



## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue

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### ***Much Has Happened at UCF by Working Together to Promote Teaching and Learning*** **Gary E. Whitehouse**



Gary Whitehouse is Professor and Provost Emeritus at UCF. He served over 20 years in the classroom at Lehigh and UCF and over 20 years in administration at UCF as Chair, Dean and Provost.

He has won a number of teaching and research awards.

Time flies by very quickly. It seems impossible that it is more than four years since I stepped down as UCF Provost and returned to the faculty of the Industrial Engineering and Management Systems Department. I taught for two years, and I am now fully retired. Not a bad life at all. I hope you will allow me to reminisce about some of UCF's efforts to promote teaching and learning. When I was a candidate for Provost in 1993, I stated the following goals to be implemented if I was selected as Provost:

- Creating a fair and consistent promotion and tenure process,
- Keeping appropriate balance between teaching and research,
- Creating a "University of the Future,"
- Encouraging and rewarding teaching excellence as well as research productivity,
- Having a diverse faculty and staff,
- Creating an environment of cooperation across campus, and
- Maintaining the high priority on undergraduate education while we grow in graduate and research stature.

Reviewing these goals I think they could have been summarized as the creation of an environment of cooperation to promote teaching and learning at UCF.

Probably the most significant example of these efforts was the creation of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning ten years ago. The Faculty Senate identified the development of the center as very high priority, and we agreed on the importance of the venture. Chuck Dziuban was very excited about this project and agreed to be the founding director for two years (one year of planning and one year of directing). Like all projects that Chuck undertakes, he did a great job. Karen Smith was hired as the first permanent director to lead and to develop the center. An appropriate home was found for the center in the new Classroom Building. Thanks to Karen's leadership and the efforts of many committed faculty and staff members, the center flourished. Unfortunately, Karen became ill and passed away. Ida Cook agreed to be acting director after Karen's death, and she did a great job as usual during this very difficult time. The center was fortunate to find a new dynamic leader in Alison Morrison-Shetlar. The center continues to grow and to develop new ways to promote teaching and learning at UCF under her leadership.

Other actions to support teaching and learning have included

- Encouraging more senior faculty to teach our undergraduates,
- Continuing to fund TIP awards to recognize outstanding teaching after all other SUS universities have dropped the program,
- Funding of TAs to help with large classes,
- Reducing class size in selected disciplines,
- Making teaching a high priority in the tenure process,
- Creating orientation for TAs,
- Evaluating the effectiveness of various teaching modes, and
- Encouraging publication of findings.

Some other offices besides the FCTL were created or strengthened to aid in faculty development. These include

- Diversity Initiatives,
- OIR,
- Web Services,

*continued on next page...*

- Interdisciplinary Initiatives, and
- International Studies.

Development and creation of the appropriate support staff to aid in the use of UCF's new technology has also helped the teaching and learning effort. Some of these efforts include

- Development of High Tech Classroom support,
- Improved OIR support,
- High Tech Library developments,
- Tech Rangers and other Web support,
- Development of FCTL Workshops,
- IDL course to support Web course development, and
- Use of recently retired faculty as mentors.

Efforts were also made to relieve faculty of the unnecessary burden of student deficiencies unrelated to course topics. These units included

- Math Lab,
- Writing Lab,
- Library support such as Ask a Librarian Web resources,
- Creation of Office of Undergraduate Studies, and
- Creation of Office of Graduate Studies.

Of course, an improved student body is a priority if teaching and learning are to get better. Some of the efforts to improve the student body included

- Creating the SDES organization,
- Placing priority on retention of students,
- Starting the LEAD Scholars program,
- Supporting the growth of the Honors College,
- Supporting SARC improvements,
- Starting the RAMP program, and
- Developing LINC Courses.

When I stepped down as provost, many folks asked what I was most proud of during my 10 years of service. My answer was the ability of faculty and administration to work together to promote teaching and learning, which led to a dramatic increase in freshman retention from 67% to 83%.

I wish the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center of Teaching and Learning a Happy Tenth Anniversary. Congratulations to all who have created the positive teaching and learning environment at UCF. But remember the job is never done. Best wishes!



## ***The Faculty Center***

**Frank Juge**



Frank Juge joined UCF as one of the charter faculty members in 1968 as an Assistant Professor of Chemistry. Over his nearly forty years of service at UCF, he has served in several administrative posts including Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. As Vice Provost, the establishment of the Faculty Center and its initial administration was his responsibility. He is currently a Professor in the Rosen College of Hospitality Management.

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For many years new faculty orientation and scattered seminars by visiting scholars were the only source of faculty enrichment at UCF. In the early 1990s, however, there was a growing sentiment among the faculty that there was a need for a broader faculty development program and a desire to bring faculty together to share their teaching strategies and needs. The Faculty Senate recognized that need and passed a resolution to establish a center to assist faculty in improving their teaching and that would foster the exchange of ideas. Provost Gary Whitehouse approved the resolution and assigned me the task of getting the center off the ground.

It was my opinion that an early effort to foster faculty development housed in the Office of Instructional Resources in the 1980s served only a handful of faculty and was often viewed as a place to send faculty who had problems with their teaching. Eventually that program was discontinued due to lack of interest. Given that track record, I asked Dr. Charles Dziuban to help design a center that would be a resource for all faculty and a place where faculty would feel comfortable sharing ideas and enhancing their teaching.

Chuck will describe his efforts in a separate article, but I believe that he brought a national perspective on the best practices in faculty development and strategies to enhance faculty participation. From his study the framework of the current center, and especially a key part of its name, "Faculty Center," evolved. His recommendation was that whatever programs or services the center might offer, it was key that faculty played a part in the identification of the programs and that faculty viewed the center as a faculty project, and not an administrative academic service. Provost Whitehouse approved the Faculty Center proposal and funded a director and provided funds to pay stipends to faculty to attend periodic workshops.

After a national search we were fortunate to appoint Dr. Karen Smith as director of the center. Karen brought enthusiasm, creative ideas, and an approach that focused on the faculty. The inclusion of the center in the new classroom building provided a comfortable and very modern home for the center. The early workshops were based on faculty proposals for

projects to improve or enhance instruction and learning. They were immediately well attended and buzzed with enthusiasm. Karen was most successful, in my opinion, in making the center a comfortable place for faculty to come for help, a cup of coffee, or simply to work on their projects using the center's resources. Her very sudden illness and death was a tragedy that was deeply felt by the faculty. Her memorial service was emotional and attended by hundreds of faculty who felt her loss deeply.

The momentum of the center was maintained by Dr. Ida Cook, who was acting director while a national search was conducted. She continued that sense of loyalty to faculty and their needs characteristic of the center and worked hard to see that the center's programs were maintained and supported.

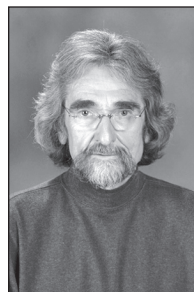
At the conclusion of the search, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar was appointed director, and the center took off again with more vigor than ever. Alison brought new ideas, a strong work ethic, and high academic standards to the center. Under her leadership the center sponsors seminars, workshops, faculty fellows and occasional faculty social events. But most important, it remains a comfortable place for faculty to go for both social and professional interaction.

The center is a success for three reasons:

- 1) Initial planning that recognized the need for faculty to be central in the center,
- 2) Effective leadership for the center that focused on teaching and learning needs and faculty ownership of the center,
- 3) Last, but certainly not least, the strong support of President Hitt from the very beginning and financial support from Provost Whitehouse and continuing support from Provost Hickey. Continued funding is evidence of commitment to quality instruction by Provost Hickey and President Hitt.



