place this topic on the agenda for follow-up during the forthcoming academic year. This suggestion forms recommendation #1. Of course any conversation about promoting and preserving teaching excellence must include consideration of how faculty are evaluated for teaching. More on this topic is included under recommendation #2. Involving faculty in these conversations extends beyond teaching ethos or evaluation. It is imperative that faculty inform the professional development activities that occur on this campus. They must be equal partners in designing the specific infrastructure of a faculty support center—a belief reflected in recommendation #3.

The committee’s thoughts concerning the organizational structure of the three centers is covered under recommendations #4 and 5. The fifth recommendation deals with the question of how technology contributes to good teaching. Task Force members felt strongly that academics must always dictate technology selection and use, rather than new technologies being made to fit what happens in the classroom.

As research becomes a greater focus of our mission, we will most likely rely increasingly more on graduate teaching assistants to teach undergraduate classes. Therefore, it is essential that we provide a level and quality of teaching assistant training that ensures teaching excellence and student learning. This topic is covered further under recommendation #6. Finally, teaching awards must be considered as a means for promoting and preserving the institution’s teaching ethos—discussed under recommendation #7.

Teaching Ethos
To articulate the optimal institutional structure needed to support and advance the University’s teaching mission, Task Force members agreed that they must first operationalize what Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos is and/or define teaching excellence. How can we preserve a strong teaching ethos when we cannot identify its attributes nor measure it? Of equal concern, can Task Force members speak for the broader campus community in defining the institution’s teaching ethos? After considerable deliberation, the Task Force recognized the inherent challenges in defining teaching ethos, but viewed teaching ethos as a set of guiding principles that professors embrace and practice as they conduct their class, express passion, pride and pre-eminent commitment to their disciplines, cognizant of the influence and impact on the lives of their students.

Using this definition, what are those professional beliefs, practices, and behaviors that are shared by Georgia Southern faculty? Ideally, our faculty model behaviors for students that lead to deep learning. Faculty embody thoughtful and scholarly behaviors. They communicate and share with students a passion and enthusiasm for the subject matter along with a commitment toward becoming lifelong learners. To paraphrase Mayer (2002), learning is process, not a product, involves change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, or attitudes, and is something students themselves do. John Stuart Mill characterized education as follows in a 19th century address at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland: “[Persons] are [persons] before they are lawyers, or physicians or merchants; and if you make them capable and sensible persons, they will make themselves capable and sensible lawyers or physicians. What professional [persons] should carry away with them from a University is not professional knowledge, but that which will direct the use of their professional knowledge, and bring the light…to illuminate…”.

Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos embraces our commitment to a student-centered environment. This type of environment benefits and empowers students since learning is constructed rather than passively received, students become active collaborators in the classroom, and frequent feedback is often provided. Buskist (2002) surveyed undergraduates and found that the top five traits desired in professors were: (1) having realistic expectations of students and being fair; (2) being knowledgeable about the topic; (3) displaying understanding; (4) being approachable and personable; and (5) being respectful toward students. Strong teachers recognize that to be effective, learning must be meaningful to the student.
Palmer (1998) suggested, “Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves” (p. 11). This type of classroom environment can encourage students to become more invested in learning and promote students’ success in the classroom and beyond. The instructor is seen as a facilitator or learner rather than a director and students are encouraged to share in the responsibility of learning. Learning processes become the focus since these skills can be applied toward new educational environments and not just the current course. Students in these types of environments demonstrate improvement in motivation, learning, and achievement and are ultimately better prepared for success outside the classroom.

Preserving Teaching Excellence
Research shows that teaching/student-focused institutions achieve student outcomes at a higher rate than research-focused institutions (Astin and Change, 1995). In this case, student-focused is operationalized as the following attributes: (1) faculty who demonstrate a genuine interest in their students’ well-being (both academically as well as personally); (2) institutions that facilitate student-faculty interactions and where faculty are accessible to students; (3) faculty who model civility and respect for their students and demonstrate sensitivity to issues relating to minority students; and (4) faculty who are committed to the success of the institution. Institutions with these attributes produce students who learn the course material at a deeper level and who report a higher level of satisfaction with their academic experience and a greater likelihood to remain at that institution.

