

Trip to the US 1999-2000

American University of Beirut

AUB Task Force On Undergraduate Teaching Excellence

Report on Visits to
Teaching and Learning Centers at
Selected US Universities

(April 22-30, 2000)

Support

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Hosting Centers:

1. University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning Services.
2. Harvard University, The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning.
3. University of Massachusetts Amherst, The Center For Teaching.
4. MIT, The Teaching and Learning Laboratory.

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- Dr. Jan Smith, Codirector of the Center for Teaching and Learning Services at the University of Minnesota, for her efforts in organizing the workshops on active learning and critical thinking, for the hospitality that she and her colleagues at the center extended to us, and for generously providing materials and resources.
- Dr. James Wilkinson, Director of the Harvard Derek Bok Center and the staff of the center, for giving us generously of their time and for the fruitful discussions on how best to get across the message that the University cares about teaching, and how to encourage faculty members to benefit from the activities of the Center.
- Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli, the Associate Provost and Director of the Center for Teaching at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, for organizing the workshop on integrating technology with teaching, for generously sharing with us their experiences in distance-learning, and for supplying us with video material on teaching practices and teaching excellence.
- Dr. Lori Breslow, Director of The Teaching and Learning Laboratory at MIT, and her staff for their hospitality and particularly for organizing the workshop on captivating classes: Meeting the Lecture Challenge. The presentations by MIT staff, and the ensuing discussion were very useful and instructive.

Report of AUB Task Force on Visits to Teaching and Learning Centers at Elite US Universities

Introduction

The AUB Task Force organized a trip to visit few Teaching and Learning Centers in the US during the Spring Term break of the academic year 1999-2000. The main purpose of the visit was to find out what other universities are doing in order to enhance teaching and learning on their campuses. The visited centers and the scheduled activities are listed in Table 1. A comparative overview of the visited centers is presented in Table 2. Appendix A provides information on contacts established during the visit. Detailed information is contained in Appendix B, including information on the trip log; attended workshops and their specific learning experiences, planned activities and discussions, information about the visited centers and their operational style, established contacts and acquired resources. Appendix C lists material obtained at the various center visited by the Task Force.

The visits to the various Teaching and Learning centers exposed the Task Force members to a variety of activities, strategies and methods for improving teaching effectiveness in undergraduate education. The attendance of various workshops and discussion sessions at these centers provided members of the task force with opportunities for training on critical thinking, cooperative learning, active learning, increasing teaching effectiveness in large classes, innovative teaching strategies, and integration of technology into the classroom. The role of mentoring student success, the use of innovative learning tools and innovative teaching tools and techniques were addressed in all four workshops with varying degrees of emphasis. These visits also provided us with opportunities to compare and contrast teaching practices at AUB with other leading US universities. We were struck by the fact that these universities face problems that are more or less the problems that we are facing here at AUB. These problems include excessive reliance on spoon feeding information to students, lack of students' interest, lack of motivation, students' absenteeism, diverse (and sometimes conflicting) values, lack of reward for class participation, the problem of amount to be covered in a semester (regardless of whether or not students understand all the material covered), and the need for faculty to be ready to face changes in the demographic constitution of students, and their willingness to take advantage of the recent advances in teaching methods and techniques. The administrations of the universities visited have charged their teaching centers with the task of helping faculty members improve their teaching. A major challenge to these centers is to allay the doubts of skeptical faculty members who are not convinced of the value or usefulness of the activities of the center, and, by allaying their doubts, make them less reluctant to join in and take advantage of the services offered by the center. Most universities, wisely we believe, present their teaching enhancement services as an option that full time teaching faculty may or may not choose to take advantage of. Some universities require Teaching Assistants and newly hired Junior faculty to go through teaching orientation and teaching effectiveness programs. It is worth noting that the members of the staff in most of the teaching centers we visited did not necessarily hold Ph.Ds in Education, but were just good teachers and professors belonging to disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, sciences or engineering.

If at some point the university deems it desirable and feasible to establish a teaching center at AUB, we hope that this report and further feedback from the members of the Task Force who went on this trip may prove to be useful. As will become obvious in the section summarizing our learning experiences on this trip, we believe that the establishment of such a center is indeed desirable and may also be feasible. The trip has not included visits to teaching-oriented universities where the concept of teaching and learning centers is much more engrained within their teaching philosophy and practices.^[1]

Contacts were established with the learning and teaching centers visited and paved the way for future cooperation. Such cooperation may include organizing workshops or exchange of educational material (See Appendix A). We tried to find out how these centers were founded, what types of services they offer, what sorts of problems they faced and how they attempted to resolve them. We were particularly interested in the relative degrees of emphasis that these universities place on research and on teaching effectiveness.

Learning Experiences: Remarks, Views, and Impressions

- The teaching centers visited have many common characteristics. However, in terms of size, resources, and services rendered, the centers at the University of Minnesota, and the University of Massachusetts were far more impressive than the centers at Harvard or MIT.
- None of the centers' workshops offered discussions or presentations on curriculum designs and program assessments, despite the fact that the Derek Bok Center lists in its publications curriculum or syllabus designs and student assessments as two services provided by the center. Curriculum designs for courses and programs as well as program assessments are the two other strong outcomes that should have been obtained from this trip.
- Additional contact with teaching-oriented universities should be established. This should shed light on concerns, practices, and strategies that these universities have developed through their own teaching and learning centers that may carry a deeper and longer experience in this field and/or be more commensurable in terms of size and mission with our own institution.
- There is room for major improvements in teaching practices and learning at AUB.
- The problems AUB faces are not unique. All four visited Centers reported similar problems: conviction of some faculty members that university professors need not to be "taught how to teach", and their reluctance to avail themselves of the services provided by teaching centers; perceived conflict between teaching and research; workload; use of teaching effectiveness in promotions; cooperation of students; and support of administration.

