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In addition, a number of other UC personnel have indicated their interest in this CASTL project and their willingness to serve as affiliated team members, occasionally joining the core team or substituting for a core team member. These members represent UC efforts in action research, University Libraries, the Center for Access and Transition (serving under-prepared students), the Preparing Future Faculty program, UC's Faculty Senate, various sub-committees of the Integrated Core Learning initiative, and the Greater Cincinnati community.

We are also in the final stages of a national search to hire a fulltime director for the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning and anticipate that this new director will also play a key role in any CASTL Leadership Program activities.



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March 13, 2006

Mr. Richard Gale  
CASTL Higher Education Director  
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching  
51 Vista Lane  
Stanford, CA 94305

Dear Mr. Gale:

On behalf of the University of Cincinnati, I write in enthusiastic support of our proposal for participation in the CASTL Leadership program, especially in regard to its emphasis on Liberal Learning and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

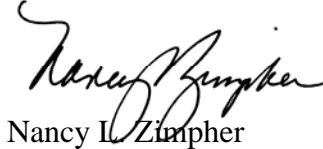
The CASTL program, with this particular area of focus, accords perfectly with some key emphases within our UC|21 academic planning process. After two rich years of development, this process has now become focused around a variety of initiatives that promise to move us forward as an institution, indeed, as “the new urban research university.” The timing of the CASTL program could thus not be better for us, poised as we are for the next stage of developments within UC|21. We are putting in place the institutional infrastructure that will not only provide much more support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) but that will also rely heavily upon SoTL for the success of these initiatives, each one reinforcing the other in a mutually supportive fashion. Through UC|21, for instance, we have not only committed significant new resources for our Center for Teaching and Learning, but we are in the process of creating an Academy of Teaching and Learning Fellows, an organization that will help us to recognize and reward our best classroom teachers as well as to lend additional support and expertise to our teaching and learning center.

I'm also pleased with the prospect of linking our institutional efforts with national colleagues. We have sought increasingly in recent years to expand our collaborative efforts with other institutions, both locally and – through the Ohio Learning Network – in Ohio. We thus look forward to learning about SoTL from a new range of colleagues within a national network.

Our main focus with UC|21 is expressed through the first of our six institutional goals: Placing Students at the Center. Our vision of such a placement accords very well with the concept of the “teaching commons” that Mary Taylor Huber and Pat Hutchings articulated in their 2005 study *The Advancement of Learning*. We believe that our participation in CASTL’s Leadership program will help us in the continued creation of such a commons, one that is distinguished by our urban setting and growing emphasis upon civic engagement, our attempts to make experiential learning a common feature of our students’ academic programs, and our assessment of that learning as guided by the SoTL activities of our faculty.

The University of Cincinnati is thus fully committed to supporting our faculty team, drawn as it is from several key constituencies and areas of expertise. And we look forward to adding our own voices to the national conversation about SoTL. Our recent developments and growth as the new urban research university have given us much to contribute.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy L. Zimpher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and "Z".

Nancy L. Zimpher  
President

NLZ: hh/mkj

Enclosure

*List of websites, publications, and other appropriate references of previous work relevant to the CASTL Leadership Program*

- The main web site for the UC|21 academic-planning process (<http://www.uc.edu/uc21/>), including information about the Integrated Core Learning initiative: <http://www.uc.edu/uc21/del-icl.html> . Assessment mechanisms already in place for UC|21 activities, such as Trudy Banta's external review of and progress report on UC|21, will continue to provide a framework for evaluation, one that can readily encompass our activities within the CASTL Leadership Program.
- The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning (CET&L): <http://www.uc.edu/cetl> -- Resources for a range of pedagogy initiatives, including SoTL. An area within this web site will house and maintain the information and documents relating to the CASTL Leadership Program, and CET&L resources will also ensure that CASTL team members have the travel funding necessary for participation in the Leadership Program. These developments would be consistent with the mission of the CET&L to this point. For instance, the CET&L has for several years now sponsored a series of annual Institutes with faculty participants organized into learning communities with various pedagogy emphases. The CET&L also plays a key networking role with related offices such as the Faculty Technology Resources Center, University Libraries and Academic Information Technology & Libraries, the Graduate School, and a wide range of initiatives moving forward within the UC|21 academic-planning process. A new organization for our most outstanding classroom instructors, the Academy of Fellows for Teaching & Learning, has recently been approved and will come to prove a valuable new resource in support of CET&L activities.
- Problem Based Learning (<http://www.uc.edu/pbl/index.shtml>) as an emerging pedagogy for many UC faculty.
- Funded by external grants to enhance their doctoral program via new SoTL-related coursework, the College of Nursing has developed a robust SoTL web site at <http://www.nursing.uc.edu/Research/SoTL.htm> . Via links on the right side of this page, viewers can access their new electronic newsletter dedicated to SoTL resources and activities.
- University Libraries (<http://www.libraries.uc.edu/index.html>) has extensive resources in support of SoTL, and their librarians have recently compiled a list of 130 online, full-text journals with relevance to SoTL. The Curriculum Resource Center (<http://www.libraries.uc.edu/libraries/crc/index.html>) is a more specialized branch of University Libraries with additional materials for SoTL research.
- The Center for Access & Transition (<http://www.uc.edu/cat/>), with its emphasis on developmental work, has provided its faculty with numerous SoTL opportunities.

