

# Annual Report

June 1, 2007–May 31, 2008



The Center for Teaching shares Vanderbilt University's commitment to excellence in research, teaching & learning, and service. We honor this commitment by promoting teaching and learning as forms of scholarly practice—that is, as ongoing and collaborative processes of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection.

In this way, we underscore that teaching and learning as intellectual invention differ from research only in kind, not in degree and importance, and require equal attention of the community of scholars. In order to foster and sustain a culture that practices, values, and rewards university teaching and learning as vital forms of scholarship, the Center takes as its mission to:

- Promote deep understanding of teaching and learning processes by helping instructors to gather, analyze, and reflect on information about their teaching, and about their students' learning. In turn, instructors can then develop new strategies for teaching.
- Sponsor dialogue about teaching and learning through orientations, workshops, working groups, and other programs.
- Create and disseminate research-based best practices, models, and approaches to university teaching and learning—and facilitate access to resources that support them.

To fulfill these facets of our mission most effectively, we build strong collaborative partnerships with individuals, departments, schools and centers across the university, and foster an ethic of teamwork and continuous learning within the Center.

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## *Teaching and learning—*



*inquiry,  
experimentation,  
reflection*

## Table of Contents

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|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>MISSION OF THE CENTER FOR TEACHING .....</b>                            | <b>2</b>     |
| <b>CONSULTATIONS .....</b>   | <b>5</b>     |
| Consultation Participation   |              |
| Consultation Participant Feedback  |              |
| <b>PROGRAMS.....</b>   | <b>9-18</b>  |
| Teaching Assistant Orientation (TAO).....                                  | 10-11        |
| International Teaching Assistant Orientation (ITAO).....                   | 12           |
| Teaching at Vanderbilt—Incoming Faculty Orientation (TaV).....             | 13           |
| Workshops and Working Groups.....  | 14           |
| Graduate Student Teaching & Professional Development Conf. (GradSTEP)..... | 15           |
| Teaching Certificate Program.....  | 16-17        |
| Celebration of Teaching.....   | 18           |
| <b>RESEARCH, RESOURCES &amp; DISSEMINATION.....</b>                        | <b>19-25</b> |
| Website.....   | 20-21        |
| Podcasts.....  | 21           |
| Library.....   | 21           |
| Contributions to the Vanderbilt Community.....                             | 22-23        |
| <i>Teaching at Vanderbilt</i>  |              |
| <i>Liaison Work at Vanderbilt</i>  |              |
| <i>Committee Work / Other Service at Vanderbilt</i>                        |              |
| Contributions to the Broader Academic Community.....                       | 24           |
| <i>Committee Work / Other Service beyond Vanderbilt</i>                    |              |
| <i>Conferences / Invited Presentations</i>                                 |              |
| <i>Publications</i>  |              |
| <b>CFT PEOPLE &amp; PLACES.....</b>  | <b>25-27</b> |
| Full-time Staff & Advisory Board Members.....                              | 26           |
| Office Location—Old & New.....   | 27           |





## Consultations

*The CFT promotes deep understanding of teaching and learning processes by helping both individuals and groups of instructors to gather, analyze, and reflect on information about their own teaching and their students' learning.*

## Consultations

The Center for Teaching provides a wide range of confidential consultation services to individuals for developmental and formative purposes. Because these services are designed to complement one another, we encourage instructors to use them in whatever combination will help them meet their teaching goals. While we welcome the opportunity to work with instructors on any teaching topic of interest to them, the services listed below are among those most requested.