Further evidence of the value and impact of good teaching on student retention and progression is found in a study conducted by Patrick T. Terenzini and Ernest T. Pascarella and summarized by Dan Barrett: “Good teaching and exposure to students from diverse backgrounds are some of the strongest predictors of whether freshmen return for a second year of college and improve their critical thinking skills” (Barrett, 2011). “Good teachers” model the following classroom behaviors: (1) explain student learning outcomes and course requirements clearly; (2) make effective use of classroom time; (3) present well organized material; (4) prepare for class and understand what they were teaching; (5) give clear explanations with examples and illustrations; (6) review and summarize material effectively; (7) interpret abstract ideas and theories clearly; and (8) give assignments that reinforce the course material (Pascarella, Seifert, Whitt, 2008). Students of faculty who demonstrated these classroom behaviors performed higher on standard measures of critical thinking, reading comprehension, and mathematics: “…Overall exposure to organized and clear instruction significantly (p < .001) increased the probability of a student enrolling for the second year of post-secondary education at the study institution” (Pascarella, Seifert, Whitt, 2008). Even more important is the conclusion that faculty can learn these behaviors and skills to become strong teachers. The study “lends support to the potential institutional benefits derived from the investment of resources in programs designed to enhance teaching effectiveness, particularly to the extent that these programs help faculty hone sound pedagogical skills such as instructional organization and clarity” (Pascarella, Seifert, Whitt, 2008).

Pascarella asserts, “The quality of teaching, the extent and nature of interaction with faculty and peers, the effectiveness of student affairs programming, the focus and intensity of academic experiences, and the overall level of student engagement...are much more important in defining excellence in undergraduate education that the reputation, selectivity, or resources of the institution attended” (Pascarella, 2001). Simply put, the value of promoting and sustaining a strong teaching ethos as well as teaching excellence at Georgia Southern University cannot be understated. It also offers an important balance to the Complete College Georgia initiative to ensure that academic rigor and quality is preserved.

Chikering and Gamson (1987) offer further reflection on what constitutes good teaching by defining high impact activities which lead to deep learning (The Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education): (1) student-faculty contact; (2) cooperation among students; (3) active learning; (4) prompt
feedback; (5) time on task; (6) high expectations; and (7) respective of diverse talents and ways of learning (Chikering & Gamson, 1987). Kuh (2008) elaborates more on high impact activities, listing them as: (1) first-year experiences; (2) common intellectual experiences; (3) learning communities; (4) writing-intensive courses; (5) collaborative assignments and projects; (6) undergraduate research; (7) diversity/global learning; (8) service or community-based learning; (9) internships, and (10) capstones.

Research shows that students who participate in at least two high impact activities demonstrate higher levels of learning (Brownell, Swaner, 2010). Equally important, their research has shown that participation in first-year seminars, learning communities (especially linked to gateway courses), service learning, and undergraduate research consistently results in greater student persistence as well as higher GPAs (Brownell, Swaner, 2010). From this perspective, it becomes imperative to understand the degree to which these types of high impact activities are encouraged and utilized as well as which student populations have access to them.

Teaching with Technology

In any discussion of teaching excellence, we must recognize that online course development and teaching necessitate a different approach to course development and delivery. Effective online instruction consistent with the University’s teaching ethos requires that we adhere to course design standards that promote effective online teaching and learning. To that end, faculty unfamiliar with online course development and delivery need guidance before and during course development—particularly for courses that support the University’s online degree programs.

A literature review on what constitutes good online course design and delivery reveals best practices in online course development. Examples include the Quality Matters™ Rubric Standards 2011-2013¹ (Shattuck, Diehl 2011), The 5 Pillars of Quality Online Education² (Bourne & Moore, 2002), The Seven Principals of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chikering & Gamson, 1987), and the Seven Principles of Effective Teaching: A Practical Lens for Evaluating Online Courses (Graham, Cagiltay, 2001). The Quality Matters™ Rubric emphasizes effective application of the following standards: course overview and introduction; learning objectives and/or competencies; assessment and measurement; instructional materials, learner interaction and engagement; course technology; learner support; and accessibility. Similarly, The 5 Pillars recommends practices to promote learning effectiveness, cost effectiveness and commitment, access, and faculty and student satisfaction. Finally, the Seven Principles of Effective Teaching explores best practices in online instruction, including student-faculty interactions; cooperation among students; active learning; prompt feedback; time on task; high expectations; and diverse talents and ways of learning.

Currently, the Center for Online Learning incorporates many of these best practices into its course and faculty development; however, missing from the COL’s practice is a course review process. Requiring courses that support our online degree programs to pass a rigorous course review process (such as the Quality Matters™ Rubric) before they are delivered would promote higher standards and greater consistency in online course development and delivery as well as ensure compliance with our regional accrediting body (ensuring a quality learning experience regardless of the course delivery mode). Task Force members ask that this issue be considered if and when their recommendations are implemented.

Recommendations

Having demonstrated the correlation between good teaching and student learning as well as retention, progression, and graduation and identified the high impact activities that we must offer and support, the Teaching Legacy Task Force makes the following recommendations. It is critical that the University

¹ See Resources.
² See Resources.
provide faculty development support that aligns with the University’s teaching ethos and strengthens teaching excellence, thus reflecting the principal mission of Georgia Southern.