- The Task Force has been exposed to several models of teaching centers, none of which can be implemented at AUB without modification. A teaching center at AUB should address our specific needs and take into consideration the size of the university and the backgrounds of our students and faculty. AUB is a small university compared to all universities visited, and although AUB is research-oriented, it is not research-based nor research-funded as MIT or Harvard.

- Workshops and seminars are one method of improving teaching effectiveness but not necessarily the most effective. Role models, mentoring, personal consultations, and group discussions may prove to be better methods.

- Improving teaching effectiveness and learning within a university is a long-term commitment and investment with a somewhat delayed pay back.

- The stronger Teaching Centers are those that extend to include faculty members from different disciplines teaching in their own Faculties. Faculty members who apply effective teaching practices in their own disciplines are better role models within their own disciplines.

- Education specialists make significant contributions to the enhancement of teaching and learning but they are not necessarily the best to establish and operate Teaching centers. Knowledge of education principles is, however, essential.

- Regarding classroom techniques - the workshops at Minnesota and MIT were useful, as were the comments made during the sessions at Harvard. Occasionally it was suggested that the techniques applying to very large classes might be difficult to apply at AUB because of student attitudes. But in conversation with some of our American colleagues, it was found that they face the same problems. Some Task Force members suggested that techniques to improve students' attitudes to learning should be looked into; this may prove to be a line worth pursuing. Core courses should be targeted for a change in attitudes because they might have some effect across the board.

- The establishment of a center for teaching excellence at AUB may be the next step. The visit was useful in showing that it would be feasible to set up such a center. Faculty participation in a center (as mentors or in other forms) ought to be recognized by the University - there ought to be some sort of compensation for involvement, and the visit allowed us to see ways in which this could be done. If teaching portfolios were to become significant at AUB (e.g. for promotion), then no doubt a teaching center would be frequently used by faculty. The centers we visited are very keen on maintaining confidentiality, and are equally keen on not being involved in decisions pertaining to promotion, tenure, etc.

- Academic advising of students is mostly done by full-time specialists rather than by hard-pressed faculty, who are then blamed for bad advising. Perhaps this matter too could come under the heading of teaching excellence.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Teaching and Learning Centers at US Universities have been established as a shift in pedagogy and teaching occurred from teacher- centered classroom to student-centered learning and with the infusion of technology into the culture of education. The emphasis that accrediting bodies now place on outcome-based programs, and the need to provide tools for assessing student performance as well as teacher performance, have driven universities to give more attention to the teaching-learning process and to the skills the students are expected to acquire. Quality assurance of undergraduate education and teaching at AUB is essential if the University is to attain, and maintain, accreditation. However, our commitment to such assurance is a matter of principle and professional pride, and not merely the result of “accreditation pressures”.

We recommend to the administration of the university to establish a Teaching and Learning Center at AUB. The Center should help faculty members improve their teaching effectiveness on voluntary basis. The Center will offer centralized teaching development programs throughout campus and across different disciplines. The center is perceived to have the following characteristics:

- The center may be headed by a faculty from Education (or other discipline with the right qualifications and experience) but it should include associate members from each major school or program. The permanent staff of the Center will be hired as full timers who could also teach some courses in their respective academic disciplines. Members of the staff of the teaching center should have a clear sense of the mission of the Center as well as the commitment and ability to implement this mission. It may be necessary that some members of the staff of this center be sent to spend a semester at an appropriate teaching center in the US.
- Associate members of the center can be chosen from well-established teachers with exemplary teaching records from various schools and programs (e.g., teaching awards winners). These associate members would receive a fixed financial compensation for participation and / or reduction in their teaching loads.
- The charges of the Center will include:
 - Seeking funding from appropriate US agencies and other donors.

- Offering a year-round set of workshops; some are repeated year after year for new faculty, and some are new depending on the specific needs of a group of faculty.
 - Offering special counseling to individual faculty.
 - Providing mid-career support, communication, and awareness activities, special needs and catering accordingly.
 - Starting and maintaining a web site with a rich source of teaching services, tips, and pedagogy, including private web-based counseling.
 - Offering sessions designed to help faculty in the preparation of their teaching portfolios.
 - Visiting classes upon the request of individual faculty members and offering advice. Video taping lectures for the teachers' self-evaluation. These activities are held in utmost confidentiality and should not enter as evidence in any promotion or renewal procedures.
 - Offering orientation classes of one to two days before the start of each semester to all new full time faculty, part timers, and graduate students who are involved in teaching activities.
 - Using the services of associate members of the center to establish (informal) discussion groups within their respective disciplines to exchange ideas and teaching tips, and to share creative teaching experiences.
 - Considering paying faculty a small token (e.g., \$50-\$100) for each session attended on improving teaching effectiveness.
 - Exploring and suggesting ideas for enhancing the use of new technology in the classroom and lab.
 - Designing a special evaluation form to get some feed back from students in the middle of the semester in order to try to improve the teaching environment before it is too late. The form can be administered by the Center itself or by the instructor herself /himself but with the anonymity of the students respected.
 - Publishing the results of students' evaluation on annual basis in an orderly and controlled fashion. This exercise would provide additional incentives for faculty members to give teaching the attention it deserves.
- A Teaching-Learning Center at AUB needs to build strong relationships with established ones in the US especially in the early years of its operation.
 - It should be mandatory for graduate assistants and newly hired part timers to attend designated workshops that the proposed teaching center may organize.