- The General Education program (<http://www.uc.edu/gened>) provides a focus on the capstone, including guidelines and rubrics for assessment of the capstone.

**The following list of SoTL activities has been reported by participants in CET&L Institutes over the period 2003 to 2005:**

- 1) Participant Idea Exchange: Fostering Transfer of Learning to and from Psychology Courses", 26th Annual National Institute for Teaching of Psychology (St. Petersburg, Florida), January 2004.
- 2) "How can active learning strategies promote transfer of learning", SUN Conference on Teaching and Learning (El Paso, Texas), March 2004.
- 3) "Student and faculty attitudes about transferring learning", Conference on Faculty/Student Partnerships in Teaching and Learning (Geneseo, New York), April 2004.
- 4) "Learning Communities and the Transfer of Learning", Annual International Conference on Faculty Learning Communities (Miami, Ohio), June 2004.
- 5) "Student and faculty attitudes about transferring learning", ARCO, date unclear
- 6) "Teaching for Transfer: Classroom Research Across Disciplines", Lilly Conference, Miami University of Ohio, November 2004.
- 7) "Techniques of Engagement: Data From the Classroom", Lilly Conference, Miami University of Ohio, November 2004
- 8) "Becoming More Effective Thinkers and Doers: Establishing a Problem-Based Learning Initiative at a Large Research University", Lilly Conference, Miami University of Ohio, November 2004
- 9) "(S)Pacing problem-based learning in the composition classroom". Panel discussion, CEA 2005.
- 10) "Learning Objects", ACM SIGITE newsletter
- 11) OLN Grant Application for PBL Web Site Resources - funded \$20,000
- 12) UC Faculty Development Grant Application for PBL Assessment - funded \$10,000.
- 13) "Concept Mapping and Problem-based Learning". Paper presented at the ODCE conference, March 2006
- 14) "PBL in a Health Care Ethics Course". Paper accepted at the International Conference for Problem-Based Learning. Lima, Peru, July 2006
- 15) "Concept Mapping and Problem-based Learning". Lunch and Learn Session open to the University of Cincinnati faculty, February 2006
- 16) Information on Transfer of Learning has been presented to the UC faculty at the First Year Research Conference and as a presentation through the FYE Best Practices series. March 2006.
  - a. Other presentations on Transfer of Learning are planned:
    - (a) AURCO conference
    - (b) Faculty-wide are RWC during the faculty convocation research presentations in the fall of 2006.
    - (c) From the CAT Classroom Behavior Group
    - (d) A workshop on classroom behaviors presented to CAT faculty.