Recommendation #1: Georgia Southern’s Teaching Ethos
As noted earlier, there needs to be further reflection and deliberation on what constitutes Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos. Our teaching ethos is central to our mission. We must understand and agree upon exactly what that means. Consequently, Task Force members recommend that the Provost invite a group of faculty to research the University’s teaching ethos. Ideally, the Provost would provide a grant to support this group’s research with the expectation of a paper on the topic. We believe that such a paper would be of interest to the academy and as such could be published to benefit other academic institutions. While such an endeavor will greatly benefit Georgia Southern as we move forward, it will also allow other institutions to recognize what we are about and what it is that guides us.

Recommendation #2: Evaluating Teaching
To sustain and strengthen teaching excellence, good teaching must be recognized and rewarded. It is not uncommon to see promotion and tenure dossiers come forward to the University level with an evaluation of teaching based solely upon Student Ratings of Instruction (SRIs). While SRIs have a place in the evaluation of teaching, they are not direct measures of teaching effectiveness nor of learning and provide limited information. Meaningful evaluations of teaching require multiple measures. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that all academic departments and colleges review their teaching evaluation guidelines to ensure that evaluation of teaching is based upon multiple measures and implement these measures when evaluating teaching (see the forthcoming Pathways to Success white paper, 2012).

As a basis for evaluating teaching, we recommend Arreola’s suggested framework based upon the following four areas: (1) content expertise; (2) affective traits/skills (e.g., “models the best characteristics of a lifelong learner,” accomplished practitioner); (3) performance skills (e.g., speaks clearly, well organized); and (4) cognitive skills (e.g., instructional design, instructional delivery, instructional assessment) (Arreola, 2007, p. 25). How much detail each discipline assigns should be decided between faculty and the department chair, but each trait should be observable and measurable (p. 32). Ideally, this framework is aligned with best practices in pedagogy described at the beginning of this paper—specifically those noted high impact areas. Optimally, the University’s faculty development center would create a teaching evaluation matrix (template) based upon Arreola’s framework with suggested measures included to ensure consistency and depth in teaching evaluations across campus.

Other meaningful measures of evaluating teaching include a review of course syllabi and curricular materials. Course documentation should align with articulated student learning outcomes and course objectives. Development of new course material should maximize deep student learning. Faculty who contribute significantly to the program’s curriculum through course development and/or modification should be evaluated based upon this work. Does the new course follow best practice in the discipline for teaching this content? Does the course utilize high impact activities that promote deep learning? Indeed, the Task Force recommends that all faculty who develop new courses through the Faculty Support Center (whether online or traditional) ought to receive a stipend or release time for course development if the course aligns with pedagogical standards of excellence and best practice.

Certainly, meaningful evaluation of teaching must include examples of student learning accompanied by a narrative from the faculty member explaining teaching methodologies and reflecting on how well those methods worked. Performance of students in subsequent courses is also important. Asking students who graduated three to five years ago how they assess the faculty member’s teaching is another tool. How did that professor’s teaching contribute toward preparing them for their career? Peer observations from within and outside of the discipline also provide an effective measure of teaching strength. External validations of teaching might include development of courses or pedagogies adopted by others. For a fuller
description of potential evaluation criteria, it is suggested that interested individuals review the University’s Pathways to Success white paper (forthcoming, 2012).

Although DFW rates should not be used in isolation, if a faculty member has consistently high rates compared to other faculty in his or her department, there should be a more careful analysis of the cause. Just as we would assume that a faculty member who consistently gives all “As” to students would need to adjust his or her delivery or content of materials, the same logic applies to a person who consistently fails students.

The Task Force recognizes the detrimental impact that enrollment growth and competing missions has had on teaching excellence. For instance, anecdotal evidence indicates that there are faculty who used to give essay exams to a class of 35 students, but now give multiple choice exams in the same course to 115 students. Projects have given way to exams. These changes minimize the learning experience and do not provide the deep learning for which we ultimately strive. On the other hand, given this environment, it is possible to structure faculty development activities that help faculty maintain deep learning through appropriate application of learning pedagogies and technologies designed for large class sizes. Indeed, we should be providing this level of support already since our QEP seeks to Advanc[e] a Culture of Engagement: Creating the Engaged Learner.

A meaningful teaching evaluation should strive to examine the full scope of the teaching; however, one of the most important parts of the evaluation should be the recommendations for faculty development. Department chairs in consultation with the faculty member should establish clear goals for enhancing teaching along with outlining the pathways for their attainment. This development plan is not just to address weaknesses, but to celebrate the strengths faculty bring to their teaching. For instance, does the plan allow faculty time to learn new technologies, to improve teaching methodologies, and to strengthen course content?