- **Digital Video** —Instructors can arrange for the Center to create a digital video of any teaching session, and then view the DVD with a CFT consultant. This kind of analysis offers instructors the chance to observe their practice through a different "lens" than when involved in the moment-to-moment teaching process.
- **Grant** — Principal investigators can consult with the CFT about educational components involved in grant proposals, including design, assessment, and evaluation. CFT consultants are well versed in current research and literature on best practices in university teaching.
- **Small Group Analysis (SGA)**— A Center consultant meets with students in a class to collect their thoughts about the class, and then meets with the instructor to discuss student responses. An SGA can provide valuable insight into what students think is working well in the classroom.
- **Student Evaluations**— A CFT consultant can help instructors interpret both the numerical ratings and the comments on student evaluations. This type of consultation shifts the focus from viewing evaluations as judgment or critique to recognizing them as a rich source of information about student learning in our disciplines.
- **Syllabus & Course Design**—Instructors can work with a CFT consultant at any stage of designing a course, from defining the topic for a course to putting the finishing touches on the syllabus. Consultants help instructors identify learning goals for their students, develop meaningful, well-timed assignments, and determine ways of assessing whether and how students have achieved those goals.
- **Teaching Documentation**— The Center consults on the preparation of teaching statements, course portfolios, teaching portfolios, and other forms of documentation. Preparing such materials helps instructors to reflect deliberately on their teaching practice—deepening their understanding of pedagogical goals and methods, and linking those goals and methods to student learning.
- **Teaching Observation**— A Center consultant can visit any teaching setting to observe instructional practices. After the visit, the consultant discusses with the instructor what she or he has observed; together, they develop strategies for further experimentation and refinement, and identify areas for ongoing reflection. A teaching observation works particularly well for instructors who have engaged already in some analysis of their own teaching, but would like another perspective.



Percentage of 2007/08  
CFT Consultations  
by Type

20%

Small Group Analysis  
Consultation

13%

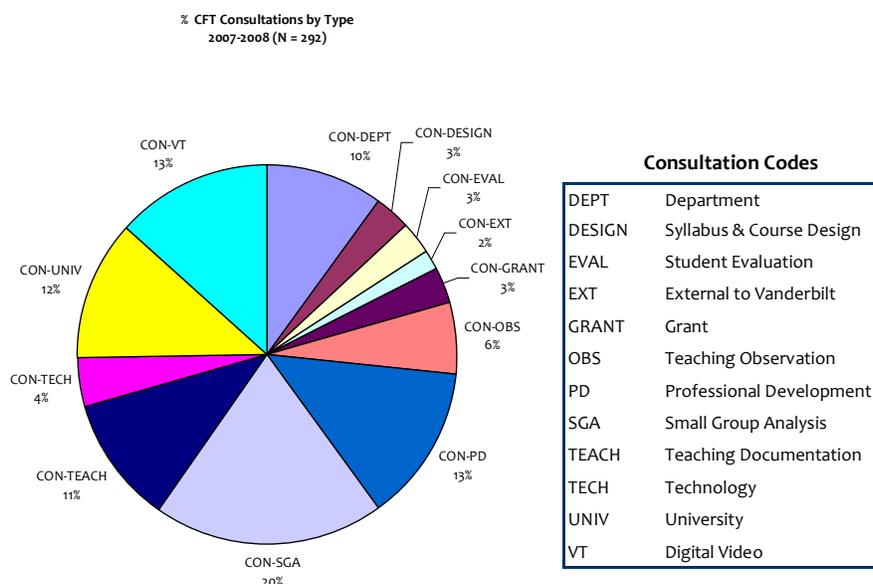
Professional Development  
Consultation

13%

Digital Video  
Consultation

12%

University  
Consultation



During 2007/08, the Center for Teaching conducted 292 consultations. Of those, 54% were requested by faculty, 37% by graduate students or post-doctoral fellows, 5% by university staff/administrators and 4% fell into an “other” category (2% undergraduate, 2% unknown). Representatives from a total of 64 programs, departments, colleges and schools were involved in consultations. A complete list is provided in the table below.



