In February 2013, the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning convened three ad hoc committees to explore several issues: New Faculty Orientation Week, Programming, and Faculty Engagement. What follows here is the report from the ad hoc Committee on Faculty Engagement (the Committee).

The Committee received the following charge:

Provide guidance to FCTL on how we could better facilitate, support, or otherwise enable greater faculty engagement and participation in FCTL events.

We have deliberately distinguished between “engagement” and “participation.” With the former, we have in mind a level of involvement that leads to some tangible product (for lack of a better name). For the latter, we have in mind simply filling seats.

To fulfill this charge, the Committee conducted an online survey to gather more information about faculty involvement in FCTL events. The survey addressed previous participation in FCTL events, perceived barriers to participating in FCTL events, opportunities and incentives that might increase participation, and preferences for program formats. Over 120 faculty members responded. Most respondents had taught at Ferris for at least 10 years; their prior involvement in FCTL events varied. A breakdown of respondents by college, experience, and past involvement is shown below in Tables 1-3. Please note that the total number of responses differs each of the three tables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Approximate Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Sciences</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Human Services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Technology</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Professions</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendall College of Art and Design</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan College of Optometry</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>121</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Survey participation by College.
Based on the responses from the survey, the Committee offers the following recommendations for FCTL in order to enable greater faculty engagement and participation in FCTL events. These recommendations are offered in no particular order.

**Recommendation 1:** Consider the needs of faculty who do not teach on or live near the Big Rapids campus, and develop opportunities that are accessible to them.

Sixty respondents indicated they would be more able to participate in FCTL events if there were more distance-learning opportunities. These opportunities could include:

- Using Adobe Connect to enable participation from different locations;
- Using Tegrity, Adobe Connect, or other technology to make recordings of events, and making those recordings available;
- Providing online learning via Ferris Connect; and
- Facilitating events at locations statewide – or even in different buildings on the Big Rapids campus.

### Table 2. Survey participation by years of teaching at Ferris State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years Teaching at Ferris State</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Approximate Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>124</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. Survey participation by prior participation in FCTL events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Events Previously Attended</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Approximate Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 1 events</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 5 events</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 events</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more events</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>123</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Recommendation 2:** Offer more options for the days and times of events.

Forty-nine respondents indicated that they would be more able to participate in FCTL events if there were more events held outside of the regular fall and spring semesters. More respondents expressed interest in having events outside the regular fall and spring terms than in having evening events or Saturday events – just 28 respondents indicated interest in evening events, and 10 respondents said they were interested in Saturday events. Respondents did not express preferences for specific days or times, and there were mixed responses about hosting events during the “university hour” on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Recommendation 3:** Offer more one-time workshops and seminars.

One-time workshops were the most preferred program format, with 88 respondents indicating they liked this format. One-time events mean faculty who do not teach in Big Rapids do not need to make multiple trips to the main campus to fully engage in the event. Additionally, several respondents expressed an interest in attending longer or more intensive workshops, as they were less motivated to drive to Big Rapids for a one- or two-hour event.

**Recommendation 4:** Continue to work with faculty and individual colleges and departments to determine what professional development needs exist, and develop events that target these needs.

While a number of responses indicated that FCTL offers relevant and useful professional development events, other responses suggested that FCTL does not always meet faculty members’ learning needs. The Committee is aware that the FCTL’s ad hoc Committee on Programming is currently exploring this issue, but as teaching and learning continue to evolve, FCTL should continue to examine the needs of the Ferris faculty community.

**Recommendation 5:** Make it easier for faculty to use Professional Development Incentive (PDI) monies.

Seventy-six respondents indicated that the opportunity to earn PDIs increases the likelihood that they will participate in FCTL events. Although few comments directly referenced PDIs, those that did expressed some frustration with accessing and using PDI funds. For example, one respondent was evidently not able to use his/her PDI funds to purchase resources that he/she would find helpful. This person wrote, “...Those who are in charge of approving the tech requests are often people who have not taught an English class and do not know what is the best equipment for grading papers....” Another respondent wrote that he/she was not eligible to receive PDI funds.
One possible deterrent to accessing funds is that currently, faculty who obtain PDI funds must work with both their departments and FCTL to actually make purchases with those funds. FCTL could explore ways to better educate faculty and relevant department staff on what resources or opportunities can be funded with PDI money, and how to use PDI funds.

**Recommendation 6:** Slow down the earth’s rotation on its axis so that there are more hours in a day. This will create more hours in a day, and allow faculty members (and indeed, all creatures on the planet) to get more done.