## ***The Beauty is in the Walking*** **Charles Dziuban**



Chuck Dziuban is director of the Research Initiative for Teaching Effectiveness. He is Professor Emeritus from the Department of Educational Research, Technology and Leadership and UCF's first Pegasus professor. He is founding director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and currently co-directs the Quality Enhancement Program with

Martha Marinara. Chuck has received funding from several agencies including the Ford Foundation, Centers for Disease Control, National Science Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. In 2005, the Sloan-C Consortium named him the Outstanding Individual in Online Learning. For the past fourteen years, he has been working with Harris Rosen on the Tangelo Park Program, and in 2007 Chuck accepted an appointment to the National Policy Council for Information and Communication Technology. Most recently, he co-edited the book, *Blended Learning: Research Perspectives*.

The title of this little piece is a partial quote from Welsh poet Gwynn Thomas' poem, "The beauty is in the walking—destinations betray us." When I look back over the ten years since I was asked to begin planning, I am completely struck by the FCTL's impact as a process rather than a place. The center is an extension of the faculty, validating each one of us who has struggled with the old adage, "I thought I understood it until I had to teach it." Continually, the FCTL is evolving away from the traditional broadcast models of faculty development to a genuine culture of sustainability at UCF.

Our dear departed colleague Bud Barringer and I spent many hours discussing how an effective center could be one in which faculty assume leadership for development and could also be a welcoming place where faculty could hang out and share creative ideas. Much of that has come to pass; although, Bud and I never saw our Faculty Club! Consider the summer and winter conferences—completely faculty driven—and by any standard, happenings that celebrate the act of teaching. This is so pleasing to me because, at the start, we encountered a good deal of ambivalence and resistance to the idea. Many of our colleagues were not convinced that the climate was right for such an endeavor. My good friend Jonas Setenyi from Budapest wrote a paper entitled, "Teaching Democracy in an Unpopular Democracy," that reminds me so much of that first year. In that presentation, he coined the term "uncertain mediation." There are many times when you don't have all the answers or closure, but faith in the idea sustains you. That is just what happened. A typical conversation with a faculty member would be, "Chuck, that will never work," to which I'd reply, "Well, it might be all right if you got the right faculty involved." I then received the response that I wanted: "OK, I'll serve on the committee."



We formed a planning group with the help of Ben Ward from Western Carolina University, Jim Isner from the University of South Florida, and Ed Neal from the University of North Carolina that never met for more than one hour at a time, but during those meetings, we planned a center—nothing as impressive as what it has become under the leadership of Karen Smith, Ida Cook, and Alison Morrison-Shetler, but we had a center. Our first speaker was Ed Neal from North Carolina, who shared his ideas about dealing with large classes, a topic of grave concern to many faculty members at that time. What happened is exactly what Malcolm Gladwell describes in *The Tipping Point*. We reached a critical mass when faculty members recognized that there was broad-based support among their ranks and financial and logistical support from the administration. President Hitt and Gary Whitehouse embraced the concept from the beginning, and Frank Judge guided me through the planning every step of the way. He, ever so gently, put me back on the rails from time to time. When the center was off and running, I let out a big sigh of relief. Believe me, there were many times I lived Thomas Edison's famous "There were days of such discouragement I ached to give it all up." Those days are over and the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning has evolved to be one of the crown jewels of our teaching culture.

I have a feeling, however, that the next decade will present wonderful opportunities and substantial challenges for those of us who continue with the faculty development enterprise. We see the vanguard of a whole new faculty generation that grew up with the technologies that we have had to learn. They are used to just-in-time delivery and have little patience for passive learning activities such as reading the manual or sitting through a workshop. In fact, they even look like our present students! They see our publication ritual as arcane and would much rather use the World Wide Web to share their ideas. Faculty development for this cohort will have to be completely different from anything we have developed thus far. My sense is the faculty centers of the future will spend more time removing obstacles for these highly creative teachers instead of presenting information to them.

During this past decade evolving technologies have burst onto the teaching scene with such force that we, as instructors, must get on board or be left behind. The boundaries of the classroom have blurred to the point where teachers and students design their own personal geographies for learning to accommodate the rapidly changing world of information and knowledge acquisition. Students wish to lessen their ambiguity toward formal education by gaining some sense of a well-defined path to success and relevancy of their studies to their present and future lives. They demand a sense of self-worth from their instructors and peers. They want active rather than passive learning environments, and because they live in a highly interactive world, they expect the same from their classes. Our students want more outlets for their creativity and collaborative nature, and they respond to the increased latitude and freedom that anywhere-anytime models provide. All of this will take faculty development to a whole new level.

I believe that the new education environments will require that professional development must respond to community, collaboration, and self organization, evolving to a learning climate that is cognitively complex, team-based, reliant on technology, and much less dependent on physical geography. Peer production will become an important part of this new learning space, displacing more traditional forms and models.

To me, UCF's Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is what Taleb calls "a black swan"—a culture-transforming event that has monumental impact and results form the continuing uncertainty in our environment. In some respects, the center was spontaneous, unpredicted, and chaotic under my watch, but has evolved to be the fabric that holds our teaching lives together. Imagine what UCF would be like without the center. Even the most senior instructor among us suffers from what Diamond calls "landscape amnesia." We can't remember UCF without a faculty center and can't conceive of not having one. I extend my heartiest congratulations to the center on its tenth anniversary. I am grateful to those who have made it such a success and am proud of its many accomplishments. There is nothing but a bright future as the FCTL leads us through our next decade of teaching excellence. Go Teaching Knights!!!!

### ***Interim FCTL Director (2000–2001)***

**Ida Cook**



Ida J. Cook is Associate Professor of Sociology. She joined UCF in 1976. She is Vice Chair of the Faculty Senate and was an Interim Director of the Faculty Center. Her research focuses on community and political behavior, evaluation research, and substance abuse.

### ***In the beginning...***

At UCF—back in the 20th century (really just the 70s)—typical class practices consisted of the more traditional approaches. We met our classes and told students what would be expected of them for the entire semester, sometimes without even distributing a printed syllabus. Students had limited opportunities for necessary information.

Some of us back then asked how we could better reach our students. We tried alternative ways of teaching students and sought sources where we could learn more about the variety of teaching techniques. We asked for assistance in improving pedagogical efforts, delivery and evaluation of teaching, and feedback on quality of teaching. We received some fledgling assistance from the Office of Instructional Resources, whose primary duties included classroom support such as background production service needs for the university, the provision and delivery of monitors, projectors and film to the classrooms.

Today, OIR supports faculty through a cooperative relationship with the Faculty Center providing extensive and comprehensive support for pedagogy, systems design, and classroom technology development to meet faculty needs. OIR's Faculty Media Center offers faculty training and demonstrations on new technologies and produces classroom resources to meet their needs.

Although I and other faculty wanted assistance in developing innovative approaches to teaching, faculty collaboration, objective evaluation, or balanced assessment of student learning, the environment then did not promote or support these efforts.

During the late 1970s, I served on the Faculty Senate Instruction Committee, and occasionally we received requests on the above issues, but its primary function was to address curricular matters, the responsibility of the present-day Undergraduate Policy and Procedures Committee. We seldom focused on teaching matters per se. These concerns and requests increased over the years, so that in the late 90s, while I was an officer, the Faculty Senate resolved to address these unmet needs. With the administration's support, a nascent form of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning was created, led by the first director, Chuck Dziuban, who worked as its director until a permanent director could be recruited. Even though the Faculty Center was viewed with some skepticism regarding the need for such an entity, and had no dedicated "place," the interested faculty began meeting and joining together to solve these unmet needs.