## 292

Consultations in 2007/08

## 190

Unique Instances of Consultation Participation in 2007/08

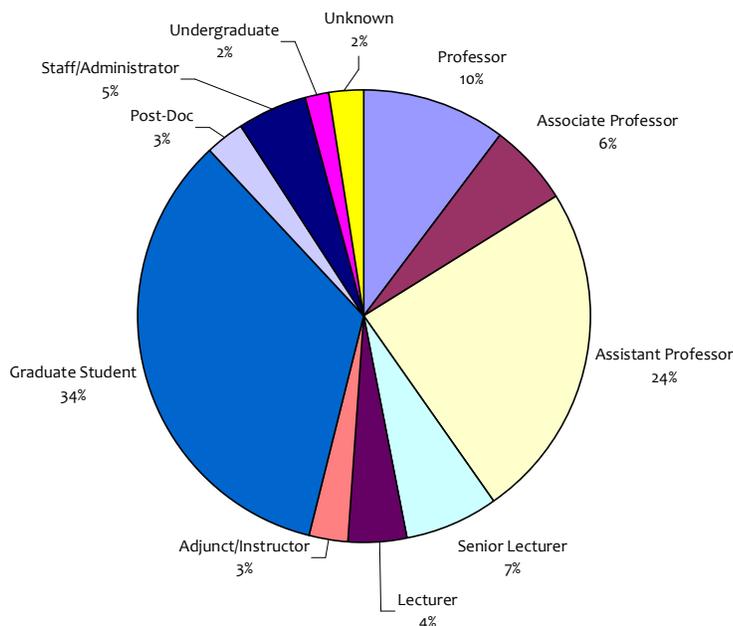
## 32%

of unique consultation participants in 2007/08 returned for at least one additional consultation

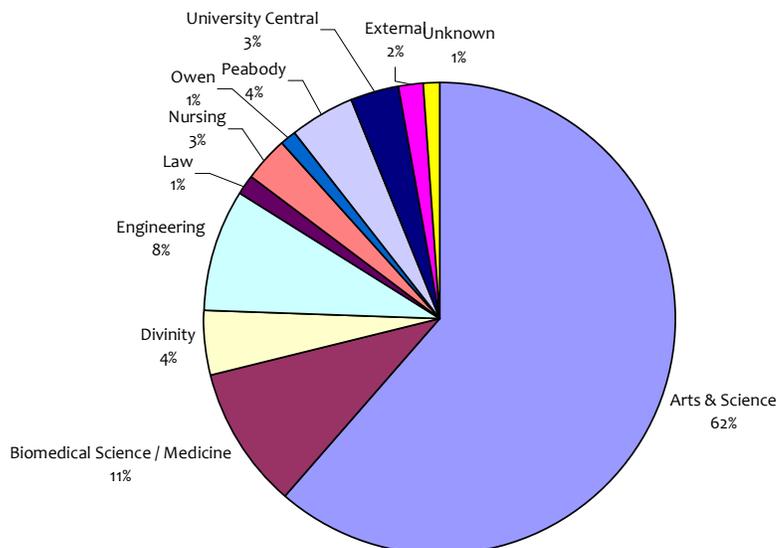
## 64

Programs, Departments and Schools benefited from a consultation

**% CFT Consultations by Status**  
2007-2008 (N = 292)



**% CFT Consultations by School**  
2007-2008 (N = 292)



### Departments, programs, schools, centers, and colleges served in 2007/08

|   |   |                                    |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Anthropology                              | French & Italian                          | New Student & First Year Programs  |
| Biological Sciences                       | General Internal Medicine & Public Health | Nursing                            |
| Biomedical Research Education & Training  | Geriatrics                                | Office of the Provost              |
| Biomedical Engineering                    | German & Slovic Languages                 | Owen Graduate School of Management |
| Cancer Biology                            | Graduate Department of Religion           | Peabody                            |
| Cell Biology                              | History                                   | Pediatrics                         |
| Center for Ethics                         | Human & Organizational Development        | Philosophy                         |
| Center for Science Outreach               | Human Genetics Research                   | Physical Therapy                   |
| Center for the Americas                   | Infectious Disease                        | Physics & Astronomy                |
| Chemical Engineering                      | Information Technology Services           | Plastic Surgery                    |
| Chemistry                                 | Interdisciplinary Sciences                | Political Science                  |
| Civil & Environmental Engineering         | Jewish Studies                            | Practice of Education              |
| Classical Studies                         | Law                                       | Psychology & Human Development     |
| Communication Studies                     | Leadership, Policy, & Organizations       | Religious Studies                  |
| Divinity                                  | Mathematics                               | Sociology                          |
| Earth & Environmental Sciences            | Media Services                            | Spanish & Portuguese               |
| East Asian Studies                        | Medical Education & Administration        | Teaching & Learning                |
| Economics                                 | Molecular Physiology & Biophysics         | Theatre                            |
| Electrical Engineering & Computer Science | Neuroscience                              | Undergraduate Medical Education    |
| English                                   |   | Vanderbilt Visions                 |
| Enrollment Management                     |   | Women's & Gender Studies           |
| European Studies                          |   | Wyatt Center                       |
| Film Studies                              |   |                                    |



