During the past year CELT has continued to add to our portfolio of long-term, sustainable programs. Our intensive institutes and multi-day programs, such as CELT Fellows, the Course Design Institute and Teaching Squares, encourage faculty to reflect on and change their teaching practice. We have further strengthened our offerings by welcoming two new associate directors, one focusing on inclusion and the other on STEM & Professional Schools. Their expertise allows us to deepen our work in inclusive excellence and collaborate more closely with faculty in STEM disciplines and in our professional schools in Boston and Grafton. Additionally, while maintaining a full portfolio of programs, events and workshops, we are expanding our reach through piloting flexible hybrid modules, presenting at conferences, and publishing articles and book chapters.

We invite you to explore examples of CELT’s collaboration with Tufts faculty in this year’s CELT Highlights.
Building (Even) More Long-Term, Sustainable Programs

CELT’s multi-day programs provide faculty with tools to reflect on their teaching goals, explore research-supported pedagogical strategies, and interact with colleagues from a variety of disciplines.

“This workshop has boosted my confidence to self-assess the strengths and areas of weakness in my course.”

During the Course Design Institute (CDI), faculty identify specifically what they want students to leave their courses knowing, then create maps that align these learning goals and objectives to assignments, assessments, content, and skills. The maps give them the necessary framework to construct their courses and syllabuses.

The Institute for Learning Assessment (ILA) gives faculty the tools to determine what their students are actually learning, and helps them design an overall model of continuous, inclusive and sustainable assessment.

During the semester-long CELT Fellows program participants lead sessions, collaboratively problem-solve, and conduct peer observations, offering feedback on each other’s classroom teaching.

Faculty value opportunities to see how their colleagues teach. In the non-evaluative Teaching Squares program, four faculty members form a square and make plans to visit each other’s classes over the course of a semester. They then meet to discuss what they learned about their own teaching from observing others.

The Mutual Mentoring Program is specifically designed to encourage junior faculty to expand their network of mentors within and outside Tufts. Participants also support each other as they write grants, submit conference proposals, publish, take on leadership roles, and prepare manuscripts for presentations.

Midterm Feedback

Upon request from a faculty member, CELT staff visit a class to ask students: What’s working well? What could be improved? and What could you do to improve learning for you and your classmates? CELT staff then meet with the instructor to discuss students’ responses and explore teaching strategies that can help clarify expectations and address students needs.
Deepening Our Work on Inclusive Excellence

While inclusive excellence is a grounding principle in all of CELT’s offerings, the Inclusive Learning Institute (ILI) specifically focuses on giving faculty foundational skills and strategies to foster an inclusive classroom environment and promote enhanced learning for all students.

“Hopefully, I am better able to put myself in my students’ shoes – what they might feel, think, and connect to – with a clear view of diversity issues, problem solving, and presenting with variety in mind.”

CELT’s Faculty Learning Community on Teaching Courses on Race, Class, Gender, Identity and Power brings together members to read relevant scholarship and share experiences and practices.

CELT is a Co-PI on the 5-year, $1 million Inclusive Excellence Grant, awarded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

CELT staff members also serve on the Provost’s Bridging Differences Task Force, and The Social Emotional-Civic Engagement Initiative Steering Committee.

Supporting STEM Faculty

Some of CELT’s offerings specifically address STEM faculty who teach large enrollment courses. These courses can be especially challenging in terms of organization, student engagement, and assessment. The Large Lecture Consortium brings together faculty to discuss issues they face, share resources and strategies, and hear outside speakers offer novel approaches to teaching in the large enrollment environment.

Other Opportunities to Reflect on Teaching

Faculty who have limited time to meet but want to reflect on teaching are invited to join CELT’s book groups. This year faculty at TUSDM, Cummings, and Arts Sciences & Engineering read James Lang’s Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning and met over lunch to discuss how to use his strategies in their teaching.

“The book made me more aware of how I’m teaching and motivated me to think about ways to more actively engage our students, even in the large classroom.”

Our CELT newsletter regularly points faculty to just-in-time resources in our CELT and Teaching@Tufts websites. Monthly emails to new faculty offer tips to help them navigate their first year of teaching. Additionally, individual confidential consultations are available for any faculty who want to discuss teaching.
Piloting Flexible, Hybrid Modules

The many responsibilities competing for faculty attention leave them little time for reflecting on and making changes in teaching. With these constraints in mind, CELT is piloting new ways to help faculty explore student-centered approaches they might use in their classes. Many of our programs ask faculty to use an unfamiliar approach to designing courses – a “backward design process.” To guide faculty through the steps, we created a Module on Developing Learning Objectives. It offers videos, reflective questions and an interactive tool that lets faculty try their hand at writing course goals and objectives. Completing the module in advance prepares faculty to make the most of their time in our CDI, ILA and ILI programs. The modules have also been used outside of CELT programs.

CELT’s Active Learning Workshop asks faculty to complete an “active learning workbook” before attending the program. This helps faculty prepare to collaborate with peers after reflecting on what they want their students to be able to accomplish in their classes.

The Academic Leadership Development (ALD) program is also being re-designed to provide flexibility for participants. Combining a self-paced online module with some face-to-face meetings enables faculty to save time and can fit this program into their schedules.

“I found the pre-assignments and homework to be value-added and they helped me to organize, expand upon, and implement my thoughts.”

In Fall 2017 CELT, Human Resources and Tufts Technology Services offered “Coaching and Mentoring,” the first in the four-module program. Participants, who included 16 faculty from 7 schools, reported that the flexible nature of the modules allowed them to “be reflective and work at their own pace.” They also noted that the online modules, together with the in-person group discussions, helped create a sense of community.

CELT Scholarship

Selected Publications:
Qualters, D. (January, 2018) Navigating Ethical Waters in the College Classroom, Faculty Focus.

Grant: Inclusive Excellence Grant, Co-PI, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, 5 years/ 1,000,000.

Selected Presentations:
Engaging Faculty in Assessing Experiential Education, World Association of Cooperative Education Fall Institute.
Engaging Faculty in Their Own Development, Academic Leadership Development Conference.
How Centers for Teaching & Learning Can Influence Campus Culture on Emerging Educational Trends, Soisson & Qualters, AAC&U.
Addressing Racism and Sexism in Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members, Contingent Faculty Symposium, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Rideau.