

6.01 Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development is an important initiative at Western Carolina University. In 1987, the Faculty Development Advisory Council recommended the following principles in support of faculty development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Principles of Faculty Development

1. Faculty members have the responsibility to promote their own growth as teacher-scholars.
2. Western Carolina University seeks to develop a community of scholarship; therefore, the university has responsibilities to support the development of both community and scholarship.
3. Faculty at Western Carolina University are expected to be active in teaching, research/scholarship, and service across their careers; therefore, there should be support for faculty development in each of these areas.
4. Faculty have different developmental needs at different stages in their careers; therefore, a variety of support programs will be needed to meet those needs.
5. Some aspects of faculty development are better implemented at the departmental, college, or university levels; therefore, comprehensive faculty development program should offer support at each of these levels.
6. Support for faculty development represents an investment of the institution in its most important resource; therefore, faculty should be held accountable when funds are expended on their behalf. Faculty receiving support (not awards) are expected to report on their funded activities as well as on the impact those activities had on their development. In addition to written reports, faculty might also share their reports with colleagues orally, or, in special instances, lead a colloquium for interested faculty on their experiences. In this way, investment in one faculty member may benefit a wider group.

Resources, Activities and Programs to Support Teaching

With all its work with faculty being voluntary, formative and confidential, the Myron L. Coulter Faculty Commons for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, located in Hunter Library, offers the following resources, activities and programs.

- Support for faculty in all aspects of their teaching as well as support for research design, and publication
- A one stop website repository to direct faculty to the information they need.
- The scholarship of teaching and learning as the center for faculty development

- Facilitation of the university initiative, The Scholarship of Teaching & Learning at Western Carolina University (<http://www.wcu.edu/SoTL/>)
- Member of the AAHE / Carnegie Campus Institutional Leadership Program
- Training and support for WebCAT, the university's online course management system
- A Faculty Sandbox, where faculty can receive one-on-one technology support.
- A Digital Media Specialist for teaching support.
- A lending library of professional literature on college teaching and learning
- Individual consultations with faculty about course design and pedagogical issues (in the Faculty Center or the faculty member's office)
- Individual consultations concerning the preparation of tenure and promotion files
- Small group analysis by an instruction developer to provide feedback from students
- Constantly updated website for events and resources (<http://facctr.wcu.edu/>) as well as a site for video streaming special events for faculty who cannot come to campus.
- Videotaping of classes upon request for formative purposes
- Faculty Series on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning each semester: presentations, workshops and panel discussions about aspects of teaching and learning
- Publications: *Faculty Forum* (monthly opinion piece), *MountainRise* (ejournal on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at <http://mountainrise.wcu.edu/>), *Renaissance of Teaching and Learning Booklet Series*, the Faculty Center Newsletter, *Connections*
- Formation of "Faculty Learning Communities" for year-long focus upon selected aspects of teaching and learning
- New Faculty Orientation each year
- Certificate of Professional Development in Teaching and Learning (a one-year program in active, reflective and collaborative faculty development)
- An annual faculty Summer Institute on Teaching and Learning
- An annual E-Learning Retreat co-sponsored with the Division of Educational Outreach
- An annual Scholarship of Teaching & Learning Retreat
- Readers' Roundtable, a faculty book discussion group
- An annual Welcome Luncheon for Faculty and the annual Faculty Recognition Banquet
- Updated library on college teaching and learning and on the scholarship of teaching and learning
- Member of the Southern Regional Faculty & Instructional Development Consortium and the Professional & Organizational Development Network in Higher Education
- Support for graduate teaching assistants and part-time faculty
- Support for implementation of the Boyer Model of Scholarship
- Support for integrating the learning goals of the QEP into syllabi and instruction
- Faculty technology support for the Education Briefcase

Programs to Support Teaching

The following programs and services are offered through the Myron L. Coulter Faculty Commons for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

SCHOLARHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING GRANTS

This grant program, funded by a generous endowment for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning funded by Chancellor Emeritus and Mrs. Myron Coulter, provides money for faculty to engage in research on their teaching and to go public with the results. Award amounts vary but may run between \$500 and \$1000.