**Participant Feedback**

Annually, the CFT sends out a survey to those faculty, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, and administrators who have used its consultation services during the current academic year. The survey includes 6 qualitative and 7 quantitative questions. A total of 56 clients responded to the survey this year.

Of those who responded, the mean rating for clients' perceptions of the effectiveness of their individual consultation was 4.37 (on a 1-5 scale with 1 = not at all effective; 5 = extremely effective). Of the 53 responses to the question "To what extent did your consultations with the CFT have a meaningful impact on your teaching, on your students' learning, or on other aspects of your scholarly/professional practice?", 84% indicated either a good deal or a great deal.

When asked to indicate any changes made as a result of an interaction with the CFT, survey respondents selected these choices most often:

- Modified presentation/delivery techniques (37 instances)
- Thought more about student learning (32)
- Tried a new teaching technique (30)
- Modified student discussion techniques (24)
- Encouraged more active learning among my students (21)

**EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION, "PLEASE COMMENT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CONSULTATIONS."**

*My consultation (based on an in-class observation) was helpful because it was tailored to suit my needs, and addressed a particular issue I wanted to explore in my teaching--namely, the use of technology as a teaching tool within lecture.*

*Watching the video and talking about it after helped a lot. Having a "think-tank" and discussing different teaching methods was helpful.*

*I was offered a teaching position and commended on my up-to-date knowledge of the learning process.*

**EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION, "IF THIS YEAR WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME YOU WORKED WITH THE CENTER FOR TEACHING, WHAT NEW INSIGHTS, SUPPORT, OR OTHER VALUE (IF ANY) DID YOU RECEIVE IN WORKING WITH US THIS YEAR?"**

*Previously, I had consulted about course design, grading, and other out-of-classroom matters. This was the first time I requested a small-group analysis. I learned a lot about what was working and what was not working in the classroom. I was able to use the information from the SGA along with the consultation at the CFT that followed to change a fair bit about the way I structured in-class time and I felt the students responded very well. One outcome was that my teaching evaluations for that seminar were significantly higher than in any previous semester I had taught it.*

*Valuable commentaries about performance in class as well as interesting bibliography and links related to my TA duties.*

*There is an advantage of an outside education expert who can facilitate the communication and product of specialty expert faculty.*

*Always provide evidenced-based, up-to-date information.*

*I realized that you are very helpful with feedback not just for classroom issues, but also with suggestions and clarification on a grant proposal.*



## **Programs**

***The CFT cultivates dialogue about teaching and learning through orientations, workshops, working groups, and other programs.***

On August 22 and 23, 2007, the Center for Teaching hosted the annual Teaching Assistant Orientation (TAO) in collaboration with the Graduate School. A total of 213 graduate students representing 32 Vanderbilt departments attended the two-day orientation to teaching at Vanderbilt designed for new graduate student teaching assistants. For more information on TAO 2007, see [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate\\_student/tao\\_2007.html](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate_student/tao_2007.html).

## Program Overview

### Plenary

In this large group session, new TAs learned about policies and resources relevant to their work as TAs and explored a few of the many difficult situations that can arise in their work as TAs. Specifically, the plenary explored 3 scenarios, the first involving FERPA and student privacy; the second cheating, plagiarism and the Vanderbilt Honor System; and the third sexual harassment.