- 17) A presentation at the national TASS (Teaching Academic Survival Skills) Conference on March 8, 2006.
- 18) A book proposal on retaining at risk students from psychosocial, behavioral, and emotional as well as academic perspectives. The book has gone through one review process and is in its second review, after revision and resubmission.
- 19) A proposal for a \$4000 grant for summer research to review the work done by the University of Minnesota's General College through their CRDEUL (Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy)
- 20) "Do participants in a year-long faculty development program change their epistemological beliefs?" Paper submitted to the Professional Organizational Development meeting to be held October 2006.
- 21) "The differences in epistemological beliefs between faculty members who do and do not participate in teaching improvement programs." Paper submitted to the Professional Organizational Development meeting to be held October 2006.
- 22) Interdisciplinary research into genetic literacy, seeking to develop an instrument that will measure genetic literacy and determine the impact of various biology and genetic courses on genetic literacy.
- 23) "What's the Problem? Enriching Library Instruction Through Problem-Based Learning", Workshop, Academic Library Association of Ohio, Interest Instruction Group, May 2003.
- 24) "Libraries and the PBL Classroom", UC CET&L September Institute, 2004.
- 25) "Out of the Stacks and Into the Classroom: Using Problem-Based to Enhance Information Literacy and Faculty Collaboration", Presentation, ODCE Conference, March 2005.
- 26) "Contextualizing Information in the Digital Age", UC CET&L September Institute, 2005.
- 27) "A Natural Fit: Librarians and Learner-Centered Pedagogies", Presentation, Academic Libraries Association of Ohio, November 2005.
- 28) "Spinning Hay Into Gold: Moving from Information to Scholarship", Presentation, ODCE Conference, March 2006.
- 29) Top-Down and Bottom-Up: Using Problem-Based Learning as a Bridge to Scholarly Teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Presentation at the second annual International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 2005.
- 30) Cognitive Cartography: Concept Mapping as a Tool to Support Problem Solving and Meaningful Learning. Presentation made to the International Congress on Problem-based Learning, 2006.
- 31) Presentations on Composition, Problem-based Learning and Assessment:
  - i) March 2006--Chicago--Conference on College Composition and Communication,
  - ii) April 2006--San Antonio--College English Association
  - iii) April 2006--College English Association of Ohio

## University of Cincinnati Narrative

*Why do you want to participate in the CASTL Leadership Program; what goals will participation accomplish and in what ways will your institution be a leader?*

For the University of Cincinnati (UC), participation in the CASTL Leadership Program creates a framework within which to link our accomplishments so far in SoTL with new developments through our Integrated Core Learning initiative (ICL). This linkage will give impetus to both, elevating SoTL to a more prominent position within the university's structure of rewards and recognition as well as strengthening ICL's role in giving greater unity and coherence to our students' academic experience. In particular, we see opportunities to extend our SoTL efforts through community action research as UC develops further into its recently envisioned role as "the new urban research university."

This combination will, we believe, allow UC to play a leadership role among major research institutions through the unique combination of qualities here: SoTL, community action research, and an integrated learning experience for our baccalaureate students.

To explain further: When our new president, Nancy Zimpher, took over the leadership of UC, she initiated a comprehensive academic-planning process that came to be known as UC|21. Taking shape through a series of town hall meetings, UC|21 gradually focused on a number of strategic priorities and initiatives. Integrated Core Learning, then, is a phrase describing the combined implementation of four distinct UC|21 initiatives: Liberal Learning, Unified First Year Experience (FYE) & Learning Communities, Experiential Learning, and a Re-envisioned Honors Scholars Program. The plan leverages three critical touch points in students' development throughout the baccalaureate curriculum: the first year (Great Beginnings), a discipline-appropriate writing course late in the second or early in the third year (Mid-Collegiate Launch), and a senior capstone (Finale). While implementation will vary, undergraduate programs across the entire university will come to share learning goals and approaches that distinguish baccalaureate education at UC by providing new opportunities for integrating the various components of that educational experience.

For our current students, such integration is still possible for only a small number. For the majority, the experience is much like that described in the Carnegie Foundation's 2004 "Statement on Integrative Learning," in which the "undergraduate experience can be a fragmented landscape of general education courses, preparation for the major, co-curricular activities, and 'the real world' beyond the campus." In moving forward with the broad goals of Integrated Core Learning, however, we seek the alternative vision from that same Carnegie "Statement," the promise to "help undergraduates put the pieces together and develop habits of mind that prepare them to make informed judgments in the conduct of personal, professional, and civic life."

Our developments so far have been further guided by the three key themes identified by Mary Taylor Huber, Pat Hutchings, and Richard Gale in their article “Integrative Learning for Liberal Education (*Peer Review*, Summer 2005): “a new, across-the-curriculum focus on ‘inquiry and intellectual judgment,’ a renewed concern with ‘social responsibility and civic engagement,’ and a new interest in ‘integrative learning.’”

In starting to move in these directions, we have already developed an extensive communication plan, in part through a series of meetings with key stakeholders that also identified contact people in each college. Further coordination with community-partner initiatives on campus has led to plans for pilot capstone projects in spring and autumn 2006, projects that will combine students within interdisciplinary teams with a focus on experiential learning. In one example, student teams will work in support of an adoption agency, combining their writing, graphic-arts, and public-relations skills to produce web pages around particular agency projects.