We think this recommendation is quite simple, and no further explanation is necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

The FCTL ad hoc Committee on Faculty Engagement

Alison Jenerou  
Michigan College of Optometry

Susan Jones  
College of Business

Paul Long  
College of Engineering Technology

Jody Ollenquist  
College of Arts and Sciences

Mary Frances Ross  
College of Pharmacy

Julie Rowan  
Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

Kari Vavra  
College of Pharmacy
Appendix

Additional Survey Data

Question 2
What barriers prevent you from participating in FCTL events? Check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Approx. Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I teach off-campus and can’t get to Big Rapids for events.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m teaching during most FCTL events.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m interested in attending, but I’m just too busy.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not interested in the events offered.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (see below)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other responses:

Workload; Excessive workload
- Enrollment grows, workload increases and tenure faculty lines decrease
- Too busy meaning too busy to drive to Big Rapids to attend a 1-2 hr event
- One can only do so much
- Too much time having to do our own administrative stuff - TracDAT, Concur, etc.
- Interested, but time needed for other matters

Schedule; Scheduling conflict
- Not on campus Tues and Thurs.
- Many of the sessions are during times that I have committee commitments
- If I can’t make an event it’s because often I’m teaching or prepping for class. I never get too upset about missing FCTL events because I know they’ll offer that event again in the future. As a new faculty I’m finding their offerings VERY helpful!
- Usually time conflict
- They’re offered on days I don’t come to campus
- Times that many are scheduled that I am interested in conflict with my schedule
- The times that they are offered often conflict with my teaching schedule
- I work full time, days
- I live in Rockford
- Teaching during some FCTL events
- I believe to get the most out of these events, one needs to attend in person. Being off campus, that is very hard to do, especially events that occur over several weeks, or for one hour which makes the travel time unjustifiable
Session quality; Session relevance
- To be honest, I have attended with mixed results in the past. This is sometimes a result of the person "teaching" and sometimes a result of the others attending. We just have a vast range of backgrounds and interests for learning - so it can feel like a graduating senior sitting in class with first semester freshmen sometimes. And I have experienced both of those roles. It makes it tough to benefit much when the expectations/needs of attendees varies so greatly.
- On occasion FCTL events are irrelevant to our curriculum
- I am only interested in a select few events

Frustration
- The incentive program is not an incentive. The "hoops and hurdles" one must negotiate after the fact in order to access or utilize a PDI are enough such that I have no intention of participating in the future

Question 3
I’d be more able to participate in events if there were: (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Approx. Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More distance-learning opportunities</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening events</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday events</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events outside the fall and spring semesters (e.g., events over winter break, summer events)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>182</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other responses:

Workload-related
- My teaching schedule is busy. Then too tired to attend
- If more tenure-line faculty were hired, retirements were replaced on a timely basis, and my workload would shrink back to the level it was even 5 years ago
- More hours in a day
- More time or less duties to perform
- If I end up on campus for more days with a less hectic schedule, I would participate
- You could reduce my overall workload
Other locations

Offer sessions in Grand Rapids
- Events in Grand Rapids
- They came to Grand Rapids

Buildings on Big Rapids campus
- Located in our building . . . easier access

Repeat sessions at different times
- Offer same event at different times so I can fit it into teaching schedule
- Varied schedules with more than one offering

Preferable time of the day

Offer sessions in the evening
- Evening sometimes but I also teach night classes

Offer sessions in the morning
- For me mornings
- Early morning events - starting at 8 a.m.
- ...Friday morning
- 8:30-10 Breakfast-related time slot events

Offer sessions in the afternoon
- Late afternoon

Offer sessions during the Tuesday, Thursday 11-12 block of time
- More events during our available meeting time of 11am-noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays

During typical work hours (8 AM to 5 PM)
- All the options listed above would make me more ABLE to attend events, but even more LESS LIKELY. It is unfortunate when I can't attend an event because of class, but I appreciate the time during the regular business day

Preferable days of the week
- Thursday and Friday are good
- Friday sessions
- Tuesday and Thursday are much better for me. Most of us teach M-W-F and it is not possible to attend
- ...Friday morning
- Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday work better for me than Thursday or Friday.
- I really enjoy taking them during the course of my days on campus
• All the options listed above would make me more ABLE to attend events, but even more LESS LIKELY. It is unfortunate when I can't attend an event because of class, but I appreciate the time during the regular business day

**Offer sessions in the summer**
- Summer sessions
- Summer ... events

**Use video-conferencing**
- If they were video-conferenced
- It would be nice to Tegrity the information for us to learn from remotely when we get a chance.
- Or Tegritys

