

2006 Hesburgh Award Nomination

Parkland College
Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Cover Sheet

Program Title: Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Focus of the Program: A faculty driven, faculty owned professional development system committed to enhanced faculty and student learning

Name of the Institution: Parkland College

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President: Dr. Zelema Harris

Type of College: Public Two-Year Community College

Number of Full-Time Students: 6,289 FTE

Number of Full-Time Faculty: 183

Summary Statement

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (www.parkland.edu/cetl) is an agile, responsive professional development system driven by the faculty, and strongly supported by the administration at Parkland College. After President Zelema Harris proposed the idea for a professional learning center in 1991, a faculty team designed a system to address their ever-changing professional development needs. The goal of this system is to facilitate and enhance quality teaching, student learning, and excellence in the workplace achieved by continuous programming in the form of courses, discussions, seminars and workshops. It is this sustainable system that makes Parkland's Center unique.

Over the last decade, the Center for Excellence has initiated and maintained several key achievements that have impacted the college culture. Such achievements include the Mentoring Program, a one-on-one learning partnership since 1994, that has expanded to support the increasing number of faculty teaching online and the over 300 online courses that have been developed. Institutional data states that student success rates are 75.7% online compared to 77.4 college-wide. The consistent use of classroom assessment and research, not only ensures quality in the classroom, but provides continuous input of faculty needs. For example, the creation of the Respectful Workplace Series, holistic in nature, supports faculty learning in areas that increase their awareness of the diversity among students. In conclusion, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is an ongoing learning system that ensures that the ever-changing needs of Parkland faculty are met.

Description of Program

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning developed a solid foundation of support and encouragement for Parkland's faculty from the beginning, with the development of a Mentoring Program, a year-long New Full-Time Faculty Orientation Program, courses based on the Cross/Angelo model of Classroom Assessment and Research, and most recently, the merging of all Distance and Virtual Learning programs with the Center For Excellence. Distance and Virtual Learning (DVL) is comprised of online and hybrid courses, telecourses, interactive classes, teleconferences, and the Parkland College Television station (PCTV). These initiatives have further enabled faculty to support their own learning and the learning of their students. The Center continues to offer courses, seminars, workshops and discussions on instructional strategies and techniques, innovative e-learning, leadership, core values, and more. While integrating these initiatives, the Center has embraced the mission of the learning college in ways that successfully satisfy the criteria of this award.

Relevance of faculty development program in enhancing undergraduate teaching/learning:

Addresses an important undergraduate teaching/learning challenge appropriate to the institution's mission and character.

Continuing to investigate what and how students are learning has been at the core of the Center's classroom assessment work. Because adult learners enter the classroom with different backgrounds, lifestyles, and learning styles, our faculty are faced with the important task of reaching all and teaching all, regardless of preset boundaries. Equipping faculty with the assessment tools necessary to gauge student learning processes and outcomes, while giving students input into their own learning, has continued to positively impact Parkland's students. This impact has been documented in numerous Classroom Assessment and Research Reports. In a study conducted in Spring 2002 of seventy-eight final reports, a total of 150 comments reported clear and strong evidence of changes in teaching as a result of participation in the process of classroom assessment. The integration of Distance Learning into the Center gives faculty the

forum to discuss and analyze the pedagogical shift that they face with a student population that is technology-rich and geographically diverse.

Represents a fresh direction beyond a conventional response in its approach to faculty development.

The Center for Excellence and Distance and Virtual Learning merged to create a new kind of academic unit at Parkland. Among its many purposes, this unit supports faculty in the use of technology as a teaching and learning tool. This integrated Center is examining how technology can help faculty find innovative ways to engage their students. The partnership encourages faculty to redesign their courses and rethink methods of delivery to best suit complex learning needs. This collaboration between the areas of faculty development and academic technology is changing and enhancing faculty learning at Parkland College, proving that this collaboration is indeed a step in the right direction.

Since this merger, many new initiatives have been incorporated that have increased the support available for faculty working with technology. Some examples include: the appointment of the first Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning, the hiring of a Director of Distance and Virtual Learning, utilizing Online Faculty Advisors and mentors for support, and offering a New Online Faculty Seminar. While many institutions support technology and teaching separately, the Center for Excellence addresses the reality that technology is integral to reach and teach the current student. As a result, increased numbers of faculty are focused on the quality of online learning and face-to-face classes that incorporate technology.