### **An idea whose time had come!**

With the support by the Provost's office, Dr. Karen L. Smith was recruited to direct the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Faculty learning took a new direction. Although Karen was a tiny person, her impact was large! She brought a new perspective, excitement, assistance and hope to faculty who wanted to enhance student learning. Her initial task was to recruit and convince faculty, departments, colleges and administrators that the faculty needs were valid, necessary and important. She seemed to be everywhere, meeting other faculty with similar interests and promoting the importance of helping students learn, convincing faculty to consider and apply basic ideas about teaching and assessment.

Karen faced a difficult challenge. She offered a new frame of reference for teaching. How can you get people to embrace the new concept and to participate? The center offices moved multiple times, but even so, faculty found it. Through Karen's guidance, the administration supported faculty developing new teaching plans, attending teaching conferences, and sharing their learning. The result was an unprecedented groundswell for faculty learning and improving teaching across the university. We were excited about the changes!

One of the pivotal new events was the establishment of the Faculty Summer Institute, purposely designed to engage even

more faculty, to acquaint them with new ideas and practices, to support the development and implementation of good, innovative teaching practices in their classes. Over 100 faculty sacrificed their brief, one-week break between Spring and Summer terms to dedicate their ingenuity, time and efforts toward discovering and learning about teaching and learning.

### **Faculty collaboration ruled the day!**

I always liked to call the Faculty Summer Institute "faculty day-camp" because we could work informally on projects without the distraction of running to and from daily class schedules. Casually-dressed participants really lost themselves in their projects—sometimes for 8 or 10-hour days! It was (and still is) fun to see how everyone reveled in their new-found knowledge and abilities. Friendly competitions arose, challenging team members to reach higher than they might have done if left on their own. Each Summer Institute culminated with an end-of-the-week presentation, which consisted of poster sessions and demonstrations. Teams shared ideas and experiences and celebrated newly-gained insights, successes and commitment to future learning. This festive occasion allowed faculty and administrators to meet, to discuss and to better understand their inspirations and accomplishments. Random drawings for prizes might include a digital camera, a PDA, lunch with a dean or the Provost, or one-on-one problem-solving sessions with the FCTL, OIR, or CDWS staff, etc. More and more faculty heard about the FCTL successes and embraced its opportunities.

As Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, Karen Smith established a welcoming place where faculty could go to meet with others, share ideas and learn. Among the initiatives were opportunities for learning in small and large workshops, increasing the number of teaching award programs, and establishment of faculty fellows program. Through her leadership, and with faculty and administration support, the innovative Classroom Building was designed and built, providing experimental teaching formats, classrooms and the uses of electronic media for teaching. Prior to her untimely death, she oversaw the administration and initial successes of the FCTL. The Classroom Building houses the offices of the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning—a fitting honor of her legacy.

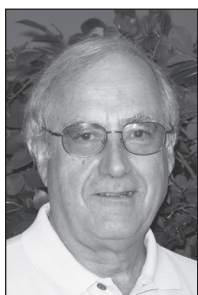
### **The 21st century and beyond...**

Building on the faculty support for teaching and learning tradition, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, the current FCTL Director, continues summer and winter conferences and cooperation with other units such as the Office of Instructional Resources, Course Development and Web Services, the library, and outreach to area campuses. She has elevated the presence and influence of the FCTL throughout the university, encouraging faculty research in teaching through electronic publications and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning awards. This new era of faculty teaching and learning accommodates all formats for teachers and teaching researchers who are trained

in a variety of theories of learning, teaching, testing, and engagement techniques. Official recognition of teaching by our colleagues, supervisors and the university is now common, and the faculty know they are not alone in enhancing learning. The center is one of the places to which all new faculty are introduced and to which they return as they immerse themselves in teaching and learning—I know they won't feel alone.

## ***FCTL's 10th Anniversary***

**Dick Tucker**



Dick Tucker joined UCF in 1972 from Emory University where he completed his Ph.D. His general interests are in Developmental Psychology, particularly as related to aging issues. He serves as Director of UCF's Initiative on Aging and Longevity. Current specific interests include characteristics of older Canadians in Florida with focus on health care needs and utilization,

the effects of respite care on care givers for those with Alzheimer's disease, and general issues in clinical geropsychology.

Reflecting back on 35 wonderful years at UCF, there are some experiences which have left a particularly warm and indelible memory. One of those has been the development of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and its rise to national prominence. Now as the FCTL celebrates its 10th anniversary, let me share some of those memories and reflections.

While we typically think of Karen Smith as our founder, those of us who were involved in the beginning know that it was Chuck Dziuban who did the initial exploratory work that led to the founding of the center. Chuck had been a very active member of the committee which reviewed the student evaluation of instruction instrument, and one of the recommendations of that group, fully supported by the Faculty Senate and by the administration, was the establishment of a faculty resource center on teaching. Chuck researched the "state of the art" programs nationally and visited several of the most promising programs. He also took the pulse of the UCF faculty to assess their interests and needs. His final report outlined the common ingredients of programs and general principles that could be applied to the specific UCF environment. As is typical of Chuck, he was never interested in serving as permanent "director," and he spearheaded the search that led to the hiring of Karen.

UCF was fortunate to attract a person who had established experience to develop a new program. Karen certainly "hit the ground running" and quickly built FCTL as a major presence on campus and beyond. That such dedication and energy was taken from us so prematurely is one of my saddest memories,

but the naming of FCTL in her honor, a unique designation endorsed by the Faculty Senate, helped to soften the hurt.

The campus was so fortunate when Ida Cook, a strong, early supporter of and contributor to the FCTL, agreed to serve as Interim Director. Ida worked hard to assure that Karen's work and plans would continue. At a time when we were grieving our tragic loss, Ida kept our focus on the continuing mission of FCTL.

One of my fondest memories was serving on the search committee, ably chaired by Rick Schell, that led to the hiring of Alison Morrison-Shetlar. I had the pleasure of hosting Alison's visit and thus spent a great deal of time with her. Alison was already drawing national attention for the work that she was doing at Georgia Southern University, and, of course, they were prepared to do whatever was necessary to keep her there. Alison was the unanimous first choice of the search committee; thus, we had to "sell" her on UCF. As a department chair for 15 years who hired many faculty, and as a member of many other administrative search committees, I had many occasions to hone my sales pitch. Selling Alison on UCF was probably my easiest task! The phenomenal growth and stature of UCF was becoming evident, and more important, amidst the rising focus on graduate education and research, it was clear that "excellence in undergraduate education" remained one of our main goals. The type of tangible support provided by the administration that had gone into the creation of FCTL and the continued resources and programs that Karen had nurtured operationally defined our commitment to our teaching mission. I remember telling Alison that I knew that Georgia Southern would counter with a great offer, but the one thing that they could not offer her was UCF. With Alison as director, FCTL has firmly established itself as a national model, and further enhanced UCF's progression from "promise to prominence."

Among Alison's accomplishments was building an outstanding staff, led by Tace Crouse, Eric Main and Kevin Yee and building a strong tradition with the "Faculty Fellows." Now that Alison has taken on another full-time position while continuing to serve as director of FCTL until her replacement is selected, the staff and Faculty Fellows have taken on an increased workload and kept all programs and services on course.

One thing is certain. With the national reputation that FCTL has established, and with a more realistic time period for the national search, we should be able to attract another excellent director. After all, what other position can offer all that is UCF!



## Remembering the First Summer Institute: Welcome to Summer Camp for Faculty

Meg K. Scharf



Meg Scharf is Associate Director for Public Services at the University of Central Florida Libraries. She has been at the UCF Libraries since 1984. In that time she has worked in Reference, taught Library Instruction classes, and worked on a variety of initiatives serving student and faculty researchers. Her recent presentation topics include the usability of library web pages and Central Florida Memory (CFM). CFM <<http://www.cfmemory.org>> is an exciting collaboration bringing digitized images of the region's history before theme parks and spaceflight to researchers, students, teachers and families.

