This report provides a snapshot of activities and accomplishments in the Paul C. Reinert, S.J., Center for Teaching Excellence at Saint Louis University for September-October 2011.

Programming & Services Overview

September and October may well have been the busiest on record in the Center. With the addition of new staff, we have been able to meet even more demand for services than usual. We kicked off the semester in our usual busy fashion — teaching consultations, SLU Global support, Effective Teaching Seminars. But we also were invited to conduct several departmental workshops and to participate in a variety of conversations at the department, program, and college level. All of this is evidence that the Center is poised to contribute to the efforts of enhancing teaching and learning across the University in new, potentially even more powerful ways. We increased our SGIFs (see below); brought internationally recognized speaker, Dr. Tony Silva (Purdue) to share insights about working with multilingual writers, a timely topic, given SLU’s record enrollment of international students; and revived an old CTE tradition—the faculty book group (discussing the widely-mentioned Academically Adrift).

Mid-Semester Feedback Sessions

One key area — the Small Group Instructional Feedback Sessions (SGIFs) we conduct at mid-term — saw almost a 50% increase in services over last fall. In fact, this fall alone, we conducted more SGIFs than during the 2010-2011 academic year! All together, we collected feedback from more than 1,800 students. Given what the research says about the impact of these kinds of sessions, we believe we’re making a significant difference in SLU students’ learning experiences.

CTE — By the Numbers

44 SGIFs (39 faculty and 1,800+ students served)
2 Cuts Orientation Sessions (~30 grads, faculty)
6 Effective Teaching Seminars (~33 grads, faculty on average)
1 Madrid Effective Teaching Seminar (~20 faculty, grads)
2 Ignatian Pedagogy Sessions (w/Mission & Ministry)
2 Conversations on Writing to Learn (~15 faculty)
>10 Other Workshops and Facilitated Dialogues (>147 total)
And lots of one-on-one consultations and other services!

From the Learning Studio

The next round of Innovative Teaching Fellows have begun their work with our ID staff and are preparing some interesting, innovative courses for the spring. Drs. Elena Bray-Speth (Biology), Flannery Burke (History), Kathleen Llewellyn (Modern & Classical Languages) will join Dr. Stephanie Mooshegian (SPS) in the Learning Studio next semester. And we’ve added new features to the room, including additional iPads, microphones, software, and other enhancements.

Coming Soon!

Finally, we should note that 2012 will find the CTE both old and new! We’ll be looking back on past successes of the Center as we celebrate our 15th anniversary. But we’ll also be looking ahead as we shift from formation to transformation. We’re beginning strategic planning, and we’re excited about the Center’s potential for greater impact, at SLU and beyond, including some new innovations in learning technologies, new incarnations of Ignatian pedagogy, and even a new Center name, so … stay tuned!

CUTS on the National Stage . . .

In October, our Certificate program received national attention when Sandy Gambill and Debie Lohe presented at the annual conference for the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education. Their workshop was selected as part of a blind peer review process, and they were thrilled to have an opportunity to introduce other centers to the CUTS program, to SLU, and to the Ignatian approach to teaching. The workshop was well received, and they hope to write an article, drawing on this work.

Staffing News

In September, we added two new Instructional Designers to the CTE family.

Formerly in Student Development at SLU, Chris Grabau has a Masters in Education and is a doctoral student in Educational Foundations. He brings to the CTE teaching experience, knowledge of learning theory, and a deep knowledge of SLU undergraduates. Not to mention his tech savvy!

Jerod Quinn comes to us from U. Missouri Columbia, where he obtained a Masters in Educational Technology and where was designing and developing courses for the Center for Distance and Independent Study. Along with his instructional design knowledge and experience, Jerod brings a passion for technology and its potential to impact learning in new, engaging ways.

And there are more to come! We currently are interviewing for two additional positions, so we hope to have more news soon.