One tool that will prove crucial in documenting the various elements of a student’s program of study in relation to ICL goals will be e-portfolios. In addition to creating pilot capstones, we have also begun developing templates and models for e-portfolios for our students. These e-portfolios, in turn, suggest further linkages between the goals of ICL and the possibilities of SoTL. Insofar as they will eventually provide a rich database for faculty researchers into the undergraduate student experience, e-portfolios will open up for us a variety of new opportunities growing out of the assessment that will attend all UC|21 initiatives and investments. Beginning with the learning goals and suggested vehicles described by our first-year-experience model, students will use e-portfolios to chart, not only much of their academic work, but also their co-curricular activities and community-engagement work. The e-portfolio templates will direct students towards the kinds of reflection that will effectively integrate the various courses and programs within their coursework besides integrating their coursework with their co-curricular and experiential-learning activities. New resources are now being directed to all of our colleges to support an expanded reach of the FYE curriculum to all first-year students. Further documentation of student work is envisioned through a First Year Expo, which will not only highlight exemplary projects by first-year students but also provide additional opportunities for SoTL investigations.

Regionally, UC has already established its reputation for expertise in problem-based learning and for inquiry-based learning, expertise that has been recognized, for instance, through external funding from the Ohio Learning Network. Our efforts around action research, led by Mary Brydon-Miller, earlier this month resulted in a conference on action research that attracted national attention. Of the 66 participants affiliated with this conference, well over half came from other institutions. Janice Denton’s role as faculty director of our General Education Program and as an authority on assessment has brought her numerous invitations to speak at other institutions.

At a national level, UC has historically played a leadership role for many years in the area of co-op education, and later this year we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of co-op here. Through our current ICL developments, we envision building upon the

lessons and resources of co-op and providing many more of our students with community experience as part of their academic programs. In creating such a comprehensive integration of community- and classroom-based education, UC can come to play an even wider leadership role nationally.

***To which scholarship of teaching and learning institutional theme (see descriptions below) will you contribute, and what will you bring to this aspect of the work and the movement?***

The above material doubtless already suggests the thematic area that the University of Cincinnati would choose for its focus: Liberal Learning and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. In addition to what has already been described, we would here emphasize the ways in which a new emphasis upon liberal learning builds upon our General Education program, approved just a few years ago by our faculty. Applying to all baccalaureate students entering UC in autumn 2001, this program defined a set of four core competencies, supported by Breadth of Knowledge areas across a number of disciplines. These competencies – Critical Thinking, Social Responsibility, Effective Communication, and Knowledge Integration – become focused for baccalaureate students within the senior capstone, and our strategies for assessing the capstone have already identified areas where programs are improving and refining their capstones.

The new ICL initiative, in turn, builds upon the strengths of the General Education program but extends those into broader areas of a student's undergraduate experience. The combined effect, then, is to define liberal learning in ways specific to the University of Cincinnati, that is, with a strong component of experiential learning within an urban setting. The capstone envisioned within ICL would continue to serve the purposes of the General Education requirements but now create a richer unifying experience, in part because the student's work would be documented and assessed through an e-portfolio.

***What do individual team members bring to the work; why these people?***

**Ruth Benander**, co-director of the teaching/learning center at Raymond Walters College, one of UC's two-year access colleges, has led several faculty-development activities among her Raymond Walters colleagues and established a significant SoTL record herself. She thoroughly exemplifies the conclusions reached by Pat Hutchings and Lee S. Shulman in their February 2006 Carnegie Perspectives essay, in which they noted: "Community colleges—with their 'can do' attitudes, and their willingness to experiment—may well have things to teach the rest of higher education about the best ways to think about the evidence needed for improvement."

**Wayne Hall**, as the contact person for UC's CASTL application, will continue to help coordinate a variety of pedagogy initiatives linking faculty development to Integrated Core Learning. He has developed an annual Institute to bring faculty together into learning communities emphasizing different pedagogies, and his current administrative duties include the creation of a comprehensive plan for faculty development.

**Ellen Lynch**, UC's champion for PBL, has helped to expand the reach of this pedagogy into many classrooms here. Simultaneously, she has also developed an extensive focus upon classroom-action research for her own scholarship. Her current work, growing out of external grant support from the Ohio Learning Network, centers around a book-length study for the use of concept mapping in assessment.