"Welcome to summer camp for faculty."

—Dr. John Hitt, greeting faculty at an early Summer Institute

Maybe some of you still have the black binder I am looking at, stored neatly on a bookshelf in your office. The front cover bears the title SUMMER '98 FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, and displays an idyllic photograph of UCF's once gray-colored reflecting pond with a single-water-jet fountain. Plans and the work of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning had been moving forward under the interim leadership of Chuck Dziuban for two years prior to that very first Institute. The Summer Institute, held with the Office of Diversity Initiatives and the Office of International Studies, was FCTL's first large-scale event.

As a member of the inaugural Advisory Board, I saw the Institute develop throughout 1997–1998. The Institute was on Chuck's agenda, and on the agenda of the FCTL's first permanent director, Karen Smith, from the first FCTL Advisory Board meeting in August 1997. After some remodeling had been done to the first FCTL offices in the Math and Physics building, the Center held a Grand Opening in January, 1998. It was such a success that many who tried to attend had to stand in the hallway. That should have prepared the Board for the landslide of applications for the Summer Institute, but going through them—hundreds of them, all on paper, some quite voluminous—was challenging.

Inventing the Institute was even more challenging. Which activities, speakers and programs would be valuable to the attending faculty? How many networking and recreational activities (tennis, anyone?) should be made available? Would attendees really complete proposed projects over a week's time? Would they actually attend the sessions? Would they

feel focused and engaged? Would they want to leave campus for the field trips? (An entire day of field trips was scheduled.) And of course, the really big question looming over each and every event and meeting: what kind of food will be served?

Piles of plastic dividers, handouts from all presenters, informational pages, binders, and cover sheets blanketed every inch of floorspace in the FCTL offices two days before the Sunday opening night dinner and keynote address. It was difficult to believe, looking at that paper blizzard, that this could all be assembled and that everything would go off without a hitch. I heard Karen Smith tell Bob Tonsetic, who was serving on the FCTL staff that year, about the storm of calls and emails that had been received, just that afternoon, with last minute questions and details to be resolved. Spotting a pile of 100 copies of a photocopied journal article, I posed a librarian-like question about violation of copyright. Karen shot me one of the dirtiest looks I have ever received. She looked at the organized chaos on the floor and asked, with a note of despair, "Is it realistic to say that this is going to come together? Is this really going to happen?" Bob didn't skip a beat. "My advice to you... (dramatic pause)...is to start drinking heavily." Then he left the room. "WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?" Karen asked me. I said, "It means he has seen *Animal House* too many times." As we continued to assemble binders, other Advisory Board volunteers magically appeared to help, and after countless hours of brainstorming and planning, Sunday night was the start of an interesting and productive Institute.

Throughout its history, the FCTL has focused on improving instruction, improving learning outcomes, and supporting faculty as they struggle with the balancing act of research, teaching and service. FCTL acts as a conduit to additional support available to faculty on campus, proving to be an important connection to teaching faculty for the library and other support units like Course Development, OIR, and the Writing Center. But the week of the first Summer Institute, the focus seemed to change. FCTL was bringing faculty together, across colleges and disciplines, for an exciting exchange of ideas. I remember a tearful English instructor, pointing to two Engineering instructors on the last day of the Institute, saying, "Do you believe it? These are my new best friends." Conversations were overheard about new acquaintances, new colleagues, and new collaborations.

Ten years later, the Summer Institute has evolved into the Summer Faculty Development Conference. It has led to a variety of events, including Winter Workshops, Teaching Circles, Brown Bag Lunches, Orientations for Faculty and GTAs, Halloween and Thanksgiving parties, and a one-time What's Where At UCF tour (on a tram, on a chilly day one long ago February). Although a great deal of work goes into each Conference, none has matched the frantic, feverish preparation for that first Institute. The name has changed, and the paper blizzard has ceased, but it has become a tradition, a routine. Faculty still discover new colleagues at the Conference and at FCTL events.

Many colorful memories later (a gorilla kissing the Provost, an FCTL interim director costumed as Mimi from the Drew Carey show), what is most memorable are all of the people associated with FCTL, from the Faculty Senators who initiated the Center to all those who have participated on the Board, as Faculty Fellows, in workshops, and in events through the years. And of course the wonderful FCTL staff, and its directors and interim directors: Chuck Dziuban, Karen Smith, Ida Cook, and Alison Morrison-Shetlar.

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## ***Bonnie Warren's Reflections***

**Bonnie Warren**



Bonnie Warren was Assistant Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning. She moved to the University of Tennessee Chattanooga in January of 2000 to be the director of the Urban IMPACT grant, a Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. In 2004 she became an adolescent literacy professor in the Teacher Preparatory Academy at

UTC. She is also the Director of the Alternative Certification Program in partnership with Hamilton County.

Let me begin at the beginning. Before Karen Smith arrived on the scene, there was Frank Juge, Chuck Dziuban and Bob Tonsetic who actually began the vision and planning for the FCTL. They held a retreat and invited many UCF faculty to brainstorm ideas about what the FCTL might become and what might be the actual name for the center. Other faculty soon joined this group in making decisions about the direction for the center. Once the initial steps had been taken, it was time to interview and hire a director for the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Karen Smith was their choice. The Physics Building was the first temporary home of the center. Future plans were made for the FCTL to be placed in a new building that was not even under construction at the time. This building was to have the latest technology and would have a wireless system for laptop computers. Karen would be involved in designing the blueprints, picking out the colors, and shaping the rooms for the FCTL's space in the building. This was her dream come true.

I think back to when Karen Smith first arrived at UCF. The signature was not even dry on the contract, and Karen was on her way. We were all amazed at the speed with which she was able to sell her home, load up her belongings, buy a house and arrive in Orlando ready to move into her neighborhood. She came with three dogs and two cats, as I recall. This method became her Modus Operandi. UCF did not comprehend that which had arrived in the shape of a small energetic lady. A tiny ball of fire hit the campus—spreading everywhere and singeing anyone not having the foresight to scramble out of her way.

Karen was a great visionary. Her vision, fiery spirit, and relentless drive kept her going until all hours of the night. It was not unusual to find she had stayed up all night working on a project or idea she had. She didn't understand the meaning of putting up her feet. She was always thinking of initiatives the FCTL could be accomplishing. She was also a technology wizard. Her Palm Pilot was often crashing because of all of the programs she was constantly adding. On the other hand, my Palm Pilot never did crash. I was just interested in having the basics. That was all I needed to keep up with Karen's schedule.

I was the Supplemental Instruction Coordinator at the Student Academic Resource Center when Karen came on board. I was soon partnering with her on various initiatives that she began that first year. Karen might have been a visionary, but she was also a hands-on, get-'er-done person as well. Her visions soon transitioned into realities as Karen molded her ideas into concrete shapes. She was constantly coming up with creative strategies, trying them out, and then tweaking them so they would be better next time. She came up with the idea of Faculty Fellows who were paid to partner with the FCTL to enhance their own teaching and technology skills and to engage in delivering campus workshops.

Karen had not been long at UCF when Halloween arrived. With Halloween came the first official FCTL party, inviting one and all who even remotely worked with the center. You were encouraged to dress up, and I came as the Statue of Liberty. Others caught the excitement and dressed up as well. Karen made what became her famous run to Sam's Club to provide goodies for the party: dip, chips, nuts, candy and apple and pumpkin pies. These were all part of the spread that she laid for her colleagues. With Halloween gone, Thanksgiving and Christmas soon followed suit with parties becoming a hallmark of the FCTL.