- We also recommend mandatory orientation sessions for all newly hired junior faculty at the beginning of their appointments.

Table. 1**Task Force Activities and Schedule During the Trip**

Date	Time	Location	Activity
University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning Services (Minneapolis, MN)			
April, 24, 2000	8:30 – 9:45 a.m.	135 Fraser	Meeting with the Staff of the Center. Overview of the Center and its efforts to enhance teaching and learning at the University of Minnesota.
	10:00-12:00 noon	215 Donhowe	Workshop on Critical Thinking Skills.
	12:15-1:45 p.m.	215 Donhowe	Luncheon with U of M-Twin Cities faculty members and administrators.
	2:00-3:00p.m.	215 Donhowe	Workshop on Getting Students to be Partners in the Learning Process.
Harvard University, The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning (Cambridge, MA)			
April, 25, 2000	10:00 – 11:15 a.m.	Derek Bok Center	Meeting with Dr. Sue Lonoff; discussion of the functions of their center and its role at the university.
	11:15-12:00 noon	Derek Bok Center	Meeting with Dr. James Wilkinson as well as Dr. Lonoff; discussion of the programs of the center.
	12:15-1:45 p.m.	Faculty Dining Room	Meeting with Dr. Virginia Maurer; discussion of teaching methods and strategies.
	2:00-4:00p.m.	Derek Bok Center	Workshop by Dr. Maurer and Dr. Robin Gottlieb on Teaching and Learning Strategies and Styles.
University of Massachusetts Amherst, The Center For Teaching (Amherst, MA)			
April, 27, 2000	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	301 Goodwell	Meeting with Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli; discussion of the functions of their center and its role at the university.
	11:45-12:45 p.m	301 Goodwell	Presentation by Dr. F. Mues on TEACHnology; a video was also shown.
	1:00-1:30	Academic Computing	A tour of the instructional multi-media Lab, where demos were observed of live distance

		Lab	learning classes.
	1:30-2:15 p.m.	Faculty Lounge	Lunch break
	2:15-3:15p.m.	Office for Information Technologies	Workshop by Dr. Elisa Campbel on critical thinking and the role of information technology in widening the use of resources among students and performing across campus workshops on use of Web-CT for on-line courses and Umail.
	3:15-5:00	Center for Computer-Based Instructional Technology	Demonstrations of the use of software tutors for many basic science and engineering courses. Task Force members access to the website where these software packages are developed.
MIT, The Teaching and Learning Lab			
(Cambridge, MA)			
April, 28, 2000	12:00 - 1:30 a.m.	MIT Rm 9-151	Meeting with Dr.Lori Breslow; discussion of the functions of their center and its role at the university.
	1:30-4:15 noon	MIT Rm 9-151	Workshop on Captivating Classes: Meeting the Lecture Challenge.

Table 2.

A Comparative Table of the Visited Teaching Centers

Features	Teaching & Learning Centers			
	<p style="text-align: center;">Center for Teaching and Learning Services</p> <p style="text-align: center;">University of Minnesota</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 23 and 24, 2000</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Harvard University</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 25, 2000</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Center for Teaching</p> <p style="text-align: center;">University of Massachusetts, Amherst</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 27, 2000</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Teaching and Learning Lab</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">April 28, 2000</p>
Staff Size	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Big Center with more than 20 staff people most of whom are not necessarily from the school of education. 2. Many associate members from different faculties and from the Academy of Distinguished Teachers 	<p>Mid-size Center with an experienced director and many faculty and volunteers</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Six-year-old small center with 5 people (3 full time faculty who would teach one course per year, and 2 secretaries) 2. Associate members chosen from a list of good teachers with fair compensation 	<p>A very small fairly new center: established three years ago with only one Ph.D (professor of communication in the School of Business) and one staff who is a Ph.D candidate in education (but aided by a technology consultant upon request).</p>
Program Clients	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Full Time Faculty 2. Tenured Existing Faculty 3. T.A's 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Full Time Faculty Orientation 2. 1,100 Graduate Students who are involved 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Full-Time Faculty 2. Tenured Existing Faculty 3. Graduate 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Newly tenured Full Time Faculty 2. Graduate Students

		<p>in teaching - 80-85% of undergraduate classes are taught by graduate assistants with major lectures offered by full time tenured faculty</p> <p>3. Optional for full time tenured faculty</p>	Students Who Teach	
Program Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established for quite some time - Big School 2. Centralized 3. Customized 4. Focus on learning enhancement (rather than provoking the issue of teaching effectiveness) 5. Involves distinguished teachers by associating them into helping 6. Confidentiality is guaranteed 7. Open discussion about best method to help individual teachers 8. Provides online help to all upon request, in order 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Established following the 1969 students= rise. Harvard has a total of 6,500 students. 2. Decentralized - the center we visited was within the School of Arts and Sciences; other schools were encouraged to establish their own centers. 3. Confidentiality is guaranteed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 24,000 students of whom 18,000 are undergraduates 2. Centralized with a dedicated Associate Provost for Faculty and Teaching Development 3. Customized 4. Focus on teaching effectiveness to enhance learning 5. Includes identified good teachers with one -year appointment and one class relief as associate members with financial compensation 6. Confidentiality 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Centralized but with very limited budget (\$125,000/year) 2. Focus on teaching and learning with open mind and no obligation 3. Confidentiality is guaranteed

