CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

MISSION:

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) will be the focus for programs and services which will promote excellence in teaching and learning at Western Connecticut State University. To achieve this mission, the Center will both utilize and enhance faculty knowledge and skills, collaborate with other resources across the university, and draw upon regional and national resources.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide learning opportunities for full-time and part-time faculty, based on pedagogical theories and methods.
2. To disseminate information about assessment of student learning and classroom teaching effectiveness, and to assist faculty as they choose to integrate this knowledge into their teaching and advisement processes.
3. To support innovations in curriculum design and pedagogical styles, and their classroom implementation.
4. To maintain a strong mentoring program, responsive to the needs of faculty at various points in their careers.
5. To provide confidential services to help faculty and teaching assistants assess their effectiveness in the classroom and utilize support services as needed.
6. To collaborate with existing University resources and services to effectively and efficiently meet the teaching needs of faculty and learning needs of students.
7. To encourage and facilitate access for faculty to technological training services, and to help faculty utilize technology applications that enhance teaching and learning excellence.
8. To sponsor an in-house multimedia center containing books, journals, videotapes and other materials on teaching and assessment that will serve as a resource for the University and the greater Danbury educational community.
9. To gather and disseminate information about programs and resources at the University, regional and national levels, which focus on and promote teaching and learning excellence; to support university and/or faculty membership and participation in selected organizations which provide same.
10. To gather data and input from faculty/staff periodically, to determine learning needs and ideas for program and service planning.
11. To utilize the expertise and talents of faculty in the planning, development and implementation of CELT programs.
12. To serve as a resource in teaching and learning excellence for the community-at-large.
13. To recognize and reward faculty for their teaching excellence and for exemplary contributions in student service areas.

STRUCTURE:

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching will have a Director and clerical support, a physical location, and a budget, secured as a line item in the University budget and included in space utilization plans by the University. CELT will be under the aegis of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and have an Advisory Committee.

1. Director.

   The Directorship will be a 12-month position with responsibility for the activities of the Center of Excellence in Learning and Teaching and the supervision of its staff. A goal is that this position become full-time, in order to effectively generate the range of programs and services set as optimum objectives for the Center. The Director will report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and work under the guidance of an Advisory Committee.

   A. Qualifications and Selection. The Director should have a strong background in higher education teaching, and have demonstrated leadership and collaborative working skills. The
Director will be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with a faculty search committee.

B. Compensation will be commensurate with teaching rank and experience, and may be direct salary or administrative release time.

C. Responsibilities:
   1. Develop, implement, and evaluate the range of services of CELT, as outlined in the Objectives.
   2. Collaborate with other University systems to enhance their services that support the Objectives of the Center.
   3. Set priorities among CELT programs and services based upon needs and interests expressed by faculty, given time, budget and staffing resources in the year.
   4. Arrange for surveys and assessment data from faculty/staff and program participants to inform on priorities for programs and services, and to document the need for alterations in the budget, staffing design, and program/service plans.
   5. Maintain the CELT budget.
   6. Pursue outside funding resources for CELT activities.
   7. Provide a yearly report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the CELT Advisory Committee, which includes a review of programmatic offerings, staff utilization of the various teaching and learning services, collaborations with other University services, budget utilization, and recommendations.

2. Clerical Supports.

A person answering to the Director will provide general clerical support, including but not limited to: management of phone and e-mail communications; ordering, organizing and arranging distribution of materials and supplies for Center workshops; coordinating resource information gathered from outside organizations; generating brochures, newsletters, and publicity for sponsored events; maintaining Center supplies and equipment. The time status of this position will be commensurate with the degree of activities undertaken by the Center, and will be assessed along with other growth factors for the Center.

3. Location.

CELT will have a physical location on campus, with office space and equipment for the Director and clerical supports, resource files and shelved collections, meeting spaces suitable for private individual consultations and small group meetings.

4. Budget.

The budget for personnel, hard copy and technological resources, and underwriting of expenses for programs should be secured as a line item in the University budget, to ensure ongoing financial and other administrative supports for this central faculty teaching excellence resource. To further the goal of having a comprehensive Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, the University must consider its financial commitment toward full-time staffing and an array of programmatic and service offerings and information dissemination.

The CELT Director and collaborating University services should identify ways to access outside financial resources, in addition to this funding base.

5. Governance.

A. The affairs of CELT will be managed by a Director and overseen by an Advisory Committee, with final accountability to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

B. CELT Advisory Committee.
   1. Functions.
      The CELT Advisory Committee will serve as a primary and ongoing resource, providing consultation on programmatic and mentoring services, assisting the Director in making decisions
regarding efficient utilization of financial and personnel resources, identifying university and community resources, and serving in other capacities as identified by the Director. Since the Advisory Committee serves in an advisory capacity, final decisions on budget allocations and program offerings will be made by the Director, with accountability to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

2. Membership:
The Advisory Committee will consist of eleven (11) members, to include:
   a. One teaching faculty representative of each of the Schools (3 total) voted on by each School’s faculty membership (2-year terms).
   b. One (1) representative of non-teaching faculty, voted on by that faculty membership (2-year term).
   c. Three (3) at-large, teaching/non-teaching faculty, including at least one part-time faculty, appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (the first year of CELT for a 1-year term, 2-year terms thereafter)
   d. A School Dean
   e. A representative from Library Services
   f. A representative from University Computing
   g. Director of Grant Programs

3. Meetings.
   a. The Advisory Committee will meet on a regular basis as established by the Director and Committee, no less than four (4) times yearly, twice each academic semester. Either the Director or a majority (4) of the teaching/non-teaching faculty members may call additional or subgroup meetings as determined by the emerging needs of CELT services in the year.
   b. Meeting Chair. A Meeting Chair will be elected yearly from among all members and the Director. The Chair will develop an agenda in consultation with the Director.
   c. Minutes. The clerical support person will ordinarily take minutes. As an alternative, minutes will be kept by Advisory Committee members on a rotating basis.

4. Report. The Advisory Committee as a whole, or a subcommittee may prepare a separate report or an addendum to the Director’s report conveying its perspective on the year’s services; or, it may be called upon to prepare same by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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