**Pamela Person** combines her role as one of the key coordinators of our ICL initiative with a key administrative role. She has spent the past several years expanding and also assessing our student learning communities, in part by working with our faculty in developing integrated learning communities for first-year students as well as first-year seminars. She has organized an annual First Year Experience Research Symposium to highlight UC and regional work in this area as well as a "best practices" series sponsored by FYE / Learning Communities.

**Amy Pettigrew**, the first director of SoTL in any UC college, also directs the Nurse Educator Pathways program, which has received major grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration. Her SoTL activities began in autumn 2005 and have already resulted in a series of electronic newsletters on the role of SoTL within nursing education as well as presentations to faculty groups.

***What impact will result from participation; how will it be documented, evaluated?***

The mission and resources of UC|21 will play a key role in specific plans and mechanisms for assessing and evaluating the impact of the CASTL Leadership Program. Since so much of the Program relates so extensively to the goals and outcomes of UC|21, evaluating the goals and outcomes of UC|21 will include an evaluation of the CASTL impact, with particular focus on our Integrated Core Learning initiative.

As a projected outcome, then, ICL will gain status and acceptance as a force shaping the baccalaureate experience of increasing numbers of our students. While we have a General Education program and set of requirements already in place to provide students with a unified core curriculum, we seek to build upon that core through ICL and thus offer more community-engagement and co-curricular experiences to our students. More specifically, we need the help of large numbers of our faculty in creating the kinds of capstone experiences that will link the traditional classroom with the community.

At the same time, and at an individual level, we anticipate significant increases in the SoTL activities of our faculty. Since we will need to monitor and assess the ICL initiative closely, and since we see it as an approach to undergraduate education that reflects the distinct features of the University of Cincinnati, we anticipate growing opportunities for SoTL work. Along similar lines, we envision SoTL coming to play a growing role in the reward system for faculty.

One related impact that we anticipate is a greater attention to assessment. Our General Education program has already developed a strong assessment strategy for capstone courses. As ICL strengthens these capstones, however, and as it provides more unifying

experiences elsewhere in the undergraduate curriculum, participating faculty will need to document the effectiveness of these changes through compelling assessment studies. From these more focused efforts, we anticipate an ever-widening attention to assessment throughout other academic programs, including graduate study.

At a further remove, but building on the previous two points, we anticipate that more departments will revise their criteria for reappointment, promotion, and tenure so as to create a more explicit role for SoTL. These changes have already begun to happen in colleges such as Nursing, but we hope to push even further in these directions.

***What products will result from participation; how will they be disseminated?***

The UC|21 academic planning process has gotten considerable regional publicity already; if we are able to focus that process around more specific initiatives such as Integrated Core Learning, we will have a dissemination platform already in place. However, we believe that ICL has the potential to gain national attention as the core curricular structure for the new, urban research university that is the University of Cincinnati. If it can realize that potential, we will have many opportunities to describe its success. We have already begun plans for a book publication around our work in experiential learning. And as noted above, our need to document and assess our efforts now will lead us in the directions of SoTL.

One other product that we anticipate is a comprehensive faculty-development plan. Our resources in support of our faculty so far are solid but not as coordinated and purposeful as they might be. As a consequence, some efforts are ineffective, either because they spread available resources too thin through duplication or because the various initiatives and resources fail to reinforce each other as strongly as they might. Through the activities and gains envisioned by this proposal, we see opportunities to coordinate faculty-development efforts in a new and more comprehensive fashion, one that would be fully articulated to all of our faculty.

At a more specific level, we have already conducted an inaugural First Year Experience Research Symposium in November 2005, one that linked FYE efforts to other aspects of the ICL initiative. Envisioned as an annual event, this Symposium serves to bring colleagues from regional institutions together for the sharing of further ideas about undergraduate education. The conversations also lay out future directions for faculty- and staff-development needs as we plan for ICL implementation. We will quickly begin growing our faculty-development opportunities for such ICL priorities, for instance, as have been described throughout this narrative: electronic portfolios, integrated learning communities that utilize common first year readings, and interdisciplinary, experiential capstones.

Primarily, however, the results from these efforts will be disseminated within our own classrooms, with our students being the most immediate and also most important beneficiaries of our work towards SoTL and liberal learning.