### Disciplinary Focus Sessions

In these small group sessions, new TAs met with other TAs in their disciplines (and, in some cases, in related disciplines) to learn about teaching methods relevant to their disciplines and their TA functions. These sessions were also designed to help TAs develop strategies for navigating the complex set of roles and relationships they would encounter as new TAs, as well as to help them develop an understanding of Vanderbilt students as learners.

For TAO 2007 the CFT had two new tools that were demonstrated during TAO training and then proved to be popular features during the disciplinary focus sessions: Turning Point clickers and the VisualsSpeak™ image set. These tools allowed the staff to showcase uses of innovative teaching tools in the classroom.

### Practice Teaching Sessions

In these sessions, new TAs met in groups of at most six to deliver five-minute teaching demonstrations. These sessions gave new TAs the opportunity to practice the teaching methods explored in the Disciplinary Focus Sessions and receive feedback from CFT staff and their peers. One goal of these sessions was to help new TAs identify their strengths as teachers as well as areas for further development.

## Participant Feedback

Shortly after TAO, all participants were asked to complete a 15-question online feedback survey. Of the 213 TAO participants, 125 completed the survey, a response rate of 59%.

Participants were in agreement with the statement “I now have a better sense about how to succeed as a TA at Vanderbilt” (Mean = 3.94 on a scale of 1 to 5). Attendees moderately agreed with the statement “I learned about a variety of teaching strategies that I think will be useful to me when I teach” (Mean = 3.62 on a scale of 1 to 5).

When asked to select which aspect of TAO most helped to prepare them for assuming their teaching duties, 55% of the participants selected the practice teaching sessions. 38% felt the disciplinary focus sessions helped prepare them the most while only 7% chose the plenary as most helpful. Participants also provided the following feedback on various aspects of TAO:

*“The event was 3x better than expected. It was very informative and never did it drag on.”*

*“It was a great chance to practice before the real deal.”*

*“The feedback and tips from the senior TAs was excellent. Preparing a short lecture helped me go through the motions of what I'd be doing for each lab class and presenting it in a small group allowed us to learn from others' presentation as well.”*

*“As well as providing useful tips, it helped me to gain confidence as a teacher.”*

265

Graduate Students  
impacted by TAO

213

Attendees  
at TAO

32

Departments  
Represented  
at TAO

6

Schools  
Represented  
at TAO

# Teaching Assistant Orientation

## Graduate Student Facilitators

TAO Disciplinary Focus Sessions were designed and facilitated by 4 Graduate Teaching Fellows and 10 Teaching Affiliates, graduate students from across Vanderbilt employed and trained by the CFT to work with TAs at Vanderbilt. These session leaders participated in a two-week training experience prior to TAO. They also followed up with new TAs from their Disciplinary Focus Sessions during the year, providing additional support as these TAs began their teaching.

Of the TAO participants who completed the TAO feedback survey, 97% rated their leaders as very prepared, providing an indication that the training program for these session leaders was successful. Participants also cited the following regarding their disciplinary focus session leaders:

*“My disciplinary focus leader was awesome. She made being there enjoyable and had a good way of presenting her points.”*

*“It was very well structured, and delivered in a very enthusiastic, positive way. You could see that he was using the same things that he was listing as good teaching techniques, which was really cool to see. You got a visual demonstration of effective teaching techniques, and a model of what you should strive for.”*

*“My focus session leader was very energetic and encouraged feedback and participation from the entire group. She provided several useful examples from her own experiences as a graduate student and a TA that were very helpful.”*

In addition to the 14 TAO session leaders, 38 graduate students from 26 different departments helped lead the Practice Teaching sessions on the second day of TAO. These “near peers” were able to provide the new TAs with feedback on their teaching and insight into the unique aspects of teaching in their departments. Including the new TAs, session leaders, and practice teaching leaders, a total of 265 Vanderbilt graduate students were impacted in various ways by TAO 2007.