Recommendation #3: Faculty Advisory Board
Best practice indicates that faculty development centers “should always consult faculty needs through surveys, the Faculty Advisory Board, or attending Faculty Council meetings before launching a new initiative, to ensure that the center is addressing topics of greatest interest to the faculty at a particular institution” (Roberts and Yarrish, 2008). The Teaching Legacy Task Force takes this practice a step further and recommends that faculty be equal partners with the center in designing any faculty professional development initiative. Therefore, it is recommended that a long-standing Faculty Advisory Board be convened to work with the faculty professional development center (herein referred to as the Faculty Support Center or FSC). The Faculty Advisory Board would be comprised of a representative from each college and the library along with a representative from each of the functional areas of the Faculty Support Center. In addition to helping determine the activities of the FSC, the Faculty Advisory Board would serve as the faculty liaison body and, as such, would report to the Faculty Senate.

As a first order of business, it is suggested that the Faculty Advisory Board work with the Faculty Support Center to agree on a name and mission for the FSC. Collaborating together, they will also need to develop a specific itinerary of professional development activities and decide when and how they will be offered. This task should be accomplished by conducting a thorough needs assessment, surveying three separate groups (dean, department chairs, and faculty) about faculty professional development needs. Other areas they may wish to consider include studying and recommending “high profile awards and events recognizing teaching,” another best practice identified to reflect the University’s commitment to its teaching mission (Roberts and Yarrish, 2008).
Recommendation #4: Faculty Support Center (FSC)
To provide faculty with the most efficacious instructional faculty development, it is recommended that the Center for Online Learning (COL) be officially and formally consolidated with the Center for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship (CTLS) and that a campus instructional technology capability be incorporated [see recommendation #5]. Since the Call Center currently housed in the Center for Online Learning responds to prospective student inquiries about online degree programs, it is recommended that the Call Center not be merged with the Faculty Support Center, but remain in the old COL space along with the current COL director’s position and under the oversight of the Associate Vice President for Continuing Education. It is further recommended that the consolidated center be renamed to signal the revised vision and mission. This new Faculty Support Center would report directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (or his designee). Under this paradigm, the Center for Academic Technology Support (CATS) would continue to maintain operations support for faculty (troubleshooting hardware and software issues) and expand support for students and staff technology needs. As noted in recommendation #3, the Faculty Advisory Board will work with the FSC as equal partners to determine the efficacy of current programming as well as future programming needs.

Merging these two centers creates one location (physical and web) where all faculty and teaching assistants can seek instructional development support. Moreover, coordinating all faculty development activities through one center allows for the University to provide a consistent message to constituents regarding the primacy of the teaching mission as well as to ensure that activities focus on developing those attributes that support Georgia Southern’s teaching ethos and align with the high impact activities as defined by the research in the field.

Working closely with the faculty advisory body described in recommendation #3, the committee recommends that the Faculty Support Center re-visit its mission, desired functionality, and optimal programming to ensure that it meets the needs of Georgia Southern faculty. The Teaching Legacy Task Force anticipates changes in these areas in response to faculty input. We do not recommend nor seek to maintain the status quo. The following information offers a perspective based upon the current activities of the centers and is bound to change as a result of a needs assessment.

Desired Functionality
The Centers for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship (CTLS) and Online Learning (COL) currently provide service in support of teaching across campus. However, to preserve and advance teaching excellence, it is necessary to align services with best practices that are consistent with the institution’s teaching ethos, expand services to reach a broader audience, as well as offer additional services not currently provided. To date, there has not been a thorough assessment of the current efforts’ efficacy. Conducting this analysis in concert with the faculty advisory body will help determine if services currently being offered are the services most needed by faculty. The following list captures the desired functionalities as currently envisioned by the Task Force.

- instructional design support (regardless of the mode of instructional delivery);
- instructional technology consultations for course development;
- media creation and capture (e.g., video production, podcasting) [note: this functionality will be brand new to the FSC; it is not recommended that the current media capture functionality of CATS be integrated into FSC);
- support for developing online courses (hybrid and fully online);
- online course review (to ensure quality of online courses);

3 Given its initial mission, is this Call Center still needed?
4 See Resources.
5 See Resources.
peer-based faculty development;

- teaching portfolio development (critiques of teaching);
- support for the scholarship of teaching and learning;
- orientations for new faculty, faculty with special needs (e.g., international faculty, faculty teaching in STEM disciplines), and teaching assistants;
- opportunities to certify teaching ability;
- information and resources on instruction;
- internal instructional grants; and
- opportunities to network with other faculty about instructional issues.