MICROGRANT PROGRAM

This program, established in 1981, promotes quality teaching by providing funds to support travel, subsistence, and registration/tuition expenses associated with workshop attendance, short course participation, mini-internships, and other off-campus activities related to teaching improvement. Maximum award is normally \$700.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP) FACULTY DEVELOPMENT GRANT

This program, established in 2008, supports activities connected to the implementation of the goals of the QEP. Funds are available to support travel, subsistence, registration/tuition expenses and/or teaching equipment and materials associated with activities related to faculty development in support of the QEP. Maximum award is normally \$750; contingent on available state funds.

PROVOST'S INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Established in 1975, these grants provide modest support for innovative projects aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of instruction within a single course or group of related courses. Individual faculty members or groups of faculty may apply for grants to support a specific instructional proposal. Typical award: \$1,500.

FACULTY MENTORING PROGRAM

Non-tenured faculty may request a senior faculty mentor. The Faculty Center identifies mentors, arranges pairings, and offers monthly activities to help new faculty learn about the University.

FACULTY SMALL GROUP ANALYSIS PROGRAM

This voluntary program involves Faculty Center consultants visiting a class at mid-semester to obtain an analysis of the learning experiences in the course from the students' viewpoint. This service is also available for online classes. A confidential report is provided to the faculty member.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

This award is designed to encourage, recognize, and reward superior teaching and meritorious performance on a North Carolina University system-wide basis. Teaching faculty who have earned tenure and been employed at Western Carolina University for at least seven years are eligible for nomination. The amount of this award is \$7,500.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE

The Board of Governor's Award for Distinguished Public Service (DPS) was created in 2007 to encourage, identify, recognize, and reward service by faculty of the University. A cash award is presented at an annual recognition event hosted by the Board of Governors.

CHANCELLOR'S DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD

This award is designed to encourage, recognize, and reward superior teaching and meritorious performance. Teaching faculty with more than two years of service at Western Carolina University are eligible for nomination if they have not received this award in the preceding five years. Amount of award: \$2000.

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING LIBERAL STUDIES AWARD

This award recognizes a faculty member for excellence in promoting significant student learning in teaching liberal studies courses on a regular basis. Any full-time faculty member who has taught at Western Carolina University for at least one year may be nominated by a faculty member, department head, and dean or by self-nomination. A minimum of four liberal studies courses need to have been taught at Western in the two years prior to the spring semester. Amount of award: \$1500. This award is handled through the office of the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Studies.

SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AWARD

This award encourages and recognizes a faculty member engaging in scholarship that focuses upon teaching and learning (SoTL) and then applying the results of that scholarship to courses taught so that students experience significant learning in those courses. The award emphasizes the integration of research about teaching and learning and the practical application of that research to teaching itself. Evidence of the learning outcomes with students of the applications of SoTL findings is needed. Any full-time faculty member who has taught at Western Carolina University for at least one year may be nominated by a faculty member, department head, dean, or by self-nomination. Award amount: \$1000.

THE JAY M. ROBINSON AWARD FOR TEACHING IN E-LEARNING

This award honors outstanding work in e-learning. The Jay M. Robinson Teaching Award for E-learning will be awarded for the first time in the 2006-2007 academic year, and will be supported annually for five academic years at a level of \$1000 from the Jay M. Robinson (JMR) endowment. This award will be accorded each academic year to one WCU instructor who teaches a 100% computer-networked online course. Courses distributed primarily via ITV are not eligible for this award. Tenured, untenured, full-time, part-time, tenure track and adjunct instructors are eligible, provided that any nominee has taught at least two three-credit graduate and/or undergraduate courses fully online during the year of the award and/or the year immediately preceding, and provided that s/he neither serves nor has served as an e-learning faculty fellow.

FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Faculty Fellows Program, begun in 1988, provides one-quarter to one-half time release for faculty members to serve in the Faculty Center. While experiences in the center may change from year to year, they may include publishing The Faculty Forum newsletter, or support for faculty in areas such as the scholarship of teaching and learning, publications, global and cross cultural communications. All of the above are facilitated by the Coulter Faculty Commons.

FULBRIGHT AWARD SUPPORT

Faculty who are interested in applying for Fulbright Fellowships may find application help and support in the CFC.

