

John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning Strategic Plan (2/13/09)

Section 1 Kendall Center Description

1.1 Mission, vision, and goals

Mission

The John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning supports faculty in achieving their potential as teachers and scholars. Responsive to the professional needs and interests of each faculty member, the Kendall Center includes support for teaching initiatives and faculty research, scholarship, and creativity, and provides on-campus opportunities for focused conversation on pedagogy, assessment of student learning, and collaboration among colleagues. Through its support of such opportunities, the Kendall Center fosters the pursuit of teaching and scholarly excellence throughout all stages of each faculty member's career and for all Gustavus students.

Vision

The Kendall Center aspires to be seen as a national model for faculty development programming at undergraduate liberal arts colleges. The Center commits to continue to provide programming that supports the teacher-scholar model, and is responsive both to the changes in faculty needs over the course of a career, and to relevant trends in higher education.

Goals

Goal #1:

Continue to respond to and provide leadership for faculty development needs and directions.

Goal #2:

Continue to demonstrate that the Kendall Center occupies a central role in the life of the College.

1.2 Programs

The Center serves all faculty at the College, approximately 180-200 FTE; tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-track full-time and part-time adjunct; all faculty ranks. Programs include: Faculty Development day, Teachers Talking series, summer workshops on teaching and learning, ad hoc workshops in response to need or interest, new faculty orientation and on-going orientation, new faculty mentoring, the Celebration of Creative Inquiry, and discussion groups on the scholarship of teaching and learning. The Center also administers department and individual minigrants, and the faculty professional travel fund. Additionally, on the website we maintain links to assessment tools, resources on teaching and learning, and contacts in other offices and programs; we also maintain a resource library housed in the Folke-Bernadotte Library. A full accounting of the Kendall Center can be found at <http://gustavus.edu/kendallcenter>.

The Kendall Center is staffed by a part-time faculty director, and three faculty associates who oversee assessment and learning outcomes, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and undergraduate research. A fourth faculty associate, overseeing new faculty orientation and mentoring, went unfilled for 2008-2009. The Center is supported by a 25-hour/week administrative assistant, and carries out its mission using College operating budget and endowment funding.

1.3 Support relationships

The Kendall Center is supportive of all academic departments, and also relies on or utilizes the expertise or resources, in varying degrees, of: Academic Advising, the Career Center, Center for

International Cultural Education, Center for Vocational Reflection, Community Service Center, Disability Services, the Diversity Center, the Provost's Office, and Gustavus Technology Services.

Section 2 Strategic Review

2.1 Strategic Issues

The prime strength of the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning is in the faculty it serves. Additionally, strengths lie in the Center's: ability to respond quickly to faculty needs or interests, to connect and collaborate with other programs and offices; to envision a variety of programming; and to confidently and fairly administer funding to support faculty work.

2.2 Barriers

The Kendall Center has the great potential to continue to grow and evolve and expand on campus and nationally. To do so will require an even greater commitment from Center staff and the institution should the College push for the growth of the Center. It also will require staff to be clear about goals so as to not dilute the mission of the Center—it cannot, and should not, be all things to all people—and willing to advocate for and support that mission. And frankly, evolution of the Center will require staff who are ready and willing to commit significant time and energy to the Center, and have an honest interest in faculty professional development within a broad higher education context.

The Center's leadership has relied, since the inception of the faculty development program at Gustavus in 2000, on full-time faculty who have been compensated with course release/s or a stipend. For the first seven years, two faculty assumed the roles of c-coordinators/co-directors; in 2008-2009, a single director was appointed with three faculty associates. A review of this administrative structure was undertaken in fall 2008; results have not yet been shared.

Section 3 Strategic Initiatives and Recommendations

Goal #1: Continue to respond to and provide leadership for faculty development needs and directions.

- a. Promote and support excellent and scholarly teaching and innovative pedagogies, including pedagogies that involve the use of technology. Continue to promote and support the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- b. Enhance support of faculty research, scholarship, and creative work, and develop new areas of support to better serve all disciplines, such as subvention or page cost funding for publications.
- c. Continue close collaboration with the Faculty Development Committee to establish professional development priorities and programming.
- d. Continue to partner with Advancement in order to increase the Kendall Center endowment.
- e. Work with faculty to enhance and expand opportunities for collaboration on research and teaching with colleagues and students, such as development of searchable online databases of syllabi, course materials, and research interests.
- f. Maintain and create new avenues to publicly disseminate faculty achievements.
- g. Address the changing nature of faculty work in order to develop more focused support for faculty at all career stages.
- h. Advocate for pre-sabbatical leaves.

i. Continue to develop effective and manageable techniques to assess student learning, assist faculty in assessing student learning, and serve as a resource for the campus community on learning objectives and their assessment.

Goal #2: Continue to demonstrate that the Kendall Center occupies a central role in the life of the College.

- a. Establish a central and visible location for the Kendall Center that is accessible and usable to faculty.
- b. Respond to and provide leadership for College curricular initiatives, including efforts to globalize and diversify the curriculum.
- c. Working with an encompassing understanding of “leadership,” provide opportunities for faculty to understand their roles and challenge their strengths and interests.
- d. Develop programming for faculty to assist in faculty governance.
- e. Enhance the Center’s resource offerings, including library resources, faculty experts, and online databases.

Section 4 Assessment

The Kendall Center already engages in assessment of various types, such as periodic faculty needs surveys and written and oral evaluation of particular programming. Different strategies under each goal will require different markers of achievement. For some, additional funding or endowment will allow us to proceed. For others, institutional action will help us succeed. And for others, our own initiative will allow goals to come to fruition. For example, we already are developing online databases to assist in record-keeping, and to allow us to better pinpoint areas of the curriculum or disciplines that are underrepresented in Kendall Center programming. Working with the faculty associate for assessment, the Center should be able to develop specific tools to help it better evaluate its offerings for faculty.