Optimal Programming
Like the desired functionality, the optimal programming provided by the consolidated center should be developed in concert with the faculty advisory body and align with the desired functionalities. Task Force members emphasize, however, that the programming must include ongoing and effective program assessment and evaluation to determine if the proffered programming is meeting its goals and objectives as well as developing the institution’s faculty. Not only is this assessment best practice, but it also serves to position the University well for its 2015 reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Desired Staffing and Facilities
The Task Force envisioned the Faculty Support Center with two primary functional areas.

Functional Area 1:
Functional Area 1 currently consists of all Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) activities (which currently comprehends the Annual SoTL Commons, the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, the Annual SoTL Symposium of the South, the SoTL at Georgia Southern Initiative, the Annual SoTL Expo, and the Annual SoTL Awards); support for qualitative, community-based, and other types of research; writing and/or editing center publications (including *The Banyan Tree*, *The Learning Quest*, the *SoTL Chronicles*, and the *FLC Forum*), and processing Faculty Development Grants and Awards. Functional area 1 is overseen by the FSC director and supported by the center’s secretary and webmaster. Operating under Functional Area 1 are two staff: the SoTL associate director and a program and grants coordinator. The program and grants coordinator would also support current programming initiatives (if, in consultation with the Faculty Advisory Board, they are continued) such as the administration and scheduling of the New Faculty Forum, Focus on Excellence Forums, and sponsored external presenters on Teaching & Learning Topics, as well as the coordination of registration and scheduling for Faculty Learning Communities, Reading Roundtables, Academic Writing Circle, Creative Writing Circle, ThinkAloud Club, and Open Doors.

Functional Area 2:
Functional Area 2 consists of facilitating peer-based faculty development (which currently includes Faculty Learning Communities, Reading Roundtables, Academic Writing Circle, Creative Writing Circle, Think Aloud Club, Open Doors); coordinating and putting on seminars and workshops such as the Friday Lunch and Learn Series, Course Design Series, Seminars on Teaching & Learning Topics (such as individual and departmental seminars for traditional and online/hybrid/blended courses); conducting mid-semester course evaluations and class observations; consultations; and support for teaching assistants, lecturers, international and new faculty (including TA Orientation, TA Learning Community, Weekly TA Teaching Tips, Graduate Teaching Certificate, Certificate for Professional Development for Lecturers and Temporary Faculty, New Faculty Forum). Functional Area 2 is also overseen by the FSC director and supported by the center’s secretary and webmaster. Operating under Functional Area 2 are four instructional designers with a primary focus on pedagogical design; five instructional designers with a primary focus on using technology to enhance pedagogy (online learning); five instructional technology
specialists; a Call Center (which reports to the instructional technology specialists); and student assistants to support the instructional technology functionality.

The proposed organizational structure is shown in Appendix 1. Added to the mix of currently existing positions are the following new positions to support growth:

- a dedicated program coordinator and staff support for the Faculty Development Awards;
- two new instructional designers (one of these positions is created by converting two graduate assistant lines currently in COL);
- five new instructional technology specialists (may be provided by Information Technology Services as per recommendation #5);
- a dedicated webmaster; and
- a director.

In terms of physical space, this organizational structure would need at least the following:

- 18 staff offices
- multiple space for large workshops (i.e., accommodating 30-40 faculty)
- multiple meeting spaces for smaller learning communities
- 20-seat computer lab
- Chromebook cart with 20-25 devices (portable computer lab technology)
- audio/video room with green-screen capability
- equipment room
- secretarial/reception space
- instructional technology Call Center space

The following table displays the recommended staffing, facilities, and equipment needs for the Faculty Support Center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Existing (E)/ New (N) Position</th>
<th>Existing (E)/ New (N) Space</th>
<th>Justification/Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSC Director</td>
<td>N (AA)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Provides strategic leadership and oversight for the entire Faculty Support Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>N (AA)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Supports all functional areas——High Priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functional Area 1</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SoTL Associate Director</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Oversees SoTL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>N (AA)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Provides support for programming initiatives to free up instructional designers for faculty consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Functional Area 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>N (AA)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Provides additional faculty support to ensure that a greater number of faculty can be served through FSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>Instructional Designer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Existing (E)/ New (N) Position</td>
<td>Existing (E)/ New (N) Space</td>
<td>Justification/Rationale</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Created from 2 GA positions formerly assigned to COL. Provides additional faculty support to ensure that a greater number of faculty can be served through FSC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Assistant</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Google Apps (see recommendation #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Tech Specialist</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N (report to ITS)*</td>
<td>D2L (see recommendation #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Tech Specialist</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N (report to ITS)*</td>
<td>Video/multimedia (see recommendation #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Tech Specialist</td>
<td>N (ITS)</td>
<td>N (report to ITS)*</td>
<td>Generalist (see recommendation #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Tech Specialist</td>
<td>N (ITS)</td>
<td>N (report to ITS)*</td>
<td>Generalist (see recommendation #5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call Center</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>N (report to ITS)*</td>
<td>Staffed by entry-level staff person and/or mix of 2 or 3 student assistants; dedicated to Folio and instructional technology support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Space and Equipment Needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Space</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Workshop Spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smaller Meeting Spaces</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-Seat Computer Lab</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 Chromebooks and Cart</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio/Video Room</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Room</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*AA = propose providing through Academic Affairs
*ITS = propose providing through Information Technology Services
*see recommendation #5