	to attract “non-comers”		is guaranteed	
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Teaching & Learning Centers				
Features	University of Minnesota	Harvard University	Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Types of Programs offered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bush Program (to new faculty) 2. Mid-Career Program (to tenured existing faculty) 3. Academy of Distinguished Teachers (Award Winning Teachers) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Year-round workshops relating to writing skills, course design, multi-section course coordination, equity in grading across multi-sections, lecturing styles, learning styles, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lilly Endowment Fund helped the establishment of the teaching center. 2. A regular program that attracts about 50 tenured faculty every other week year-round in groups of 8-12 led by a fellow from the center to discuss teaching problems. All participants get some teaching relief bought by their departments (through special funds to hire part timers) 3. The TEACHnology Fellows Program that enlists around 10 faculty members each year to teach them the use of the state-of-art technology and computer-based classroom instruction. The program is funded by the Deans and the Provost and each participant receives a 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lab-based teaching 2. Year-round workshops 3. Frequent survey of students = learning 4. Advanced distance-education center

			laptop 4. Year-round workshops 5. Advanced distance-learning center.	
Facilities Available	1. Dedicated Center with many staff to help individuals and groups 2. Provides video taping services to individual classes 3. Other educational resources such as fliers and tips	1. The Center is mostly concerned with graduate students who are teaching 2. Provides video taping services to individuals' classes - teachers evaluate themselves by watching their own videos 3. Other educational resources such as fliers and tips	1. Dedicated Center with staff and volunteers 2. Has a distance-learning studio connecting with many other Massachusetts universities and colleges 3. Has a specially equipped room using the Personal Response System (PRS) to enhance interactive learning 4. Offer Web-based training using CBT systems to provide interactive problem solving to more than 200 courses 5. Provides mid-term assessment of teaching and learning and compares students' performance before and after counseling teachers to change their teaching styles 6. Provides assistance in tenure cases by offering workshops	1. Provides video taping services to individuals classes 2. Provides other educational resources such as fliers and tips

Features	Teaching & Learning Centers			
	University of Minnesota	Harvard University	Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
Motivations for Involved Faculty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching awards at the University (10 of faculty members are chosen each year by a subcommittee on educational policy from the University Senate, each receives \$5,000 financial prize) and many at the School levels (with financial prizes too) 2. Automatic 5-year membership in the Academy of Distinguished Teachers for University-Wide winners 3. Good teachers with good research productivity are awarded tenure 4. Students writing thanks cards (solicited by the learning center) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teaching awards at the University (7 awards are granted each year) 2. Publishes students' evaluation results in a book every year 3. Good teaching is not a big deal when it comes to promotion and tenure; nevertheless, it is nowadays capturing the attention of the university under the pressure of parents and employers 4. Generally speaking, most faculty work for a term contract as they mostly know that they will not get tenure, and that they will have to be on the move in 7 years (only 12% of faculty are tenured) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heburgh Award: Teaching awards at the University and School levels 2. Encourages consultation with peers as mentors 3. Encourages (but does not push) individual junior faculty to visit their peers' classes 4. Good teachers with good research productivity are awarded tenure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good teaching is not a basic requirement for tenure and promotion 2. 85% of teaching is done by tenured faculty. Some tenured faculty are genuinely interested in improving their teaching styles

Appendix A

Established Contacts

	Name	Position	Email Address
1	Dr. Jan Smith	Co-director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Services at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.	smith004@maroon.tc.umn.edu
2	Dr. Lori Breslow	Director of the Teaching and Learning Laboratory at MIT, Rm. E53-411, 50 Memorial Dr. Cambridge MA02142.	lrb@mit.edu
3	Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli	Director of the Center for Teaching and Associate Provost at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.	
4	Dr. Fran Mues	University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Center for Teaching	
5	Dr. Beverly Park Woolf	Senior Research Scientist and Director of the Center for Knowledge Communication, Lederie Graduate research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst.	bev@cs.umass.edu
6	Dr. James Wilkinson	Director of Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Science Center, Harvard University.	jwilkins@fas.harvard.edu
7	Dr. Sue Lonoff	Associate Director of Derek Bok Center for Teaching and	

		Learning, Science Center, Harvard University.	
8	Dr. Joyce Weinsheimer	Co-director of Center for Teaching and Learning Services at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.	teachirn@tc.umn.edu
9	Dr. Judith Puncochar	Director of Human Relations Program 210e Burton Hall, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.	puncocha@tc.umn.edu
10	Dr. Maurer	Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Science Center, Harvard University.	vmaurer@fas.harvard.edu
11	Dr. Robin Gottlieb	Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Science Center, Harvard University.	
12	Dr. Steve Simmons	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Agronomy and plant Genetics.	Ssimmons@tc.umn.edu
13	Dr. Connie D. Tzenis	Center of Teaching and Learning Services at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities: Human Resources, Mpls MN55414-1546	Tzeni001@tc.umn.edu

Appendix B.