After volunteering with Karen and the FCTL for about a year, I applied and was offered the job as the Assistant Director in 1998. For the next year and a half, I worked alongside of Karen and assisted with many projects such as the first Summer Institute, Winter Workshops, and various other initiatives throughout the year. Karen always had something going on.

Although I only worked with Karen Smith for a year and a half, I will never forget her relentless drive to accomplish great things with the FCTL. She made her dreams become a reality. It is her legacy, her vision that continues to shape the direction of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Central Florida.

Karen, we honor your spirit, we miss you, and we salute you.

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## ***Living in the Moment: A Teacher Reflects on FCTL***

**Jeffrey S. Kaplan**



Jeffrey S. Kaplan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning Principles in the College of Education and a FCTL Advisory Board Member. He also directs The National Writing Project at UCF, Chapter Counselor for Kappa Delta Pi, and Associate Faculty Fellow for the UCF Academy for Teaching, Learning and Leadership.

**A**s I reflect on my association with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL), I cannot help but recall how far we have come in so short a time. Under the able leadership of Chuck Dziuban, the late Karen Smith, Ida Cook, and now Alison Morrison-Shetlar, FCTL, (or our 'teaching home' as it is affectionately known) has grown exponentially. From meager beginnings, a glint in a faculty member's eye and passion in their heart, the Faculty Center has become a nationally recognized center in higher education for all things good in regards to teaching, learning, and scholarship.

Why? Because this is the place to be. If you are a new professor, the Faculty Center welcomes you with open arms. Literally. The administrators and staff will bend over backwards (Ask them to do it. I am sure they will.) to help you in any way possible to accommodate your every need. Need a resource? Ask them. Need a teaching tool? Ask them. Need help with a classroom assignment? Ask them. Can't find the materials or help you need to complete a project? Ask them. From resume writing to classroom lesson planning, from creating teaching portfolios to conducting academic research, the Faculty Center stands willing and able to help you become the best teacher possible.

If you are an experienced professor, the Faculty Center will help validate your lessons and renew your sense of purpose. Stuck for a new idea? Anxious to revitalize an old concept? Bothered by bad evaluations? Perplexed by new standards? Questions about your own research? Agonizing over what to include on your curriculum vitae? Or in your promotion and tenure file? The center knows what to do, and if they don't, they will find the answer for you in a moment's notice. They are like that. They really are.

If you are a novice researcher, the Faculty Center will help you get started. They will ask you questions until your eyes pop out of your head and your brain begins to ooze from your ears, and then some. Why? Because that is what they do. They probe, they ponder, they contemplate, they question, they cajole—they do everything humanly possible and then some, until both of you walk away reasonably satisfied that they have helped you find a way to do your research. Not someone else's. But yours.

If you are an experienced researcher, the center will inspire your next steps. Want to 'rev up' your scholarship to the next notch? Anxious to do something very experimental? Little different from the norm? Want to work with other disciplines? Different professors? Someone who thinks like you? They know just the people to make it happen. And happen it will.

If you are a prolific writer, the Faculty Center will work to make you even more established. They will show you the next step. Have you thought of this journal? This angle? This piece of scholarship? Have you considered these researchers? Theorists? Thinkers? The center people have a myriad of connections in nearly every discipline and are more than willing to share their confidences and friendships with researchers who desire to broaden their scope and knowledge of teaching and learning with a wider academic community.

If you are a new presenter, the Faculty Center will show you how to show off what you know. And what you want to know. They will provide you with tips for clarifying your presentation, underling your main ideas, and evaluating your performance. They will show you how to project, to share, to inform and to inspire. They are specialists in workshop and seminar presentations; they have a wealth of resources to help you get started.

If you are an experienced seminar leader, the Faculty Center will show you how to take what you know and expand your repertoire. They know what needs to be done to make you better than you are, for they have the tools and experience to define just what it is that you want to present. Moreover, they listen. They listen to what you do best and then know enough to make pointed and perceptive suggestions to make you even better than you are.

If you are in need of money (and who isn't?) for professional travel and/or projects, the Faculty Center can help as well. Providing workshops that include stipends for professional use, eligible faculty can partake of learning opportunities that not only enrich their minds, but their pockets as well. By using FCTL wisely, eligible UCF teachers can engage in their own teaching and learning, while simultaneously finding the funding to further their endeavors.

If you want to learn more about your teaching, what you do well and what you can do better, the Faculty Center is more than there for you. With workshops, seminars, winter and summer conferences, and in-depth research projects, the FCTL staff provides a multitude of venues for teachers and scholars, researchers and academics, to examine the why and wherefore of their own instructional style so that teaching and learning is not seen as separate and distinct entities, but an integrated and holistic journey towards self-improvement and enlightenment.

If you want to learn more about your subject matter (or someone else's subject matter), the Faculty Center provides those opportunities and more. Faculty are always gathering to dis-

cuss books they have read, lectures they have attended, and conferences they have enjoyed. Regularly, FCTL provides working seminars about special issues and/or books of mutual interest and concern. Sometimes, author visits are arranged, and often, as a result, new teaching ideas and faculty publications result.

Finally, if you just want to relax, the Faculty Center is there for you. If you want to share, schmooze, grab a water, a soda, a cookie, celebrate holidays (Thanksgiving, Halloween, etc.), or just have a casual chat with a new or old friend, FCTL is the place to be to hang your hat, your book bag, and your laptop as you catch up on the latest UCF news and gossip. This hub of faculty camaraderie and conviviality is one of the few places on campus where faculty can get to know other faculty outside their discipline. And that is special, indeed.

The ‘thing’ about the Faculty Center staff that makes them so special is that they ‘live in the moment.’ They listen to the needs of faculty and respond accordingly. They gather evidence as to what faculty really want in a teaching center and make those wants come alive. They provide resources, activities, workshops, and even food to satisfy the human and intellectual hunger of its many participants.

As famed educational theorist Maxine Greene writes, learning in a democratic union finds its most elegant realization in the respectful interactions between authentically engaged individuals. At the Faculty Center, we celebrate Greene’s notion of academic freedom by celebrating this possibility in educational work, “freedom developed by human beings who have acted to make a space for themselves in the presence of others.”

Since its opening, I have soaked up everything FCTL has had to offer. From faculty seminars to winter and summer workshops, I have enjoyed my tenure with the Faculty Center because of the people I have met, the ideas I have garnered, and the associations I have kept. Each experience has enriched and sharpened my perspective about what it means to be a true scholar, someone committed to excellence in teaching, research and service, and knowledgeable enough to make them all one.

University teaching requires a commitment to an ideal larger than oneself. Not only do we teach, but we research our teaching and share our teaching with the larger academic community. This takes patience, resources, and determination to become more than one can imagine, a driving force in one’s discipline far beyond their immediate reach.

As a high school teacher, I was responsible for my students and my teaching. I did not have to write or publish or serve on school committees that made real decisions about school policy and faculty. As a college teacher, I do, and do so willingly. Still, only with the help of understanding department chairs and faculty colleagues have I been able to make the transition to university teaching. Luckily, I found many of those caring

and inspiring faculty colleagues at FCTL.

Does this mean that the Faculty Center is all wonderful? Is this beginning to sound like an infomercial? Perhaps. To be sure, FCTL in its ten year history has had its series of missteps. Still, its intentions have always been pure and its mission, noble.

Carefully and honestly, the Faculty Center aims to provide opportunities for all UCF faculty to improve their teaching, scholarship and service, and in so doing, strengthen their ability to integrate their interests into becoming engaged and enlightened educational professionals.