Beginning in the fall of 2005, the Angel platform was adopted to support Parkland's online courses. The introduction of Angel not only supports the faculty and student need for a single online course platform, but also allows every Parkland class an online space and every Parkland student an online account. This is particularly important as Parkland offers over 200 online courses to approximately 3,000 students per semester, making it a leader among community colleges in the state for online learning. The Center continues to oversee and ensure the quality of online teaching.

Supports the diverse, multicultural aspects of undergraduate education.

The Center for Excellence embraces the beauty and dignity of diversity and multiculturalism among Parkland College's faculty, staff and students. Center programming focused on Core Values, Respectful Workplace, and other diversity programming continues to portray to faculty and staff that multicultural understanding is invaluable in the workplace. The Center has been given the responsibility of laying the foundation for the college's diversity training. Since Spring 2003, over 400 participants have attended Respectful Workplace training sessions such as: The African American Voice, Brown vs. Board of Education, The Jewish Experience, Clear and Healthy Boundaries, Ally Training and Safe Zone Panels.

Parkland College Television (PCTV) is another core piece of the Center. Under Center direction, PCTV has entered into collaboration with the Urban League to produce a television program focusing on young African-American students and their concerns on a variety of issues. This program is part of the Parkland Voice television series that explores the diverse, multicultural groups represented on Parkland's campus. An academic component of the diversity work is the infusion of race and gender issues into the curriculum, and the assessment of the impact of such infusion. The Center's diversity programming is a fluid system addressing the needs of the college and the community. Because the Center is an open and honest place to discuss all issues, Parkland faculty recognize that it is a safe place to continue to learn, grow, and support diversity and multiculturalism.

Effectiveness of program's development / implementation plan:

Clearly communicates program's objectives and expected teaching/learning outcomes.

This year, as part of Parkland's Institutional Effectiveness study, the Center developed the following goals: 1) Serve the learning needs of the student through faculty development; 2) Serve the learning needs of the professional; 3) Support the mission and values of the college. The outcomes are measured through feedback after each session asking faculty what they learned, relearned, or better understand as a result of the program, and through faculty surveys

and focus groups. The mission, the goals, and programming objectives are clearly communicated to the college via email announcements, the website, and written handouts.

Strongly analyzes educational need and incorporates effective implementation strategy.

The Center is an agile, responsive unit. Each semester, the Associate Vice President, the Director of Distance Learning and the Professional Development Coordinator assemble a programming schedule built upon input from various sources, ensuring that sessions offered are in alignment with the educational needs of the faculty and strategic institutional needs. In addition, information is gathered through a SWOT Analysis and strategic planning. The Associate Vice President gains multiple perspectives as part of the Executive Team, which reports to the president; Instructional Council, which reports to the vice presidents; and the Parkland College Association, the college senate. The Professional Development Committee of the senate is the advisory board to the Center, providing college-wide input as to what the current classroom and institutional needs are. Sessions are scheduled accordingly. This action is evidence to faculty that their input is respected and valued.

Since the infusion of online teaching and learning into the Center, a series of programming to support online faculty needs has been implemented. Faculty, both online and traditional, are given technology training on the new Angel platform at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. Four hundred courses will be converted from WebCT and Blackboard to Angel by June 2006. Online Faculty Advisors have been identified and continue to assist with the development of online courses. An Online Faculty Seminar has been introduced to give online faculty a hands-on learning experience while developing their courses.

The Center is the clearinghouse for ideas and new initiatives. Programming is analyzed by gathering feedback from each participant and facilitator. Results are evaluated for quality. Sessions of impact are repeated. These feedback results, along with Final Reflection Papers and other semester-end projects are vital to the Center's ability to serve the learning needs of faculty.

Offers evidence of efficient use of human / financial resources and inclusive planning.

Center programming is faculty-owned and faculty-driven. During the Spring 2005 semester, 73 individual faculty, staff and administrators volunteered their time to facilitate 98 sessions in the Center. In this win-win situation, special talents are highlighted and recognized by the Center, and in return others benefit from the knowledge and expertise offered by their colleagues. Online Faculty Advisors are a key source of information to online faculty. They continue to provide support, assistance, and advice to their online colleagues in the areas of course content and online course design.