Programs to Support Research

THE HUNTER SCHOLAR AWARD

Initiated in 1987, this award supports scholarly research during the calendar year. It consists of release time for two semesters, the assignment of a graduate research assistant, support funds from Hunter Library, and designation as the Hunter Scholar. It is available to full-time, tenure-track faculty members as funds permit.

FACULTY RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES GRANT

This program provides faculty a block of time to devote completely to their research or creative activities. Four awards of up to \$5,000 each will be made when funds permit. All full-time tenure-track faculty are eligible to apply. The financial award may be used for any purpose.

THE UNIVERSITY SCHOLAR AWARD

Designed to recognize the research and creative activities of faculty, this award is given annually to the faculty member who, in the opinion of the awards committee, has achieved a position of prominence in his or her discipline through research and/or creative activities. Amount of award: \$1,000

In addition to these programs, the Office of Research Administration provides support for faculty and staff seeking both internal and external funding for scholarly activities. The staff offers assistance in all aspects of proposal development: proposal writing workshops, identifying appropriate funding agencies, review and evaluation of proposals and budgets, budget management, procedures on the welfare of experimental subjects, and federal assurances. The *Western Research Notes* is published three times a semester to inform faculty and staff of grant and contract opportunities.

Programs to Support Service

PAUL A. REID DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

This program consists of two awards given annually for distinguished service: one to a member of the administrative staff and one to a faculty member. To be considered, a faculty member may be recognized not only for excellence as a teacher, but also for contributions in the areas of scholarly activities, and service. Amount of award: \$1,000

Programs to Support both Teaching and Research

VISITING SCHOLARS PROGRAM

By bringing scholars to the campus, this program enriches the college intellectual and cultural environment. Departments may propose scholars to meet with faculty and students in small group sessions and address the university community on topics of interest to the department. Typical award: up to \$1,500 (more if sponsored by two or more departments)

DEAN'S SEMINAR FUNDS

Under this program, each academic undergraduate dean receives a limited amount of money to bring visitors to the campus to present departmental or college seminars. Faculty may request support for colloquia, seminars, or other academic activities directly from the office of the appropriate dean. Typical award: variable, by college.

Other Types Of Support

FREE TUITION FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

Under North Carolina policy, full-time faculty at the rank of instructor and above and other full-time employees who are members of the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System or optional retirement plan may take one tuition-free course each semester.

DOCTORAL STUDY ASSIGNMENT PROGRAM

Through this university system-sponsored program, faculty members can apply to receive full salary and related benefits while pursuing doctoral studies on a full-time basis at an accredited university. Applicants are screened and prioritized on individual campuses, and final selection is made by the UNC General Administration. NOTE: There are very few of these highly competitive grants.

SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT PROGRAM

Western Carolina University offers scholarly assignments to provide opportunities, including opportunities away from campus for tenured faculty members to pursue full-time independent study, research, or creative work, designed to promote scholarly growth and development. Receiving one of these assignments depends upon the quality and feasibility of the activity proposed and upon the availability of financial support. Recipients may be released from their usual duties to pursue scholarly assignments for one semester at full pay or for the academic year at half pay.

DIVISION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Division of Information Technology offers a wide range of services to support teaching and research. In addition to supporting computer classrooms and labs, the division supports the WebCT Course Management System. It offers training workshops and individualized consultation on topics ranging from assistance with faculty web site development to designing technology support for research, grant proposals, and new teaching initiatives. The Division welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with academic departments and individual faculty members in exploring new uses of technology.

HUNTER LIBRARY

Services available through Hunter Library include:

- Assistance with on-line database searches through FirstSearch.

- Access to our on-line catalog (TOPCAT) from faculty offices.
- Access to on-line catalogs at major libraries.
- Borrowing of books and periodicals through ABC Express and Interlibrary Loan.
- Specialized bibliographic instruction for classes upon request.
- Consultation to assist faculty in designing assignments involving library use.
- Assignment of a locked study for faculty use (competitive; request forms must be submitted).

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Specially equipped interactive audio and video classrooms with video-taping capabilities are available for distance learning opportunities to a wide range of area schools and across the state to institutions within the North Carolina University system. Training and support are provided by Educational Outreach, the Faculty Center, and Information Technology.