### 2007/08 Graduate Teaching Fellows



Eileen Campbell-Reed,  
Graduate Department  
of Religion



Rebecca Chapman,  
English



Michael Risen,  
Human Development  
Counseling



Laura Taylor,  
Graduate Department  
of Religion

### 2007/08 Teaching Affiliates



Debra Back,  
History



Bieke David,  
Psychology &  
Human  
Development



Eva Dessein,  
French & Italian



Saurav Dhital,  
Physics &  
Astronomy



Katherine Fusco,  
English



Ben Graydon,  
English



Mary Konkle,  
Chemistry



Arun Krishnan,  
Civil &  
Environmental  
Engineering



Sarah Musser,  
Chemistry



Rachel Nisselson,  
French & Italian



*“It was very useful to think about what issues we might encounter in the classroom, but of a greater value was how to think about presenting information to our students and involving them in their education.”*

**~ TAO 2007 Participant**

ITAP assists and supports international graduate students as they prepare for and begin their teaching duties at Vanderbilt. It is specifically designed for those international teaching assistants (ITAs) for whom English is not their first language and who have not completed a baccalaureate degree at an institution where English is the language of instruction. To learn more about ITAP, see [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate\\_student/itap.htm](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate_student/itap.htm).

## International Teaching Assistant Orientation (ITAO)

Hosted on August 20 and 21, 2007, ITAO introduced international teaching assistants to the culture of the American classroom and the International Teaching Assistant Program (ITAP), which helps them develop the English language and teaching skills needed to thrive in this culture. A total of 44 ITAs attended ITAO this year, with 26 students being placed into either an English course or the Teaching Practicum for further development.

## English Language Courses / Teaching Practicum

The Center for Teaching works in collaboration with the English Language Center (ELC) and departmental representatives to evaluate ITAs' language skills as they enter Vanderbilt and place ITAs into appropriate English language courses offered by the ELC. These courses typically include pronunciation, speaking and listening, and communication skills. In all courses, the emphasis is on helping ITAs improve their oral English language skills for the classroom so that they can become fully integrated into the academic community at Vanderbilt.

In addition to the language courses offered, the ELC and the CFT offer a semester-long course that presents ITAs a variety of practical means for improving their teaching. A combination of teaching workshops, classroom observations, interviews with undergraduates, and practice teaching, the Teaching Practicum gives ITAs the opportunity to learn more about teaching in the American classroom and to hone their teaching skills. Fourteen students completed the Teaching Practicum this past year.

## Student Consultant Program

The Student Consultant Program, run by ITAP, complements the work done in English language courses and the Teaching Practicum. Undergraduate students, working in pairs with one or more ITAs, assist international graduate students with language acquisition, familiarize ITAs with expectations in the American classroom, and serve as a resource about Vanderbilt culture. The English Language Center trains Language Partners to assist ITAs with language development, while the Center for Teaching trains Teaching Partners to work with ITAs on best practices in the American classroom. During the 2007/08 academic year, 24 undergraduate students served as either a Teaching Partner or a Language Partner.

### Countries represented by 2007/08 ITAP participants

- Brazil
- China
- Colombia
- Dominican Republic
- Ethiopia
- India
- Japan
- Poland
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Turkey

### Departments represented by 2007/08 ITAP participants

- Anthropology
- Biological Sciences
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Economics
- Electrical Engineering
- History
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Owen
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Spanish & Portuguese



Image: Steph & Adam/Flickr

## Teaching at Vanderbilt (TaV)

Every August the Office of the Provost and the Center for Teaching host "Teaching at Vanderbilt," an orientation for junior and senior faculty new to Vanderbilt. Held on August 24 and 27 in 2007, this event provided incoming faculty with an opportunity to meet with some of Vanderbilt's best teachers, as well as get to know other new faculty. It also explored what makes teaching at Vanderbilt unique--the kinds of students faculty encounter, the resources available to faculty, and the expectations of the University. Of the 134 new faculty members who joined Vanderbilt in 2007, 72 of them attended TaV. For more information about TaV, visit the Center for Teaching website at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/faculty/tav.htm>.

### Program Overview

The goals for this year's event were to 1) convey to new faculty that teaching is important and supported at Vanderbilt, 2) frame teaching as a scholarly activity integrated in Vanderbilt faculty life, 3) establish personal contact between each new faculty member and at least one Center senior staff member, and 4) inform new faculty of the Center's resources and services.