Details of Activities, Workshops, and Discussions During the Visit

Center for Teaching and Learning Services

University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

April 23 & 24, 2000

The AUB task force met the Center Codirector, Dr. Jan Smith, on Sunday April 23, 2000. Dr. Smith was able to identify closely our needs, learn more about AUB teaching practices and discuss with the Task Force the general activities of the center and the teaching enrichment series they offer to improve classroom teaching effectiveness and the efforts they direct to improving teaching among international faculty, teaching assistants, future faculty, tenure-track, and newly tenured faculty. The center also provides confidential consultations on general classroom concerns or specific teaching techniques to improve teaching and develop courses. The center has a large teaching and learning Resource Collection that contain books, articles, journals and video tapes on teaching and learning issues, and handbooks and guides for faculty, TA's, and TA supervisors.

On April 24, 2000, the AUB Task Force had the following schedule:

	Time	Location	Activity
1	8:30 – 9:45 a.m.	135 Fraster	Meeting with Staff of the Center for Teaching and Learning Services. Presentation and discussion on Teaching and Learning Development at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.
2	10:00-12:00 noon	215 Donhowe	Workshop on Critical Thinking Skills
3	12:15-1:45 p.m.	215 Donhowe	Luncheon with U of M-Twin Cities faculty and administrators.
4	2:00-3:00p.m.	215 Donhowe	Workshop on Getting Students to be Partners in the Learning Process.

Through activity (1) the following was learned:

1. The center has 22 full-time employees; 16 of whom hold PhDs; the others have Master degrees.
2. The center has a number of adjunct teachers from various faculties.
3. The center has 5 meeting rooms plus office space and working stations.
4. By law of the State of Minnesota, any teaching staff must have proficiency in English and familiarity with local accent and expressions. This initiated a program for international graduate students and faculty whose native language is not English.
5. A mid-career teaching program is offered by the center to experienced faculty as they continue to adapt their teaching styles to the demands of today's students.
6. The Bush Faculty development program on excellence and diversity in teaching matches tenure track faculty with experienced faculty through structured small group interactions.
7. The center conducts workshops on teaching large classes all over campus and provides consultation on one to one basis for individual faculty members.
8. Provision of teaching improvement incentives through creation of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers across the university. The Academy offers scholarships and awards for excellent teachers.
9. One third of the teaching at Minnesota is done by non-tenured faculty. Teaching is important but not a major part of the promotion process.
10. Success of the center programs is measured by: (1) participants' evaluation; (2) administration response; and (3) promotion and tenure is very high among faculty who participated in the program.
11. The idea of a centralized versus a decentralized teaching-learning center was discussed. Although the idea of multiple centers is more adaptable to faculty's needs (knowing that there are more than 34000 undergraduate students enrolled at the university in addition to around 10000 graduate students), a single center is easier to run and helps build momentum on campus.
12. Quotable remarks (Dr. Joyce Weinsheimer):
 - "Perhaps the best way to make teaching more effective would be to put the emphasis on improving the student's ability to learn..."
 - " Get faculty involved from the beginning..."
 - " For the most part, teaching at colleges and universities seems to be an isolated activity that goes on in the classroom between teacher

and students. There is little talking about teaching, about what goes on in the classroom, identifying problems, sharing insights.”

“ Act as a facilitator. Let the faculty choose what format they are comfortable with. There are some faculty who would never go to a workshop, but would stay up beyond midnight in the privacy of their home or office joining in an on-line ‘conversation’ or exchange on teaching and learning.”

13. AUB task force members were then divided into 6 groups, and each group met with one or two members of the center to discuss more specific problems related to teaching. Discussion and issues raised varied and encompassed many avenues. Some of the issues raised were on how to renew enthusiasm in faculty members towards their teaching and the students’ role, win teachers’ confidence in the learning center, build in students reflective learning (ask students to write papers about self-reflection or take a video and apply some pedagogical skills), and finally the importance of a built-in incentive to quality teaching. The issue of web-based courses was also raised. Discussion hovered around methods of training faculty members to get familiar with the technology as well as cautions about avoiding the outbreak of standardized soul-less courses. Examples on teaching of large classes were discussed with the use of cooperative learning, base groups or partner activities, and the use of teaching and grading rubrics.

The following was learned from activity (2) that was carried by Dr. Judith Puncochar:

1. Theory-based structured pedagogy for critical thinking.
2. Critical thinking pedagogical tools using structured learning groups and constructive controversy. In the session, members of the task force practiced both tools. We went through the process of critical thinking while analyzing the poem “the Bridge” by Khalil Hawi and evaluating each group’s dynamics. We know how our students would feel through such an activity. It was a very informative and educational experience for us.
3. Advice for avoiding common problems.
4. Factors for high performance (Climate – Feedback – Input – Output).
5. The discussion included points such as how to provide incentives for group work through a rewarding assessment mean. Changing teaching style will require changing the ways courses are structured and taught as well as the way student work is assessed and graded.

The following was learned through activity (3):

Members of the Teaching-Learning Center Staff at U M-Twin Cities were all present at the luncheon and circulated among Task Force members to exchange experiences and answer

questions. Faculty members from a variety of disciplines who are known to be effective teachers had been invited to the luncheon and shared in the informal, small group discussions.

The following was learned through activity (4), which was conducted by Dr. Joyce Weinsheimer:

1. The workshop concentrated on means for getting students to be partners in the learning process.
2. Setting the stage for shared responsibility through: (1) knowing what you want; (2) getting students to want something; (3) redefining roles and (4) once you define what you want, identify avenues (out of seven) to influence the behavior of students. These ideas were implemented directly with us.
3. Reinforcing the partnership through: (1) modeling learning and encouraging reflection; (2) assessing learning and monitoring the process; (3) dealing with excuses; and (4) connecting students with campus resources.

