Teaching and Learning Center Committee
Academic Futures White Paper

24 October 2017

In AY16/17 Provost Moore charged a faculty committee to make a set of recommendations regarding a campus-wide teaching and learning center. The Committee met over the year, engaged a variety of national leaders, and concluded that, above all other considerations, the campus community needed hold a conversation regarding the development of a highly visible and centrally located hub connecting pre-existing and new teaching and learning services. Such a center would potentially transform the campus's ability to realize the University's mission.

Campus inclusivity will be key to developing a center for teaching and learning. Recognizing this, in the spring of 2017, the Committee drafted a set of short-term recommendations for the Provost toward initiating a campus-wide discussion, including a faculty associate charged with advancing the project and faculty-staff emissaries tasked with meeting individual units. The *Academic Futures: Rethinking the University – the futures of learning and discovery* initiative largely made these recommendations redundant. Given the profound importance of a teaching and learning center, and the broad ownership of teaching across the University, the Committee recommends that the Academic Futures Committee take up the idea of a center seriously and support it with the necessary resources.

This document presents the Committee's work as an Academic Futures White Paper. It includes the Committee's initial vision and principles for such a center, its structural outline for the Center itself, a list of associated units, and a list of potential challenges. The document concludes with appendices presenting the Committee's 2016/17 membership and the Provost's initial charge.

VISION AND PRINCIPLES
The Center's guiding vision will be forward looking and holistic, focused on the integration, engagement, and elevation of teaching and learning within the University of Colorado Boulder's overall culture.

The Center will be governed by five main principles:
1. Initially, the Center will be an instruction- and unit-focused hub, facilitating a network for teaching and learning. Ultimately, it will include student support services.
2. The Center will be directed at improving teaching and learning through incentive-based and formative assessment rather than through merit and promotion evaluation.
3. The Center will be directed at generating research knowledge, innovating, adopting and adapting scholarly strategies, and building community.
4. In all enterprises, the Center will promote inclusive pedagogy.
5. The Center will use models of organizational institutional change to engage in continuous improvement, adapting to the changing needs of the faculty, staff and students it supports.
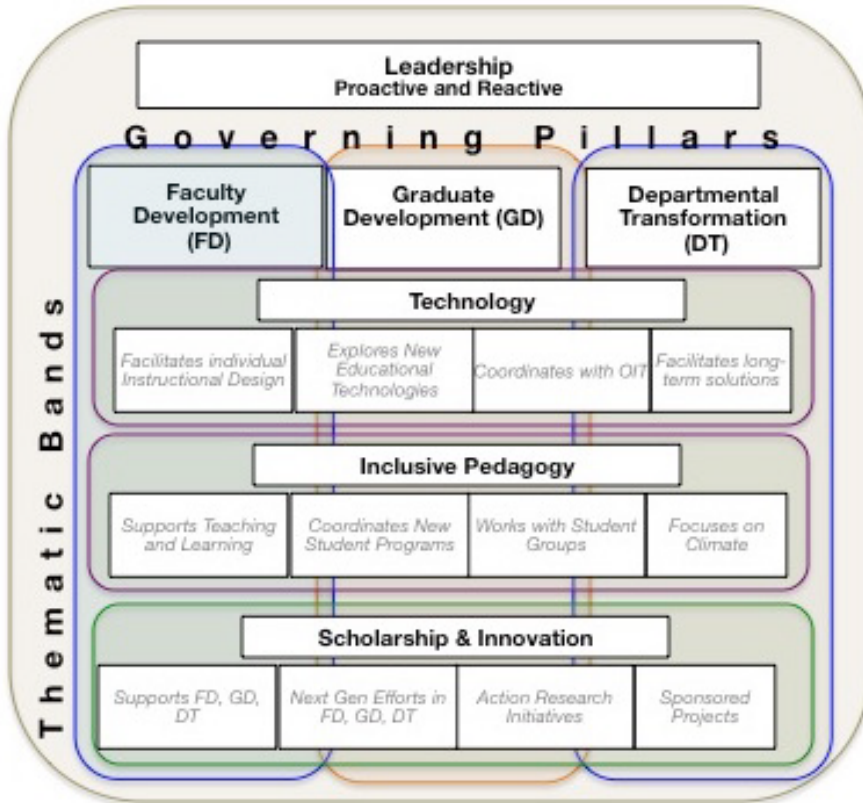
CONCEPTUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
The culture of teaching is diffuse at the University of Colorado Boulder. Given this, the Center for Teaching and Learning's primary role will be a networked hub connecting pre-existing teaching services and developing new ones. The Center needs a visible physical location if it is to be a useful resource and a powerful symbol for the campus. All three of these elements—physical location, useful resource, and symbolic importance—are necessary to state the centrality of teaching and learning to the campus and to its extramural stakeholders.