It is recommended that the FSC collaborate with the Library to create a designated professional development library. Doing so will eliminate the need for the FSC to maintain space for a physical and/or electronic resource room.

**Recommendation #5: Instruction Technology Specialists**

To provide comprehensive pedagogical support on campus, the Teaching Legacy Task Force recommends that we create an instructional technology support functionality. Instructional technology support focuses on how technologies affect the learning experience—how we can maximize student learning through the effective application of technology to instruction. It is not operationally based which is training in how to use technology applications. The committee held numerous conversations not only about the need for this level of pedagogical support but also about who would provide that support, initially considering the Center for Academic Technology Support (CATS); however, the committee found that CATS currently provides a vital operations-based service to the University, and it is not in the best interest of the campus to recommend that CATS’ mission be retooled or re-envisioned to meet an instructional technology need. Instead, the committee invites Information Technology Services to set the foundations for a new Instructional Technology department—housed in Information Technology Services and perhaps even reporting directly to the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer. The existing training positions for Google Apps and D2L (currently housed in CATS) might be better aligned with the new Instructional Technology department, and the committee...
asks that consideration be given to shift them to that department. Should Information Technology Services prefer not to create an instructional technology functionality, it is the recommendation of the committee that this functionality be created in the newly consolidated Faculty Support Center.

The committee’s preference to house this functionality within Information Technology Services stems from a desire to strengthen the bridge between Information Technology Services and Academic Affairs, providing new and enhanced opportunities for collaboration and partnerships. Faculty will benefit from an Information Technology Services division that retains a foothold directly in the academic mission. Information technology specialists will be better able to serve faculty if they understand the compliance and licensing issues related to the use of instructional technology as well as the instructional use. But, to be truly effective, we need to ensure that the necessary conversations and synergies occur between the two divisions. It is therefore recommended that the instructional technology specialists be physically located in the FSC and be included in the FSC’s staff meetings, etc., to ensure that this communication occurs between Academic Affairs and Information Technology Services.

The committee’s recommendations call for five instructional technology specialists (see Organizational Chart). It is hoped that at a minimum Information Technology Services could convert the two positions mentioned above into the first two of the five recommended positions, adding the other three positions as resources permit. Ideally, each college would have its own dedicated instructional technology specialist. For a proposed position description for an instructional technology specialist, please refer to the Resources.

The rationale behind the Teaching Legacy Task Force’s instructional technology support recommendation is as follows.

1. There exists a demonstrated need for additional instructional technology support for both students and faculty. A recent study by CDW-G revealed that over 70% of students polled indicated that the overall use of technology on campus was “Very Important” to their decision on whether to attend; however, only 38% of students say their professors understand technology and have fully integrated it into their classes (CDW-G 21st Century Campus, 2009).

Furthermore, according to preliminary findings from a recent College of Education technology survey, several faculty reported little to no interest in modern social networks or mobile devices, yet that is where technology trends and the educational technology community is heading. Our students as well as our competitors are using social networks, social media, and virtual learning environments to enhance teaching and learning. An instructional technology team would help educate faculty to the value of these technologies as well as promote and support their appropriate use.

This same College of Education technology survey revealed that many faculty in the college would like additional ideas or support in various technologies as shown in the following sample responses.

*Small group sessions in our own building by someone familiar with “teaching” rather than someone simply familiar with new technology would be very helpful. When Smartboards were being introduced, our session involved us watching someone else demonstrate the Smartboard. We need interactive sessions to learn any new technology. If new technology isn’t applied during the session, it won’t be useful later.*

“...what if the committee shared info on the newest technologies that have evidence for effectiveness and an accompanying summary of the research regarding its instructional effectiveness, then have and refer to [a] place where faculty can always request training or demos via the IRC website.”
“Training from CET [sic] or CATS staff is too low level to [be] of use in most cases. The technology groups on campus should support faculty needs. Instead, it seems as though they operate and choose what they feel will be appropriate without consulting what faculty need or what is common practice at other institutions.”