The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning

Harvard University

April 25, 2000

The AUB task force members met with the Director of the Derek Bok Center Dr. James Wilkinson and the Associate Director Dr. Sue Lonoff. The center is part of the faculty of Arts and Sciences. The following table lists the activities that went on that day.

On April 25, 2000, the AUB Task Force had the following schedule:

	Time	Location	Activity
1	10:00 – 11:15 a.m.	Derek Bok Center	Meeting with Dr. Sue Lonoff; discussion of the functions of their center and its role at the University.
2	11:15-12:00 noon	Derek Bok Center	Meeting with Dr. James Wilkinson as well as Dr. Lonoff; discussion of the programs of the center.
3	12:15-1:45 p.m.	Faculty Dining Room	Meeting with Dr. Virginia Maurer; Discussion about teaching methods and strategies.
4	2:00-4:00p.m.	Derek Bok Center	Workshop by Dr. Maurer and Dr. Robin Gottlieb about teaching and learning strategies and styles.

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The following was learned through activity (1)

- The Derek Bok Center runs year-long workshops and provides confidential individual Faculty consultation as well as external consultations to other universities.
- There are other teaching-learning centers associated with related faculties or departments such as that of the Business School.
- All course evaluations are published annually and made accessible to everybody; evaluations are changed from get-at to friendly ones.
- A large percentage of the contact hours with students are covered by teaching fellows (graduate and/or teaching assistants).
- The center's strategies are built on videotaping and analyzing lectures and having the teacher review the session with a mentor assigned by the center for an assisted self-criticism and evaluation. The professor gives the lecture whereas teaching is run by graduate students.
- In addition to mentoring the faculty who consult with them, the center depends a lot on videotaping activities and analyzing taped-lectures and having the consultee critique himself/herself.
- The major role of the center is to help the professor improve his/her teaching. We should separate improvement of teaching from discussions on promotion. The University offers 7 awards per year (Harvard College Professorships) as incentives to motivate faculty members to improve their teaching effectiveness.

The following was learned through activity (2):

- The Center offers workshops and training on syllabus design, course coordination, lecturing styles, innovations in teaching, writing skills, lab teaching, grading equity in multi-section courses and student assessment. Examples of each were discussed.
- New Faculty Orientation; Practice teaching sessions; and teaching awards and certificates.
- Quotable remarks (Dr. James Wilkinson):

“ There is an assumption that if you spend a lot of time on teaching,

it is because you are bad at research. This assumption is now changing....

We used to look down upon 'emotional intelligence' and place sole emphasis on objectivity and analytical abilities. This too is now changing.

The emotions of students are acknowledged; the student is seen as a whole, complex, being. We are now more aware of the need to give emotional support to students."

" Teaching centers at universities in US have come about as a result (at least in part) of an increased interest in pedagogy at the level of the university and the belief that teaching might be interesting and an appropriate subject of scholarship.

The university of Michigan developed one of the earliest (and more successful) teaching centers (1965).

" The marks of a successful teaching center:

1. Fit between the Center and the specific needs of the University.
2. Long term planning; not just short term remedies. Afternoon workshops may respond to political needs and pressures, but will not be of a permanent value without continuous follow ups on the progress of teachers and students and integration within a long term plan.
3. Good relations with faculty. A good deal of diplomacy may be needed. We need to be good listeners; we need to cultivate and exemplify collegiality.
4. Leadership. The central message being: ' our institution cares about teaching'.
5. Coordination between the Center and what is going on at the institution as a whole.
6. Identify and take full advantage of good teachers. Teachers who are exemplary at what they do. They can teach and be able to articulate what they are doing. Get them together; ask them what they need to improve teaching."

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The following was learned through activity (3):

Lecturing styles, presentation styles such as theatrical presentations, and assessment of faculty's presentation through videotaping and observation.

The following was learned through activity (4):

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- Students' feedback about their learning experiences; seen on video.
- Various teaching methods such as interactive classes; seen on video.
- Utilization of interactive classes in various courses such as Physics, Mathematics and Moral Reasoning.
- There is a consulting office for students that provides guidance and assistance to students in terms of counseling and teaching how to study and learn.

It has been felt that Harvard University had much harder time involving the faculty member in the center's activities and in convincing full-time faculty members to attend workshops on teaching and learning. This is because newly-appointed junior faculty rarely make it through the tenure system; the estimate is about 12%. There is little incentive for full-time, senior faculty (who usually come to Harvard from other universities) to attend these workshops. Also the University Administration is decentralized and the model of providing more than one center associated with each faculty may work better. We also obtained the evaluation forms of instructors and subjects and compared them to the assessment-based assessment matrix developed at FEA. The discussions with Dr. Virginia Muarer were fruitful. She mentioned the Harvard Assessment Seminars and gave us the first and second reports on these assessment seminars and on other written relevant material.

The Center for Teaching

University of Massachusetts Amherst

April 27, 2000

The AUB task force met the Director of the Center for Teaching, Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli, who introduced us to the activities of the Center, which was established 10 years ago. The following table lists the activities that went on that day.