The Committee suggests that the Center initially focus on faculty development. This function must be devoted both to individual faculty and unit needs and to the broader university culture: the Center must be simultaneously reactive and proactive. That is, it must be a recognizable physical place on campus, a hub to which faculty go for help, advice, and ideas, and an intellectual place, one of strategy and energy that motivates the campus as a whole. Reacting to individual faculty needs and propelling the campus forward, the Center must be both inward and outward facing, connected to the entire campus and to the national conversation about teaching and learning.

If the Center's vision is both forward looking and holistic, its conceptual approach must define its governing concerns and integrate those concerns into the campus so that they are not isolated as silos. Thus, the Committee imagines the center as defined by three governing pillars—Faculty Development, Graduate Development, and Unit Transformation—that are crosscut by three thematic bands: Technology, Inclusivity, and Scholarship and Innovation, each of which can be broken down into four separate areas.

This conception can be illustrated by a three-by-three grid.

Leadership
Proactive and Reactive

G o v e r n i n g   P i l l a r s

T h e m a t i c   B a n d s

Faculty Development (FD)	Graduate Development (GD)	Departmental Transformation (DT)

Technology

Facilitates individual Instructional Design	Explores New Educational Technologies	Coordinates with OIT	Facilitates long-term solutions

Inclusive Pedagogy

Supports Teaching and Learning	Coordinates New Student Programs	Works with Student Groups	Focuses on Climate

Scholarship & Innovation

Supports FD, GD, DT	Next Gen Efforts in FD, GD, DT	Action Research Initiatives	Sponsored Projects

The above conceptual organization suggests a corresponding governance structure. The Center will be led by an Executive Director, a faculty member responsible for advocacy, championship, and policy. The Executive Director will oversee daily operations of the Center—its help desk and daily activities—but will also maintain its vision, evolve its strategy, and implement its tactical solutions.

The three pillars will each be defined by a separate faculty director:
1. Director for Faculty Development: Charged with faculty professional development and individual problem solving.
2. Director for Graduate Development: Charged with graduate development.
3. Director for Departmental Development: Charged with supporting departmental transformation in support of teaching and learning, thinking about how departments can implement new plans, as well as developing teaching assessment metrics and standards.

Finally, the thematic bands will include staff in the following areas:
1. Technology
   a. Facilitates Instructional Design for existing technologies
   b. Explores New Educational Technologies
   c. Coordinates with the Office of Information Technologies
   d. Facilitates Long-Term Technological Change
2. Inclusive Pedagogy
   a. Supports teaching and learning, including international student success
   b. Coordinates teaching and learning with New Student Programs
   c. Works with student groups
   d. Focuses on an inclusive climate in non-academic environments to sustain an inclusive culture
3. Scholarship, Innovation, and Assessment:
   a. Support of current GD, FD, DT efforts– providing evidence for decision / action
   b. In collaboration developing next generation models for GD, FD, DT efforts
   c. Action Research Initiatives / Cross Domain SOTL work
      i. E.g., LEAP – faculty development program or SITAR Departmental Action Teams, Visualization of Instructional Practice, or Student Pathways Visualizations, UEDP in Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
      ii. Developing tools for "critical thinking" our outcomes of UG education, classroom observation protocols
   d. Sponsored Projects: initiatives to advance education and our capacity to do so
      i. E.g. AAU, White House, BayView Alliance, APLU/SMTI, CIRTL, NSF or other efforts
      ii. Projects that otherwise do not have (stable) institutional home but advance (and fund) our institution

ASSOCIATED UNITS
A number of units currently exist on campus that address the broad topic of teaching and learning.

- **ALTEC**: The Anderson Language Technology Center offers support for foreign language technology services, including non-degree programming, speakers, workshops, and help in developing and running placement effective exams. ALTEC maintains an open media library for language learners on campus and departments.
- **ASSETT:** Arts & Sciences Support of Education Through Technology provides direct support to faculty and educators in the use of technology to advancing the teaching and learning mission of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Colorado at Boulder.
- **ATDT:** The Academic Technology Design Team in the Office of Information Technology provide support for teaching and learning across campus.
- **Continuing Education:** Continuing Education provides instructional design services for its online courses.
- **CSL:** The Center for Stem Learning improves STEM education at CU Boulder serves as a model for institutional change. In STEM fields it seeds and conducts educational transformation, supports education research within and across units, and engages in K20 faculty professional development.
- **Faculty Groups:** A number of individual faculty groups address teaching and learning. These groups are primarily discipline- or division- based and provide significant insights for faculty in these areas.
- **FTEP:** The Faculty Teaching Excellence Program provides direct support to faculty in the form of workshops, symposia, short courses, and one-on-one services.
- **GTP:** The Graduate Teaching Program provides support for graduate teaching assistants and teachers.
- **LA Program:** The Learning Assistant Program focuses on assisting classroom transformation to focus on student-centered approaches through the inclusion of undergraduate learning assistants.
- **LEAD Alliance Groups:** The CU LEAD Alliance includes multiple groups focused on underrepresented minorities on campus. Each of these groups has existing teaching and learning support programs that range from tutoring to course offerings. For faculty, these units often host workshops and discussions to assist faculty in building an inclusive classroom.
- **LEAP:** The Leadership Education for Advancement and Promotion program provides support for faculty on numerous topics.
- **Libraries:** The CU Boulder Library faculty provide multiple types of support for teaching and learning. A direct liaison relationship should be created with this unit.
- **School of Education:** The School of Education has numerous programs that address teaching and learning and many that focus on developing enhanced teaching and learning approaches. The School of Education should be a primary collaborator for the TLC.
- **Other Support Units:** In addition to these primary teaching and learning support units, other units that are primarily housed in Student Affairs provide teaching and learning support. An example includes New Student and Family Programs.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES
The Committee recognized several challenges.