A comprehensive program was developed to accomplish these goals. The events agenda included an address from Associate Provost for Faculty, Timothy McNamara, on the faculty role in teaching and learning at Vanderbilt; an overview of the Center for Teaching's resources and initiatives in teaching at Vanderbilt by its Director, Allison Pingree; and roundtable lunch discussions facilitated by experienced faculty members of the Vanderbilt community and Center for Teaching staff.

A change to this year's program was the addition of case studies during the roundtable discussions designed to provide structure to the conversation. During the roundtable discussions, attendees were presented with two short case studies. In the first one, a faculty member grades the first major assignment of the course and finds out that many of the students performed poorly. In the second one, a faculty member finds that course preparation is taking far more time than anticipated. Each case studies featured the question "Which of the following actions would be most helpful?" along with several possible responses to the challenge posed in the case study. Discussion was facilitated and encouraged with the use of the Center's new classroom response system.

### Participant Feedback

Attendees were sent a ten-question feedback survey via SurveyMonkey after TaV; 33% of the attendees completed the survey. Of those responding, 92% indicated that they personally met at least one member of the CFT's staff and there was strong agreement to the statement "The event familiarized me with university resources and initiatives to support teaching and learning" (Mean = 4.33 on a scale of 1 to 5).

The free response comments were generally very positive, citing as valuable the opportunity to meet fellow faculty members, information about CFT resources for supporting teaching, and discussions about teaching. Below are a few representative excerpts:

*"Most helpful for me is always to know what resources are available, and where I can turn for what sort of information and advice. You did very well in not overloading us with lectures and explanations but giving out a nice portfolio and introducing your staff and goals, etc."*

*"Meeting faculty from other schools at Vandy. And I think it is good to signal Vandy's commitment to teaching."*

*"Overall, the event was very useful, and I appreciated the opportunity to have met faculty from other departments that I probably would have never gotten to meet."*

Associate Provost for Faculty, Timothy McNamara, discusses the faculty role in teaching and learning at Vanderbilt during new faculty orientation, otherwise known as TaV.



# 72

New Faculty  
Members  
Attended TaV

# 54%

of New Faculty  
attended TaV

# 14%

of TaV attendees  
followed-up with a  
consultation in Fall  
2007

Throughout the academic year, the Center for Teaching organizes workshops and working groups on a variety of teaching topics and issues for Vanderbilt faculty, graduate and professional students, post-doctoral fellows, staff, and others. To learn more about the Center for Teaching's Workshop and Working Group offerings, visit <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/workshops/index.htm>.

### Program Overview

In 2007/08 the Center for Teaching hosted a total of 19 workshops: 9 Teaching Workshops and 10 Conversations on Teaching.

In all, there were a total of 267 instances of participation at workshops with 195 unique participants. Graduate students and post-docs made up 53% of the attendees, while tenure-line faculty accounted for 19% of the total participants.

Our most popular offerings this year were the Conversations on Teaching workshops from the Technology, Values, and Teaching series co-hosted with the Center for Ethics. These four workshops garnered 87 instances of participation, 33% of the total instances of participation. The average attendance for these workshops was 22 people, 7 higher than the overall average.

### Teaching Workshops

These workshops focus on issues particularly relevant to first-time teachers. Drawing on research-based approaches, workshop facilitators enable participants to identify and address common challenges and opportunities in their teaching practice. Teaching Workshops are designed for and publicized to graduate students only.

### Conversations on Teaching

Conversations on Teaching focus on emergent pedagogical issues in an informal, roundtable format. Typically co-sponsored with other campus partners, these sessions often begin with perspectives from panelists and then open up to a larger group discussion.

### Working Groups

The CFT also organizes working groups—small cohorts of either faculty members or graduate students that meet several times a semester to discuss either a specific teaching practice or a more conceptual set of issues. During the 2007/08 academic year 12 graduate students and post-docs participated in the Teaching and Learning Reading Group and an additional 7 joined the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Working Group. Two faculty members participated in a Teaching with Technology in the Humanities working group. In summer 2008, an additional 5 faculty members will engage in a Course Design Working Group.