On April 27, 2000, the AUB Task Force had the following schedule:

	Time	Location	Activity
1	10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	301 Goodwell Bldg	Meeting with Dr. Mary Deane Sorcinelli; Discussion about the functions of their center and its role at the university
2	11:45-12:45 p.m	301 Goodwell Bldg	Presentation by Dr. F. Mues on TEACHnologyâ A video was also shown.
3	1:00-1:30	Academic Computing Lab	A tour to the instructional multi-media Lab, where demos are shown of ongoing live distance learning classes and tools used in these labs.
4	1:30-2:15 p.m.	Faculty Lounge	Lunch break
5	2:15-3:15p.m.	Office for Information Technologies	Workshop by Dr. Elisa Campbel on critical thinking and role of information technology in widening the use of resources among students and performing across campus workshops on use of Web-CT for on-line courses and Umail.
6	3:15-5:00	Center for Computer- Based Instructional Technology	Demonstrations of the use of software tutors for many basic science and engineering courses. Access to the website where these software packages are developed is given to the task force members. Some sample CD's were distributed.

The following was learned through activity (1)

- University of Massachusetts Amherst has around 26,000 students and has gone recently through a re-accreditation process.
- The center concentrates on using technology to improve the students learning with resources that include:
 - Ø The TEACHnology Fellows Program for tenured faculty, funded by the Deans and the Provost's Office. Fellows are awarded a state-of-the-art laptop computer (with the condition that these are used in classrooms) and opportunities for development through attending seminars and networking with other fellows.
 - Ø A multimedia resources room to provide opportunities for curriculum design and practice in implementing teaching technologies in the classroom.
 - Ø Campus-wide workshops and roundtables on using presentation tools, computer-based instruction, classroom communication system and distance learning tools.
 - Ø Individual consultation on issues of good practice in teaching and learning as related to instructional technology.
 - Ø The Center for Teaching cooperates with Academic Instructional Media Services, Center for Computer-based Instructional Technology, and with the office of Information Technologies which is the primary provider of computing, networking, telecommunication and information transfer services and support.
- The introduction of the Heburgh award to a faculty development program that is judged to have best met the three award criteria: significance of the program to higher education; appropriate program rationale; and successful results and impact on undergraduate teaching and student learning. The awards are based on the nomination of students and peers. Alumni were also involved.
- The introduction of mid-semester evaluation.
- Questions were raised as to whether technology really helped students learning and the answer was yes through feedback, comparison of students' performance and students' evaluations.
- References were given on Technology and Pedagogy.
- The infrastructure for the widespread use of technology is costly.

The following was learned through activity (2)

- The concept of TEACHnology was explained.
- The outcomes of implementing TEACHnology Fellow Program were illustrated.
- Campus wide workshops on building skills for preparing a teaching portfolio, designing Web sites, enhancing online learning, and creating online images were described.

- A handbook for Teaching Assistants was distributed.

The following was learned through activity (5 & 6):

- Online Information Technology has licensed Web-based training from CBT Systems and has 230 course titles available for use on Amherst Campus Community. CBT Systems delivers interactive education software and develops information technology training for business and education.
- The Center for Computer-Based Instructional Technology works in collaboration with faculty, students and staff to develop computer-based and Web-based instructional systems for use in meeting educational needs. An automated homework system is developed in the Departments of Physics, Chemistry, Entomology, Microbiology, Geology and Foreign Languages. Multimedia tutors are created for teaching in Mechanical Engineering.

The overall impression on the visit to University of Massachusetts Amherst Center for Teaching was that their use of technology is impressive, but unless technical support is provided, such a system is not feasible at AUB. The OIT Department and the number of support staff in all places are huge, while the impact on teaching effectiveness and improving students' learning may be disproportional with the university's huge investment in personnel and equipment.

The Teaching and Learning Lab at MIT

April 28, 2000

The AUB Task Force met with the Lab Director Prof. Lori Breslow who is also a professor at the School of Business, and with her graduate assistant.

On April 28, 2000, the AUB Task Force had the following schedule:

	Time	Location	Activity
1	12:00 – 1:30 a.m.	MIT Rm 9-151	Meeting with Dr.Lori Breslow; Discussion about the functions of their center and its role at the university
2	1:30-4:15 noon	MIT Rm 9-151	Workshop on Captivating Classes: Meeting the Lecture Challenge.

The following was learned through activity (1):

- The Teaching and Learning Lab (TLL) was initiated through a \$2 Million donation to MIT and was founded three years ago.
- The TLL lab is run by Dr. Breslow and an assistant who is pursuing a PhD in education.
- The major difference between the TLL and other teaching centers that we had visited is that this center is more proactive in working with program definition and curricula improvement.
- The Lab function is to help faculty members improve their teaching, but does not impose the service.
- Most of the people who usually approach the Lab are newly tenured faculty members.
- The TLL Lab conducted several experiments in teaching methodologies for small and large classes.
- The center offers classes to graduate students and orientation for the teaching staff.

- Problem-based learning is encouraged and is very effective, but open-ended problems need to be addressed as well.
- The use of active learning may affect the amount of material that need to be covered as described by course syllabus, but the knowledge and skills will be retained more effectively by the student, after he/she is done with the course.
- Some reading material is provided on strategic teaching and on handling the muddiest points in a lecture when students have lost track of what is going on and are inattentive.
- The importance of periodic feedback through mini-surveys and the question box at the end of the lecture.
- Teaching is not important in the promotion process if one is good in research.
- There is absolutely no pressure on faculty members to seek the help of the Teaching and Learning Lab. But they do it out of interest, while confidentiality is maintained.
- Lecturers can observe their lecture on Video and can work with the Lab help on improving their styles.
- Enthusiasm about the material delivered plays an important role in students' interest in the subject.
- The TLL environment for conducting classes is very conducive to effective teaching. Lectures can be videotaped. The taping is supervised by a communication expert.
- Several live and distant learning classes are conducted in the TLL. One unique program on distant learning is conducted in cooperation with University of Singapore and seems to be working successfully.
- Common problems that the TLL addressed include the problem of inducing effective learning in large classes, and the problem of resolving the conflict between the drive of the teacher to cover all the material of a course and cooperative learning in classrooms (the issue of covering vs. un-covering the material).