- **An Exceptional Task:** Building a teaching and learning center is a complex endeavor that will not occur though an overload effort. There are a number of significant centers across the country that might serve as useful models to the University of Colorado Boulder, as well as a number of experts in the field, who might serve as formal or informal consultants. The Committee has queried a few of these already. The Committee believes that in order to build an exceptional center, one that leads the field of teaching and learning as well as the campus' practices, we will need to formally assign this responsibility to a campus champion who is willing to shepherd the project, organizing the campus conversation in national terms.

- **Development of Change Agents:** As the project of building a center develops, the campus will be challenged to bring together faculty, staff, and students in such a way that gives each a leadership voice. Because there are so many stakeholders involved in teaching and learning, ranging across faculty and staff, the campus will need to identify agents of change who can act as advocates and leaders for the project.

  The process of selecting these change agents must be inclusive, respectful of the many different kinds of work that go into teaching and learning. These change agents will also need to be granted time and funds to engage in developing the Center.

- **Campus and Faculty Culture:** The campus' currently diffuse approach to teaching and learning creates a culture of autonomy, one with little coordination and less assessment. Creating a single entity that represents a campus-wide approach to teaching and learning, which is authorized to assess teaching and learning overall, will be no small task.

  Further, the Committee perceives that the CU Boulder campus culture could place greater value on teaching. This is evident, for example, in that research and creative work is clearly prioritized over teaching in promotion and tenure decisions. Developing a single resource will demand a change in faculty culture as well as campus culture.

- **Budget and Space Allocation:** Creating a center for teaching and learning will demand a significant commitment of resources. A large centralized space will be required. This type of space is difficult to obtain on campus. The Center will also need faculty and staff. Moreover, although some of the funds supporting a Center for Teaching and Learning will have to be newly designated, some of them will involve changing existing funding structures and, thus, changing existing units.

APPENDICIES
Membership, 2016

- Kirk Ambrose, Professor and Chair, Art and Art History
- Elizabeth Boese, Instructor, Department of Computer Science
- Paul S. Chinowsky, Associate Vice-Provost for Student Success, Professor, Dept of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering
- Noah Finkelstein, Professor of Physics, Co-Director, Center for STEM Learning, and President's Teaching Scholar
- Deborah Hollis, Associate Professor, Special Collections and Archives
- Susan Jurow, Associate Professor and Program Chair, Learning Sciences and Human Development
- Daniel Kellogg, Associate Professor and Chair, Composition, Erismann Faculty Fellow
- Jennifer Knight, Associate Professor, Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology
- William Kuskin, Vice Provost and Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Professor of English
- Suzanne Magnanini, Associate Professor and Chair, French and Italian
- Andrew Martin, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, President's Teaching Scholar and Faculty Advisor for ASSETT
- Matt McQueen, Associate Professor of Integrative Physiology
- Mark Meaney, Executive Director, Center for Education on Social Responsibility, Leeds School of Business
- Rolf Norgaard, Associate Director, Program for Writing and Rhetoric
- Marcia Yonemoto. Associate Professor of History, Faculty Director of GTP

Initial Charge

The Provost charges the Teaching and Learning Center Committee to develop a recommendation for a campus-wide Center for Teaching and Learning.

Specifically, The Provost's asks that this recommendation be completed by March 31, 2017 and include the following:

- Identify existing units concerned with teaching and learning,
- Consider the role of faculty governance and the organizational structure for a campus-wide unit
- Articulate obstacles to this task, such as space utilization and staff support
- Write a vision statement to guide such a center, its mission and purpose
- Define an initial set of action steps to put the center in place

It is my expectation that your recommendation will consider the campus's commitment to inclusive excellence and design clear guidelines for inclusive pedagogy.

Thank you for taking on this charge on behalf of the University of Colorado Boulder.