May the Faculty Center continue to enlighten us all. For in their teaching, we become a community of educators dedicated to the belief that learning is a lifelong profession. And that teaching occurs best when immediate needs are met.

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### ***Teaching Across Time*** **Shelley Park**



Shelley Park joined the UCF faculty in 1990. She is currently Associate Professor of Philosophy and 2007–08 FCTL Fellow for the UCF-Cocoa campus. Prior to relocating to Cocoa, she served as Director of Women’s Studies (1997–2000) and Chair of the Department of Philosophy (2000–2003).

In the 17 years I have been employed at UCF, the teaching environment has changed significantly. As a new faculty member in 1990, I taught classes that ranged from 8 students in a senior level philosophy course to 40 students in an “Introduction to Philosophy” (“large” GEP) course. All classes were taught in a standard classroom (what we now refer to as a “face-to-face” class—a terminology that had yet to be invented, as it had no alternative). All faculty taught in Orlando (what we now refer to as “main” campus), although some faculty would drive out to Cocoa one night per week to teach for overload pay. Classroom facilities were modest. There were desks, podiums and chalkboards, and you could, by special request, obtain a TV/VCR set up on a cart or an overhead projector. Classroom observations by colleagues or other forms of mentoring and guidance regarding one’s teaching were practically non-existent. We hadn’t heard of “assessment” as an institutional tool (although some of us practiced it informally with our own classes). There was no Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, nor the regular workshops and roundtables on pedagogy and curricular transformation that have since become a staple of our lives. Service-learning did not exist outside of professional degree programs requiring internships or other community engagement. And the “scholarship of teaching and learning” had yet to be discovered out-

side of Colleges of Education. There were no TIP (or SoTL) awards and, for the purposes of annual evaluations and tenure, one's teaching was assessed primarily on the basis of the student evaluation instrument—together perhaps with an examination of one's course syllabi and assignments.

And yet, undergraduate teaching was central to UCF's mission; many of my senior colleagues had been promoted to associate or full professor solely on the basis of their teaching contributions. And most of them took their responsibilities to students seriously. In the hallways, faculty would regularly discuss pedagogical challenges and successes and ideas for new courses. Office hours were faithfully kept by faculty, and there was almost always a line-up of students waiting in the front office to meet with faculty members. Some faculty even mandated student visits during office hours, in order to ensure they knew each of their students personally.

The most often noted (and grumbled about) change to our teaching environment over the last 17 years has been the growth of our campus, and thus of our classes. As student enrollment has exploded from approximately 20,000 to almost 50,000 students and class sizes previously thought of as "large" have now been designated "small," we quite rightly bemoan our inability to teach undergraduate classes as interactive seminars enabling close working relationships with individual students on reading, writing and critical thinking skills. Meeting with every student in each of our classes individually—even once—during a semester is impossible for most faculty. For many, multiple writing assignments have also become a thing of the past. Computer graded exams, while admittedly not the best way to assess a student's philosophical reasoning skills, are necessary to preserving the sanity of those teaching 150 students in a single GEP course.

Cutting back on individualized feedback to and mentoring of students has also been necessitated by factors other than growth of the average class size. The growth of programs, departments, colleges and campuses has necessitated a more complex administrative infrastructure which brings with it much higher demands on our time in terms of faculty governance. Most of us serve on multiple committees in our departments, colleges and university—in addition to our professional organizations. Moreover, as UCF successfully transformed itself from an undergraduate teaching institution to a "research" university, we now face much higher demands to publish. The result is that we simply cannot spend the same amount of time on classroom teaching as was once the norm. This is especially true for tenure-earning faculty members—since one can no longer earn tenure on the basis of good teaching alone, new faculty (often eager, dedicated teachers) are routinely advised to cut back on their teaching in order to devote more time to their research.

The "good old days" were not all good, however. Nor is the present day culture for teaching uniformly dismal. UCF's teaching culture has been greatly enhanced in the last 17 years by the development of an infrastructure devoted to supporting

student learning and to supporting faculty in their teaching mission. The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, the Burnett Honors College, the University Writing Center, the Center for Distributed Learning, Course Development and Web Services, the Office of Instructional Resources, the Office of International Studies, and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, among other places, offer an array of support services for teachers and students. It is hard to imagine how we used to do our jobs without them—or without multimedia classrooms, websites, electronic library reserves or Turnitin.com. I am glad that the days of teaching modeled on "talk and chalk" are gone (although equally glad that I have this skill, when classroom equipment malfunctions)! Thanks to new technologies and a variety of support services, we now have the ability to teach in more creative ways better suited to a variety of learning styles and pedagogical challenges. It remains a shame, however, that in the context of this vastly improved infrastructure in support of UCF's teaching mission, faculty have much less time than previously to devote to the activity of teaching.

### ***Wouldn't Karen Be Proud?***

**Mary Ann Eastep**



Mary Ann Eastep is an Instructor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies. Her research interests take her to the Caribbean where she is attempting to establish an international Service-Learning program, and she is actively seeking ways to expand the criminal justice internships she coordinates into an international program.

**W**hen I was approached about writing an article for the *Faculty Focus* this month, my initial reaction was, "Can it really be ten years since the Faculty Center came into existence at UCF?"

Interesting that as I consider all the changes that have occurred at the Faculty Center since it first brushed my life, I can almost envision a parallel shift in my own development as an instructor. I don't really think that's a coincidence.

The first project I remember interfacing with the Faculty Center on was in 1999, when I accepted a challenge to enrich my Women and Crime course, and to make it more universally appealing to a wider audience. The Summer Conference that year presented me with the opportunity to meet with faculty from the Women's Studies curriculum and from other colleges and programs. That was the first time I attended sessions on issues that I had been confronting on a regular basis, including course development concerns, organizing large classes, keeping teaching fresh, fair assessment practices and efficient classroom management. I simply had never framed some of the issues in quite the way they were framed in the sessions



I attended at the Faculty Center conference. While working through my project, I also found that I was working through a deeper and frighteningly profound truth: most of us who teach in the university setting were not actually trained as teachers. While we accept an enormous responsibility to the students in our classrooms, we go into that aspect of our professions as imitators. We imitate the teachers that had a positive impact on our education, and we hope we do it well. I was lucky enough to recognize that early in my experience with the Faculty Center. The new building (where FCTL would be housed) had not even been constructed yet!

The Faculty Center offered (and still offers) workshops and conferences that focused on topics that I realized were relevant to my life as an instructor at UCF. I knew that if I wanted to improve my teaching and (perhaps more importantly) my feelings about myself as a professional, I could take advantage of the opportunities that were available. I have had so many memorable experiences with the Faculty Center, it would be difficult to recall and list them all. But I will give you a couple of examples to illustrate how transformational the workshops can be.

I saw that the Faculty Center was promoting a “collaboration” workshop at the Winter Conference in 2000. I couldn’t imagine how that would really apply to any of the courses I taught, but when I started thinking about crime prevention, I thought there might be a fit. After all, it seems we place a good deal of emphasis on keeping students separated. We admonish students for sharing projects; we give them exams to take in a vacuum, alone and isolated in a room or online; and we assign essays that are written individually. Then, after they graduate, students in the criminal justice field are called upon to make decisions—often life and death decisions—collaboratively. Maybe I did have a fit.