“Questions addressed to CATS too often result in redirecting faculty to the use of tools or services that do not address the needs that initiated the question.”

2. An instructional technology specialist position is cost-effective. Keeping up with modern technology tools and instructional implications is a job in itself. It is more efficient to provide a resource position to research and support faculty than to ask each faculty member to keep up with instructional technology trends. For example: an information technology specialist can spend a day learning and digesting the implications of a new tool, distilling the information into a 1-hour session, whereas it may require double that time from multiple professors to each explore the tool on their own with varying results.

Recommendation #6: Teaching Assistant Training
When using teaching assistants for instruction, not only is it good practice to place knowledgeable and trained teaching assistants in the classroom, but as an educational institution, we are obligated to prepare them to be future strong teachers. Teaching assistant training should be grounded in the research discussed above, particularly in the high impact activities. Because we have so recently moved to a teaching assistant model (utilizing teaching assistants as classroom instructors), much work remains to be done at this institution before we have an effective teaching assistant training program. To begin with, it is recommended that the needs assessment being conducted by the College of Graduate Studies be evaluated to determine what gaps still need to be addressed in teaching assistant training. It is further recommended that written policies and procedures be developed concerning the requirements and expectations of teaching assistant training. In concert with the written policies and procedures, a web presence should be created to facilitate awareness of the teaching assistant opportunities available. Moreover, it is recommended that a permanent committee be established comprised of institutional teaching assistant stakeholders (e.g., one teaching assistant, one representative from each college’s academic program directors, one representative from the College of Graduate Studies, and a representative from each of the combined center’s functional areas, chaired by a faculty member) to develop the teaching assistant training program as well as an assessment plan for the training, review the policies and procedures, and serve in an advisory capacity. The core teaching assistant training should be provided throughout the year through the Faculty Support Center with supplemental training in the discipline provided at the departmental level along with faculty mentorship. Training should be offered partially online and partially face-to-face. Again, all training should be grounded in the literature on best pedagogical practice for teaching online as well as face-to-face.

Recommendation #7: Teaching Awards
Consistent with the goal of sustaining and strengthening teaching excellence at Georgia Southern University, it is recommended that a survey be completed of the institution’s teaching awards. Currently, the University and colleges offer a wide variety of teaching awards which vary drastically in criteria as well as monetary rewards. It is recommended that a university framework be developed that applies to all institutional teaching awards. This framework would define the minimum evidence-based criteria for any institutional teaching award—colleges could add additional criteria. The university level criteria should align to those practices and behaviors that embody our teaching ethos. In this manner, we would ensure that our “reward system” reinforces the attributes that most contribute to teaching excellence and ensure student learning. Additionally, it is recommended that this committee evaluate the need for additional “prestigious” teaching awards that heighten the visibility and value placed on teaching at Georgia Southern—the University College Dublin offers a potential model for consideration (Lang, 2012).
Finally, the Faculty Support Center must assume a proactive role in disseminating information on the availability of and opportunities associated with these awards to faculty as appropriate.

Summary
In writing this report, the committee began with the recognition that teaching and learning are the *sine qua non* of Georgia Southern University. As such, we must provide more than lip service to the sustainment and strengthening of this mission-critical task. Indeed, the Task Force believes that requiring all administrators with faculty rank to teach at least one class a year (even if an FYE class) would send a clear message about the importance of teaching at this University. Moreover, the preceding recommendations are designed to provide the infrastructure necessary to preserve teaching excellence.

The Task Force envisions the next steps as follows. First, an interim director of the Faculty Support Center should be appointed to oversee the implementation of these recommendations and ensure that the Faculty Advisory Board is appropriately involved. Secondly, an assessment of faculty needs should be conducted through a comprehensive needs assessment survey. Simultaneously, current programming offered in the CTLS and COL should be assessed for efficacy. After analysis and evaluation of these activities, FSC programming should be realigned with faculty needs, pedagogical standards of excellence, and best practice. Finally, staff should be appropriately tasked with working in their areas of expertise, and new staff should be hired to provide the level of support needed to implement fully the programming needs.
Endnotes


Resources


2The 5 Pillars of Quality Online Education: http://sloanconsortium.org/5pillars

3&4Current Services Offered:

Center for Academic Technology Support
- Provide technical operations support and training for Academic Affairs (troubleshooting hardware and software, setting up applications, training on using applications)
- Maintain and staff support desk and hotline
- Provide media development (making videos)
- Offer media conversion (convert tapes, dvds, etc. to digital; convert sites and PPTs to Google Docs and Sites)
- Manage campus digital signage
- Administer software (SharePoint, GeorgiaView, Echo360)
- Support and install smart classrooms
- Support and provide training on mobile devices
- Support and provide training on Google Apps
- Consult on technology effectiveness
- Support the Student Technology Association

Center for Online Learning
- Provide online course development support for faculty interested in developing fully online classes
- Administer the coordination of online course development (stipends, course line-up, rollout)
- Offer three-week online faculty training course
- Consult on online course development
- Maintain and staff Call Center for prospective online students (GOML and Georgia Southern)
- Provide GeorgiaView technical training and support for faculty undergoing training through the Center for Online Learning

Center for Teaching, Learning and Scholarship (CTLS)
Peer-Based Faculty Development
- Faculty Learning Communities
- Reading Roundtables (faculty book groups)
- Academic and Creative Writing Circle
- Open Doors (peer-teaching observation groups)
- College faculty and P-12 Teacher Collaborations

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)
- Annual SoTL Commons: International Conference
- International Peer-Reviewed Journal for SoTL
- Annual SoTL Symposium of the South
- SoTL at Georgia Southern Initiative and Website
- Annual SoTL Expo
- Annual SoTL Awards

Consultations
- Individual and Departmental
- Teaching Online and Hybrid Courses
- Mid-Semester Feedback (course evaluation)
- Class Observations and Feedback
Teaching Assistants (TAs)
- Teaching Assistant Orientation
- The Teaching Academy
- Graduate Teaching Certificate Program
- TAs Learning Community (TAsLC)
- TA Weekly Tips

Grants and Awards
- Administer the Award for Excellence in Contributions to Instruction
- Administer the Faculty Development Summer Awards
- Administer the Awards for Professional Travel
- Administer the Awards for the Development of Instruction

CTLS Publications
- The Banyan Tree (CTLS newsletter)
- The Learning Quest (newsletter for new faculty)
- SoTL Chronicles (for the SoTL at Georgia Southern initiative)
- TA Times (newsletter for teaching assistants)
- FLC Forum (highlights the work of the FLCs)

Seminars & Events
- New Faculty Forum (2-day orientation)
- First Friday Lunch and Learn Series
- Focus on Excellence Forums
- Course Design Series
- CTLS Seminars on Teaching and Learning Topics
- Sponsored External Speakers

Support for
- 3rd Year Review & Tenure Portfolio
- Teaching Philosophy
- Grant Writing and Evaluation
- Qualitative Research

5 Position Proposal: Instructional Technology Specialist
The Instructional Technology Specialist position provides opportunities to collaborate with faculty at Georgia Southern University to promote appropriate and innovative use of technology in instruction. Some of the duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Serve as a technology mentor to Georgia Southern faculty as requested.
  - assist with technology use in projects;
  - collaborate on course design, working closely with the FSC and faculty to promote effective technology use in the teaching process;
  - team-teach with professors or present to students on new technologies for use in their coursework (like e-portfolios, Google Docs, social networks); and
  - be present (in class) during early adoption of technologies (upon request), providing another level of support to faculty who wish to implement new technology in their classroom.
- Provide regular training for faculty on various software, hardware, and concepts related to instructional and workplace technology use, such as web 2.0, blogging, emerging technologies, and SMART boards, mobile devices, social networks, and system adopted technologies (like Taskstream or Google).
- Act as a liaison between Information Technology Services and the colleges, keeping lines of communication open and advising faculty on currently supported technology solutions.
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- Serve as a technology consultant to colleges and their faculty, assisting them on making sound choices for technology in the classroom or office. Help them use technology to streamline their work and teach more effectively.
- Work with local agencies (like schools or businesses) to promote technology collaboration with Georgia Southern faculty. Collaboration may include conference co-presentations with faculty.

This position is a full-time, benefitted position. The salary is competitive and commensurate with qualifications, teaching certifications, and/or experience.

Required Qualifications
- Earned master’s degree or higher in instructional technology or closely related field
- Commitment to continued scholarly productivity and to the mentoring of faculty and students
- Ability to work effectively with diverse groups and individuals
- Minimum of 4 years teaching experience at P-12 and/or higher education levels with exemplary record
- Record of research and service with publications and/or presentations in professional venues
- Strong social skills and ability to take initiative and formulate visions for growth

Preferred Qualifications
- Ability to work independently, without supervision or guidance
- Experience working with and supporting colleagues in a collaborative environment
- Extensive knowledge of social media, specifically how it is used for work and learning
- Familiarity with non-traditional pedagogical trends, including performance/project based learning and technology enhanced instruction
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