The Center collaborates with Career Programs, Adult Basic Education, the Academic Development Center and International Education to deliver grant-funded programming in order to efficiently utilize financial resources. The online environment has been streamlined so that the automatic transfer of faculty teaching schedules and student course schedules from the mainframe is immediate. The Director of Distance and Virtual Learning and the Technical Services Specialist support the more than 2000 online students enrolled during the Fall 2005 semester. The staff continues to work in an efficient manner, while ensuring the highest degree of quality.

Demonstrates high degree of faculty participation at all levels.

The Center for Excellence has devoted itself to fulfill the college's mission of a learning college. Participation in the Center is not mandatory, but is driven by the desire of faculty to continuously learn and improve upon their teaching. The opportunity to learn from another colleague's experience or expertise is invaluable. During the 2004-2005 academic year, approximately 87% of Parkland's full-time faculty attended at least one session in the Center, and 83 faculty members attended 13 different programs dedicated to online learning, online platforms, and integrating online technology into the classroom. Duplicated participation numbers totaled 3,067 for the 2004 – 2005 academic year.

Proven success / impact:

Evidence of systematic change in teaching effectiveness and sustained faculty commitment, including extent of faculty participation, formalization of the program, and its integration into the teaching philosophy.

The Center has been delivering extensive programming for faculty for over a decade. One of the most influential programs the Center has offered since 1996 has been the Classroom Assessment and Research Courses, based on the Cross and Angelo work. Over 300 faculty have participated in the various assessment courses. During that time, the Center has accrued over 400 written reports, reflecting honest investigations of student learning. Additionally, in May 2004, the Center for Excellence worked with the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation (OIRE) to conduct an anonymous, web-based faculty survey. A total of 77 surveys were completed. Of those surveyed, 83% had participated in Center programming 1-10 times per year. Multiple faculty comments attest to the fact the professional growth of Parkland faculty has enhanced teaching skills, which in turn has led to better learning opportunities for students. Survey comments also reflect that, thanks to the work of the Center, faculty have witnessed the value of assessment as a useful tool for discovering what students do or do not understand, and are using that information to guide their teaching methods.

Since its merger with the Center for Excellence, the online program has maintained the goal of ensuring quality in online teaching and learning. The current educational marketplace has a high demand for online accredited coursework. In order to ensure that the focus remains on teaching and learning, we are forced to address two fundamental questions: *How do we know online learning works? How do you know that faculty are doing a good job?* The following numbers reflect the success of the online program:

- Fall 2005 online student enrollment: 2129 unduplicated.
- Student Success Rates: 75.7% (online); 77.4 (college-wide).
- Grade of C or better: 73.1% (online); 73.4 (college-wide).

The Distance and Virtual Learning unit has identified from students and faculty the need for a unified approach to online courses. Online courses are in transition between platforms and are in the process of converting all online courses to Angel. Over 100 course sections have already

begun to use Angel. To support the increasing technology requirements of the traditional classroom, every course section offered at Parkland now has online space in Angel, and every student now has an Angel login.

Objective, hard data documenting improvements in undergraduate learning outcomes and student advancement.

In the previously mentioned analysis of final reports from the Introduction to Classroom and Research course, every faculty member reported at least one significant change in teaching, while most reported at least two. In 78% of the reports, faculty reported clear improvements in student learning. Comments showed evidence of the following changes in student learning: 1) increased learner centeredness; 2) increased active learning; 3) improved metacognition; 4) improved positive affect toward learning; and 5) enhanced academic confidence.

In addition, the May 2004 web-based faculty survey showed that 85.9% believe the Center for Excellence has had an impact on student learning at Parkland. Faculty comments reflect that the application of what they have learned in the Center has increased the number of their students who are taking personal responsibility for their own learning and are more active in class. Also, according to those surveyed, the teaching tools acquired in the Center are helping students to think about their learning styles, study habits and behaviors. The Center has conducted multiple studies to assess its impact on learning outcomes; the fact that these studies all reveal an enhancement of student learning is significant.

A study of feedback forms from the Fall 2004 courses offered through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning indicated that there is a direct perception and impact by the faculty that teaches or works with developmental students.

Of the 250 statements examined, 153 statements (61%) reported clear evidence of learning, relearning, or having a better understanding of the material; applied the material to their classes; or transferred the material to students. Another 88 statements indicated positive responses regarding the programs presented, resulting in 241 positive (96%) responses.