So, with the help of the collaboration team at the FCTL Winter 2000 Workshop, I was able to transform my Crime Prevention course completely, from a lecture-based class to a collaboration class. From that point on, every time I taught the course, it was taught in one of the collaboration classrooms. Not only was my own mind opened to the possibilities for my students and my teaching, but the students had a much more “hands-on” relationship with the subject. They shared in projects, and they were able to complete their presentations working together on assignments that required them to engage and to evaluate, and then to synthesize what they had learned together as a small group, and to present their findings to the larger group. The technology in the classroom is such that student presentations can be projected from the students’ shared computer to the front of the class via the instructor’s computer. Other student teams can then compare their presentations, and project contrasting models. The class was much different from the traditional lecture model. After this transformation, the Faculty Center then asked me to share my story and model with others who were contemplating similar course conversions at ensuing workshops. The FCTL promotes faculty development on several levels.

The second example that I feel I must share is my wonderful experience in the Caribbean that was facilitated by a Fulbright-Hayes award. The Office of International Studies, in conjunction with the Faculty Center, gave a workshop, wherein they mentioned some of the opportunities for faculty study abroad programs. At the time, I was at the point in my dissertation research where I wanted to do some additional research in the Caribbean. Again, because of my association with the Faculty Center and the contacts that I had made there, I was able to learn about a program that led to one of the most interesting experiences of my life. As a result of the Fulbright-Hayes, and the time I spent in the Caribbean, I developed a special topics course, Crime and Justice in the Caribbean, that gave some UCF students the opportunity to travel to Barbados, and I have maintained contact with several of the folks from the University of the West Indies, whom I met while in the islands.

In addition to the professional benefits I have derived from my association with the Faculty Center, I have felt personal pride of association as well. I am proud and honored to have been selected twice over the years to be a faculty fellow at the Faculty Center, once appointed by the College of Health and Public Affairs and once by Service-Learning. When I walk into the center now, I feel very much at home.

Through the years, our department, the Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies, has benefitted significantly from the Faculty Center. We have sent teams to summer and winter conferences to transform syllabi to infuse Service-Learning into the curriculum of the department, and to improve the Internship programs.

When the new Classroom Building had just been constructed, I can remember sitting around a table with Karen Smith and a couple of others in a large room that was soon to become the Faculty Center. The walls were not yet in place, and in fact, the subject of the meeting was the layout and design of the center. Karen knew how much space she had to work with, and she had a certain vision for the space that she absolutely would not compromise. She insisted on openness. More than anything, she wanted faculty to feel as though they could walk into the center and be comfortable grabbing a snack and a cup of coffee and discussing whatever issue was on his/her mind. She envisioned a bustling center, where faculty of any level could share meaningful discourse; a center that had both the technical expertise and the strength of reputation that caused faculty to seek advice and counsel from its staff and its collaborators; and, a center wherein faculty felt secure in asking any type of questions without fear or intimidation.

Wouldn’t Karen be proud?

**Who Knew? Ten Years Ago...****Cynthia Hutchinson**

Cynthia Hutchinson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies. She was granted a leave of absence from the Seminole County Public Schools to join the faculty of Florida Technological University (now UCF) in 1975 for a one-year assignment. She never left. She has served the College of Education in a variety of roles including

Program Coordinator for Elementary Education, the largest undergraduate major in the college, and Faculty Fellow to the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Her passion is helping pre-service and in-service teachers develop the confidence and repertoire of teaching strategies to find success in the K-12 classroom.

As the university community looks forward to celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, I have the opportunity to reflect on the journey we faculty have taken with the center. As a participant at the Faculty Center's first Summer Institute, I joined faculty from other colleges on a Sunday evening to launch the institute. We were excited and a little nervous about what the week ahead would require. Many of us were still grading final exams and trying to put together syllabi for summer classes that would begin the next week. But we came and we listened as Provost Gary Whitehouse welcomed us. And at the end of the Institute, I knew that something very unique and important had begun.

The faculty present during the first Summer Institute couldn't possibly have known how far and how fast this unique concept of a faculty center would grow at UCF. Beginning with a few workshops each month and a Summer Institute in the summer, the center has blossomed into a remarkable resource for faculty and staff. The Summer Institute became the Summer Conference and was joined by a Winter Conference. The once-occasional workshops now number in the hundreds each semester. The staff of two is now nine full plus several part-timers. The tiny office was moved into a suite of rooms and offices in the Classroom Building. But through all of this growth and expansion one thing has remained constant: the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning is a safe place for faculty and staff to improve their trade.

The website for the Faculty Center notes that it supports excellence in teaching and learning, successful research, creative endeavors and the professional fulfillment of faculty and staff in the local and global environment. Whether someone is seeking to improve his/her course through a course innovation project, learn how to conduct research through a SoTL workshop series, or simply find a network of colleagues to discuss common interests through a Teaching Circle, the Fac-

ulty Center is the place to begin. Competent professionals are available day and evening hours, ready to answer questions, guide us to a workshop, suggest reading materials, schedule a fix-it session, or simply listen.

No project is too big or too small for the Faculty Center to accomplish. The Summer Conferences have waiting lists of participants. But I have also attended workshops where I was one of two participants like a recent workshop on Wikis, Blogs, Podcasts, Facebook, and RSS: Communicate in New Ways with Your Students. The attitude is always, you are welcome here and my time is well spent assisting you.

Confidentiality is another ingredient that makes the Faculty Center so successful. When I choose to examine some aspect of my teaching or scholarship, I am never made to feel inferior or incapable. I am treated like a professional seeking professional development.

Our Faculty Center is a dream space—a place where our dreams can come true given hard work, capable support, and the time to create. Dr. Gary Whitehouse and Dr. Karen Smith, the first Director, began the dream and Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar and staff continue the dream of creating a place of support for teaching, learning, research and creative endeavors.

I personally have attended numerous Summer and Winter Conferences. I have received a grant to conduct SoTL research. I have served as Faculty Fellow from the College of Education, and I have taught and attended the various workshops offered on a daily basis. My teaching and scholarship have been enhanced by my association with the Faculty Center, and I thank the visionaries who first dared to dream this concept for their foresight, determination and dedication to our success and Provost Terry Hickey who continues to support this effort. Happy 10th anniversary and thank you. You make a difference every single day.



## ***A Brief History of the Faculty Center***

**Norma Suarez**



Norma Suarez is a Coordinator of Administrative Services for the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. She handles all of the administrative functions of the center, including budget and personnel matters. She received her B.A. degree in Organizational Communication from the University of Central Florida and a B.S. in Secretarial Science from the University of Puerto Rico. Norma is well known at UCF and has been working for this institution for over 20 years.

I remember when the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning opened its doors in the Math and Physics Building with a big ceremony to celebrate its creation. At the opening ceremony, President Hitt cut the gold and black ribbon during a gathering of faculty, administrators, staff, students, and other community members who were present. During that time, the center's staff was a small group that consisted of a Director, an OPS Coordinator, an Office Manager, about three student technicians, and the support of the administration.

In August 1997, I was named Office Manager for the Faculty Center. During that time, I became aware that several faculty members from the university had been principal forces in promoting the establishment of the Faculty Center since 1996. They were assigned with the hard task to research and develop a Faculty Center that would serve the faculty of the University of Central Florida in quality teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and collegiality. The Faculty Center was a great success in its first two years and programs and services to orient new faculty, support experienced faculty, provide feedback on teaching, and train international and domestic graduate teaching assistants were developed. At that moment, my colleagues and I understood how much the Faculty Center was needed, not only as a place for faculty to find resources and improve their teaching skills, but as an oasis that faculty could turn to no matter their need, emotional or professional. I believe that with the development of the Faculty Center, UCF took the necessary steps to promote the effectiveness of faculty as teachers, to develop a broad range of faculty skills and abilities, and to generally strengthen the teaching practices of the university.