**Miscellaneous**
- Continue the way it is
- If I have to travel for an event, I would rather do it in fewer, but longer sessions for the events that are currently done over a number of weeks
- The best way to get faculty participation is to schedule within each college framework. May not be possible because of too much duplication
- None of the above. The best scenario is live in Grand Rapids (did the person intend to write, “Big Rapids”?). I do not like distance learning. Never have, never will. :-)
- Nothing in particular

**Question 4**
What benefits or incentives would increase the likelihood that you would participate in FCTL events? Check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Approx. Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development Incentive money (PDIs)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for conferences</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition (or greater recognition) by colleagues and/or administrators for purposes of reappointment, tenure, promotion, and/or merit increases</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>242</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other responses:

Financial incentives
- Cash
- Not eligible for $$$
- Provide faculty funds that can accumulate and later be used by the faculty for travel or course-related activities
- I love PDI money, but I have run into trouble when using the funds for technology. Those who are in charge of approving the tech requests are often people who have not taught an English class and do not know what is the best equipment for grading papers. They like the newest tech toys and I like technology that makes my job easier and makes me more accessible to my students
- PDI's are a great bonus and I feel that the requirement for an end product is a reasonable expectation
- Pay me for the actual miles I drive, NOT from some arbitrary distance from my host site (sorry, this is a sore spot with me right now)

Administrative support
- Actual support from our Dean - he needs to mention activities, speak to their importance, encourage, etc. He does none of this

Networking
- Ability to network with faculty to help me improve my abilities as an instructor/facilitator

Time
- Mostly just too busy
- Personally the information is great so just the topics would get me in the seats if I could free up teaching time to attend
- It's just a scheduling thing for me
- I don't need incentives to participate - what keeps me from doing more is my busy schedule
- These do affect my decision, but in a minor way -- managing my time well (and not having enough!) is what has the greatest effect on my decisions to do this or not
- The only incentive I would need would be time
- More than 24 hours in a day
- More time or less duties to perform

Convenience
- Occur 5:00pm in Grand Rapids
- Simply making them more convenient (i.e., NO travel)
Programming and topics

- More college-specific courses tailored for specific needs of the college
- These sessions are usually very beneficial. That is the incentive
- Many programs seem shallow, uninteresting and/or irrelevant. Most seem to involve introducing uses of more technology, lots of it either not needing introduction or not relevant. For example, who could not figure out how to use FaceBook to enhance a class, if that class would benefit from this
- The general scope of topics has been good I think

Promotion and tenure

- The point is moot as the promotion/merit policies are dubious at best

Miscellaneous

- I do it for the experience/learning- the last PDI money expired before I could use it!
- All the above would be greater incentive to attend!
- N/A
- Incentives help but sometimes it is nice just to learn something for the joy of learning it,
- I already attend when I can, but any additional incentives would be great. Such incentives might lead me to attend a session that I am on the fence about attending
- None of these are all that important
- I don't consider any of those reasons honorable motives (except the middle which I don't understand)
- I go because I want to learn, the incentives are just bonuses
- Food! (This was mentioned two times.)

Question 5
What program formats do you most prefer? Check all that apply.

There were 217 responses, but faculty members were asked to mark all that apply, so the number of unique respondents is unknown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Learning Communities</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-time workshops</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireside Chats (usually once a week, over lunch)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance-learning opportunities</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>217</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other responses:

Seminars or speaker events
- Day-long or half-day long seminars
- Speaker events (2-hour format)

Consultations
- Maybe a "consult." Come and visit the type of teaching/learning going on and have a "fireside" after some direct observations
- "On call" availability: when I need to improve my tools

Workshops
- One-time subject specific workshops work best for me. They fit my schedule better. Sometime it is easy to retain and use information in smaller pieces

Discussion groups
- Readings/Discussion Groups
- I don't usually like making long-term commitments and doing something online feels like more work cutting into personal time. One-time workshops where you get something accomplished geared to my competency level in an area I'm interested in is generally what I look for. :)
- Short period (1.5 or 2-hour) book discussions

Location
- Come to our buildings for “labs” on various topics
- More off-campus sessions

Miscellaneous
- I love the "walk-in" events such as the recent "Online Fair" in FLITE and the Safari event FCTL held last year. Hope these continue!
- Enjoy all but don't have enough time
- Depends on subject matter or technology being presented
- Face-to-face opportunities preferred
- Tegritys
- Not applicable