In summary, these programs facilitate and enhance quality teaching of developmental students, student learning, and excellence in the workplace. They empower faculty to address challenges while fostering scholarship and student service.

Following is a selection of additional participant feedback:

- “I’m very happy that I did this. I think it will improve my teaching.”
- “Great ideas for ways to give feedback on CATs! Including how to involve students in these conversations.”

Classroom Assessment Techniques

- “Wow, there are many resources for adult education students to enhance their learning ... I think I can be more creative with my teaching and planning.”
- “I can see how valuable a website for the class can be ... it brings the course into the present.”

Technology: What It Can Do for You and Your Students

- “Great! A sense of community with the other online faculty; a forum for questions.”

Online Faculty Seminar

- “I have had a wonderful experience with the mentoring program. ... It has been crucial to my successful integration within Parkland.”
- “I have always felt that the mentoring program is very worthwhile ... I have been very fortunate to have had many great mentors who have all been very generous with their time and wisdom.”

Mentoring Program

- “I can’t think of anything that could’ve been more effective and meaningful as hearing the personal stories of our African American Colleagues.”
- “I have a clearer understanding of how LGBT can’t be themselves all the time; I don’t think anyone can understand or relate totally until they stand in those shoes.”

Respectful Workplace Series

Substantiation of program’s successful far-reaching impact on academic community, such as self-evaluations, best-practice analysis, and emulation / adaptation by others.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has flourished for over ten years under the motto of being owned and driven by the people. In 1997, the Center’s classroom assessment work was described by K. Patricia Cross in *Developing Professional Fitness through Classroom Assessment and Research* as an outstanding example of an ongoing delivery system. The Center has been built on and continues to strive from the feedback of its faculty and staff participants and facilitators. Since 1996, approximately 6,306 full- and part-time faculty have voluntarily

participated in Center for Excellence programming. Our participation numbers serve as testimony to the commitment of Parkland faculty to continue to keep on the front lines of teaching and learning issues. Center for Excellence programming often becomes infused with both the college and faculty culture. This is demonstrated through the appointment of the first Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning at Parkland College.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has received several awards that substantiate its successful impact on the academic community:

- 2001 Futures Assembly Bellwether Award Finalist: Recognition as one of the top ten instructional programs in the nation.
- 2001 League for Innovation: Learning College Champion.
- 1998 National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness: David Pierce Leadership Award.
- 1994 Illinois Community College Board Award for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: Classroom Assessment and Research Initiative.

Center for Excellence personnel have presented at over 30 conferences. Most recently at the Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation Commission on Colleges (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 2005). Presentations are scheduled for later this year at the National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development and the ICCCA (Illinois Council of Community College Administrators) Fall Conference.

Consulting and training have been offered to twenty-five other institutions on: the Center's professional development system, the Distance and Learning program, and the Classroom Assessment and Research Initiative. Most recently, consulting and training was conducted at Garden City Community College (Kansas, 2005). In addition, the Center for Excellence gives numerous telephone consultations and provides on-campus visits to those interested in creating their own professional development model.

The following list of publications serves as indicators of the Center's work as best practice:

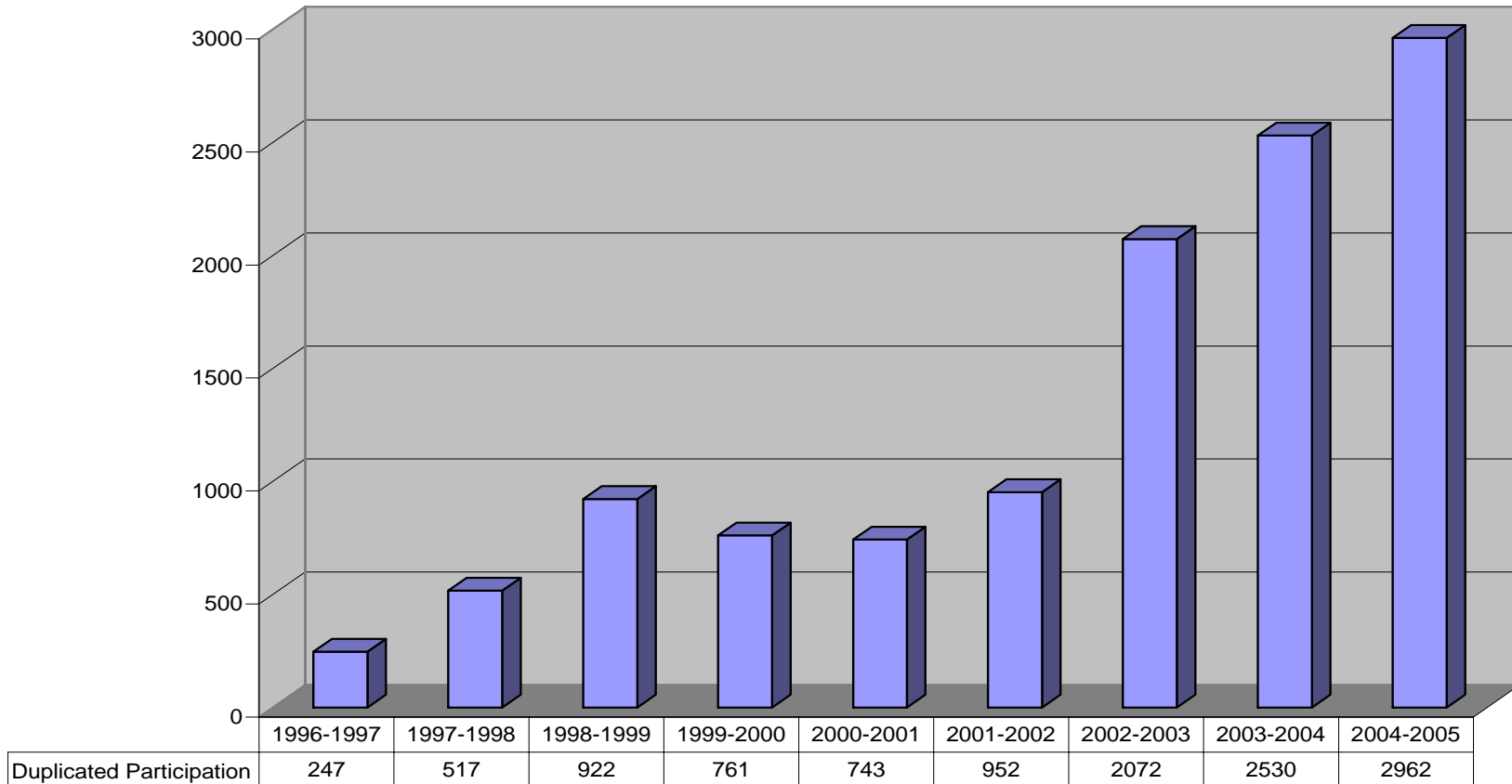
- *American Association of Community Colleges Journal*, "Faculty Learners Create a Learning College," Zelema Harris, Fay Rouseff-Baker, Tod Treat, 2002.
- *New Directions for Community College: Issue #20 – The Changing Face of Staff Development*, "Leading Change through Faculty Development," Fay Rouseff-Baker, 2002.

- *New Directions for Community College: Approaches to Using Learning Outcomes to Promote Student Success*, “Engaging Faculty and Students in Classroom Assessment of Learning” Fay Rouseff-Baker, D. Andrew Holm, 2004.
- *Community College Times*: “Online Teaching Transforms Traditional Classroom,” Brett Coup and Fay Rouseff-Baker, 2004.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is an ongoing professional development system that is faculty driven and faculty owned. This system has provided faculty the support they have needed in the teaching and learning process, including keeping up with the impact of modern technology and the complex learning needs of today’s student. The overall objective of the Center’s programming is to support faculty in their honest investigation into the question “*how do you know students are really learning?*” A decade ago, Parkland’s Center for Excellence started as a good idea to support faculty, and has grown to become what many consider the heart of a learning college.

APPENDIX A

Participation per Academic Year



*The increase in participation is a result of database revamping in Spring 2003. These changes include counting participants each time they attend ongoing courses or seminars, and including facilitators in the participation totals.

PARKLAND COLLEGE

APPENDIX B



Student Needs Met

- ◆ Respiratory Therapy
- ◆ Active duty soldiers
- ◆ Spanish for the workforce
- ◆ Katrina / Rita relief
- ◆ Stay-at-home moms and dads
- ◆ Physical disabilities, transportation issues
- ◆ Cost effective

E-Learning

- ◆ Online courses
- ◆ Hybrid: Face-to-face/online
- ◆ Video streaming
- ◆ Web pages
- ◆ Email