The following was learned through activity (2):

- Learning is an active process.
- Posing problems motivates learning and forces the students to think.
- Both stimulation and reflection are necessary.
- The structure for understanding has been clarified through proper planning of lectures, working between levels of abstraction and using repetition, internal summaries, analogies and visual representation.
- A video of a lecturer in physics was shown. The AUB task force formed four groups and prepared a critique of the lecture and the teacher style.
- Sample students' surveys were provided for feedback on the lecture.

- Samples of active learning exercises were illustrated.

The discussion that followed after activity (2) was very interesting. Comparisons between AUB students and MIT students were drawn. At MIT, the atmosphere is very competitive for students, and they are attentive at lectures. Professors have several TA's for the course who help in grading and running tutorial sessions and discussion classes. Strong emphasis is placed on proper counseling and support for students.

Appendix C

List of References and Materials From each of The Centers Visited

(MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE WITH TASK FORCE MEMBERS)

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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- Compendium: Practical Pedagogy for Critical Thinking (CT)

CT curriculum for the classroom

Group work

Constructive controversy

CT discussion

One-minute paper

Reference list

- Handouts:

Working effectively in groups

Providing help for non-native English speaking students in a lecture class

Characteristics of a good grading system

Assessing course-related learning and study skills, strategies and behaviors.

Assessing skills in analysis and CT

Assessing skill in synthesis and creative thinking

Assessing skill in problem solving

Assessing course-related knowledge and skills.

Assessing learner attitudes, values, and self-awareness

Computer college degrees/constructive controversy

The teaching portfolio

I can't get the students to do the assigned reading

Designing effective library assignments

- Articles

The Dreaded Discussion: Ten ways to start

So Much Content, So Little Time

Faculty development bulletin

- Pamphlets:

Center for Teaching a learning services

Preparing future faculty

- Compendium: Getting students to be partners in the learning process

- Documenting your teaching

- The national teaching & learning forum

- Teaching & learning strategies: A collection of articles for new instructors.
- Teaching at the University of Minnesota: A handbook for faculty & instructional staff
- Univ. of Minnesota Summer Session 2000 catalogue
- Univ. of Minnesota Fall Session 2000 class schedule

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

- **Pamphlets:**

Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning: Fall Teaching Orientation

The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning: Winter Teaching Orientation

Bureau of Study Counsel: Faculty of Arts & Sciences

Bureau of Study Counsel: Groups & Workshops

Harvard Teaching Series: Videotapes from the Derek Bok Center and Order Form

- **Booklets:**

Derek Bok Center for Teaching & Learning

Peer Counseling at Harvard College

- **Mid-Semester Evaluations**

- **Ten Strategies for Effective Discussion Leading**
- **Tips for Teachers: Twenty Ways to Make Lectures, More Participatory**
- **Teaching Fellows Handbook**
- **Harvard Assessment Seminars:** First Report 1990
Second Report 1992

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UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST

- **Handbook:**
 - Preparing a teaching portfolio
 - Hesburgh 2000: For faculty development to enhance undergraduate teaching and learning – Award winners 2000
 - Handbook for teaching assistants
- **1998 – 1999 Annual Report-Center for Teaching**
- **Newsletters of the Office of Information Technologies**
 - Fall 1999 / Vol. 5 # 1
 - Spring 2000 / Vol. 5 # 2
- **Handouts:**
 - Web CT at UMass

Reading recommendations on:

- a) Communication, teaching, & learning in the foreign language classroom
- b) Community service-learning: Linking classroom education and community service
- c) Teachers' choices: The ten best on teaching and learning
- d) Preparing for promotion and tenure: A selected bibliography

Two thumbs up: A selection of teaching and learning videos

Faculty technology support sessions-spring 2000

Academic computing workshops June 2000

Center for teaching: Programs and resources

· **Compendium: Technology fellows program:**

· **Pamphlets:**

Center for teaching: A mind once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.

Teaching technologies

Academic computing

· **University catalogue:**

Undergraduate

Graduate

MIT

· **The teaching and learning laboratory folder includes:**

Presentation compendium on captivating classes: Meeting the lecture challenge. A presentation for the AUB Task Force on Undergraduate Teaching – April 28, 2000.

- **Booklet:**

The Torch or the Firehose: A guide to section teaching

- **Pamphlets:** MIT the teaching learning laboratory

- **Handouts on:**

Department based teaching and learning workshops

The electronic forum on educational innovation

Class videotaping and consulting program

Schedule of series of workshops presented for “ On the culture edge: Innovations in Science and Engineering Education”.

- **Syllabus on:**

Teaching College – Level Chemistry.

^[1] Universities such as Penn State University, McMaster, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute that are renowned for example by their excellence in teaching. Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, for instance, runs yearly several conferences on the issue of teaching excellence and practices (to engineering), the aspect that may have benefited the group much more effectively than our visit to Harvard (for reference to these events please re <http://www.rose-hulman.edu/lc/> or <http://www.rose-hulman.edu/echoes/fall1998/confer.htm>) .