During March 2000, the Faculty Center expanded and moved to its current location in Classroom Building I—Suite 207, providing the same and better services under the direction of its then-director, Dr. Karen L. Smith. Dr. Smith had been Director in June 1997 and served as the center's director until her unexpected death in January 2001, leaving behind a legacy to further advance faculty development, teaching and learning. The university renamed the Faculty Center in her honor, designating it the Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for

Teaching and Learning and appointed Dr. Ida Cook, Professor of Sociology, to serve as the Interim Director.

In July 2002, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Professor of Biology and Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching at Georgia Southern University, joined the UCF Faculty Center as its second director. Her experience has proved valuable to the Center and under her guidance, the Faculty Center has extended and improved its services. Not only have old programs grown and developed, but new services and programs have been created. The website has become a prominent part of the Faculty Center and is used widely by faculty and staff inside and outside the university. The Center has gained national recognition in its teaching and learning practices and its continual faculty development. In addition, today the Center's staff consists of four faculty positions, one A&P position, four USPS positions, several OPS positions, faculty fellows, and the Advisory Board, and continues to have the strong support of the UCF administration.

If you would like to establish a life-long learning experience, the Faculty Center is the right place to start. It will help you not only to become a quality teacher, but a better person. In my ten years of service to the Faculty Center, I have witnessed a lot of growth and change, and I have also learned a great deal. My experience at the FCTL has taught me how to interact, support and share ideas with all levels of faculty, staff, and students, and it has helped me develop as both an individual and a team member. I believe everyone has something to gain by being a part of what the Faculty Center has to offer.

### ***The Faculty Center's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***

**Alison Morrison-Shetlar**



Alison Morrison-Shetlar is Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Director of the UCF Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, and Professor of Biology. After graduating with a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from Dundee College of Technology in Scotland, she conducted research in physiology, biochemistry and molecular biology for many years and became Chair of

the Molecular Biology Dept. at the Max-Planck Institute in Dortmund in 1990. On coming to the U.S. in 1993, Alison taught in Connecticut and Georgia, where she also directed the Center for Excellence in Teaching at Georgia Southern University. She joined UCF in 2002.

The articles in this 10th anniversary edition of the *Faculty Focus* have given you insight into the genesis of the Faculty Center and the people involved in the development and support of the Center as it has grown and evolved over time. In this article, I would like to celebrate the faculty and staff who have helped make the Faculty Center what it is today. Without the passion for service and the dedication of the faculty,



the administrative staff, and the graduate and undergraduate students who work at the center, the Faculty Center would not have the university, statewide and national recognition that it has today.

When I joined the Faculty Center in 2002, Provost Gary Whitehouse and Dr. Frank Juge welcomed me to UCF by taking me to lunch. Over that meal I gained further insights into the value that the administration placed on having such a resource available to faculty, and learned that the center was developed by faculty for faculty. Dr. Ida Cook was the welcoming force that helped me transition seamlessly into the Faculty Center. While continuing on a part time basis at the center for the semester after I joined UCF, Ida introduced me to the faculty who routinely visited the center and to its culture—to this day I am appreciative for her graciousness in welcoming me and for her continued, tireless support of faculty at UCF. Dr. John Schell (Rick) has been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of the Faculty Center and the mission of improving teaching and learning at UCF.

Eric Main was also a faculty member in the center when I arrived. His experience as an instructor and now as faculty in the center brings depth and understanding of different pedagogies and a unique ability to look at teaching in different ways. The *Faculty Focus* is his brain child and is widely read across campus by faculty, staff and administration. Eric has been the driving force in the development of our website as a resource for faculty, the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Teaching Certificate course, GTA orientation, Course Innovation Programs, as well as supporting the implementation of new technologies into the classroom.

There are a group of undergraduates employed in various capacities at the Center. The Technical Assistants (techs) support our collaboration classrooms, work with faculty in developing course materials when they need technological help, visit classrooms to support faculty when they teach with technology, and they make things happen “technologically” when needed. Best of all, they have fun and are a joy to work with. While there have been several undergraduate techs over the years who have worked and contributed immensely to the success of the Faculty Center, I can mention only a few here. Jeremy Darty, Ulf Borgeson, Scott Anderson, Dennis Ladogana, Paul Parone and David Tran all stepped up to the plate when needed to take on leadership roles in managing the other techs and coordinating projects. Jeremy Darty initiated development of the Faculty Center website and print material. Paul Parone took over after Jeremy’s departure and brought new innovations to the website, and now David Tran has taken the website, brochures, and flyers to the next level of excellence. Ed Coyne and Chris Upchurch support the server and programming side of the center and make our classrooms functional for the many faculty who use technology in their teaching. Our website, <<http://www.fctl.ucf.edu>>, is used extensively by UCF faculty and staff, as well as statewide and nationally by other institutions as a valuable resource to support their own faculty development.

In 2004, we had the double pleasure of Dr. Tace Crouse joining the center as Assistant Director and Dr. Kevin Yee joining as Faculty Coordinator. The addition of two excellent faculty to the senior staff of the center made a huge difference to campus outreach and workshop offerings. Tace has significantly advanced our outreach in the areas of assessment and in workshop and retreat facilitation and has gained well-deserved recognition for her expertise. She was instrumental in the development of a strong collaboration with Dr. Paula Krist in OEAS in support of academic learning compacts, general education assessment, and course and program evaluation. Tace has helped develop the Faculty Center website, especially in the area of assessment, and is recognized at the state and national level for her contributions in this area.

Kevin Yee has become a leader in support of adjunct faculty at UCF. He developed the *Center Point* newsletter and effective online materials to support faculty and GTA success, collaborated with Graduate Studies to provide resources for GTAs who teach and has developed workshops on a wide range of pedagogical topics.

Faculty Fellows have contributed hugely to the success of the Faculty Center. These faculty, nominated by their college deans, provide a conduit from the Faculty Center to the colleges. They have office hours in the center to work with faculty on teaching related issues, facilitate workshops, host teaching circles, provide Summer and Winter Conference sessions and more. Whether at regional campuses or on the Orlando campus, the Faculty Fellows share their experiences and bring faculty together to support faculty success at UCF.

And finally, the group of amazing people without which the Faculty Center could simply not survive—the administrative support staff. Norma Suarez, the founding Office Manager, has supported director, faculty and staff success for the last 10 years. She has been the one constant support at the center when others have come and gone. Her duties over the years are too numerous to mention, but suffice it to say, she has made sure everyone has what they need to be successful. Office managers and Senior Secretaries that have supported the Faculty Center events and the seamless running of the center are Carla Novak, Karen Carr, Elba Miscannon, Vikki Feurer and Eileen Ryan. Without these wonderful people the center would not be the welcoming, safe place for faculty to meet and share their ideas on teaching, research, and scholarship.

In summary, the Faculty Center has a great reputation on campus because of the people who work there. In the last 5 years, I have had the privilege to work with the best and most dedicated faculty, staff and administrators who support the center’s mission of faculty success in teaching, research and service. I would like to close by thanking them all for what they do and have done for UCF over the last 10 years.

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## ***Submissions***

The *Faculty Focus* is a publication for all instructors at the University of Central Florida. This includes full-time and part-time faculty and teaching assistants at all UCF campuses. Its purpose is to provide an exchange of ideas on teaching and learning for the university's community of teachers and scholars. It is envisioned that this publication will inspire more dialogue among faculty, whether in hallway discussions, departmental meetings, or in written articles. This represents an opportunity for faculty to reach their peers throughout the growing UCF community. The *Faculty Focus* invites you to contribute your ideas on teaching and learning in a short essay.

See the guidelines for submission online at <[www.fctl.ucf.edu/focus/guidelines.htm](http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/focus/guidelines.htm)>. Please send your submissions to [fctl@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:fctl@mail.ucf.edu).



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