267

Instances of Participation at Workshops in 2007/08

195

Unique Participants at Workshops in 2007/08

24%

of unique workshop participants attended at least two workshops

15

Average Attendees/Workshop

19

Workshops Offered in 2007/08

#### 2007/08 Workshop Offerings

##### Teaching Workshops

- Advanced Classroom Lecturing: Engaging Students in Discussion
- Course Design 101
- Discussion Leading
- Grading for Humanities & Social Sciences
- Grading in Quantitative Disciplines
- Integrating Clickers
- Introduction to Clickers
- Podcasting: What Is It and Why Would You Want To Do It?
- Teaching Laboratory Classes

##### Conversations on Teaching

- *Assessing Student Learning Series*
  - Assessing Conceptual Understanding through Concept Inventories & Concept Maps
  - Assessing Critical Thinking through Rubrics
  - Assessing Oral Competencies
- *Teaching Writing at Vanderbilt Series (Co-sponsor: Undergraduate Writing Program)*
  - Leading a Writing Workshop
  - Responding to Student Writing
- *Technology, Values & Teaching Series (Co-sponsor: Center for Ethics)*
  - Laptops in the Classroom?: Pedagogical Pros & Cons
  - Pedagogy, Plagiarism, & Computer Technologies
  - Teaching in a Digital Age: How Should Technologies Shape Our Learning Space & Pedagogical Practices?
  - The Mediated Classroom: Ways That Computer & Other Technologies are Transforming the Space of Communication & Relationships
- Teaching as Research: A Roundtable Discussion with Carl Wieman for Scientists, Engineers, and Mathematicians (Co-sponsor: Department of Physics & Astronomy)

## Keeping Pace with the Present: Practical Approaches to Teaching Tomorrow's Learners

GradSTEP is a day-long exploration of teaching, learning and professional development issues across the disciplines. All graduate and professional students, as well as post-doctoral fellows, are invited to attend. This year's event was titled *Keeping Pace with the Present: Practical Approaches to Teaching Tomorrow's Learners* and was hosted on Saturday, January 19, 2008. 76 participants attended, 74% of whom represented the STEM disciplines. To learn more about GradSTEP 2008, see [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate\\_student/gradstep.htm](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate_student/gradstep.htm).

### Program Overview

Attendees at GradSTEP 2008 had the opportunity to attend two of seven workshops facilitated by members of the Center for Teaching staff. Topics included service learning, engaging learners with Web 2.0 technologies, classroom assessment techniques, critical thinking, strategies for effective public speaking, and preparing teaching statements and portfolios.

Dr. Elizabeth F. Barkley gave this year's plenary address. Dr. Barkley is an Instructor of Music at Foothill College in California and co-author of *Collaborative Learning Techniques*. Her interactive discussion on how to engage undergraduate students in the learning process allowed attendees to witness first-hand the techniques she was discussing. The conversation continued during a follow-up workshop with conference participants.



An addition to this year's program was a wrap-up session featuring a "Talk Back" with 4 undergraduate students and a high school senior. These five students attended various workshops throughout the conference and then provided reflections on what they heard during a final conversation with conference attendees. Participants were then invited to ask questions regarding the students' experiences.

### Participant Feedback

Following GradSTEP participants were asked to complete an eight-question survey. Of the 76 people who attended, 43 responded, a response rate of 57%.

Those who responded to the survey rated the program highly. For example, participants at GradSTEP 2008 strongly agreed with the statement "Based on my reason for attending, GradSTEP 2008 met my expectations" (Mean = 4.26 on a scale of 1 to 5).

When asked "The most important thing I am taking away from GradSTEP is..." 47% of the respondents indicated practical strategies/tips as most helpful. One respondent remarked that

*"Some of the techniques described (many of which I'd already heard and know) – it was great to have them actually modeled and for me to participate in them."*

An additional 26% respondents mentioned rethinking the relationship between student learning and technology as most important. Three respondents noted that GradSTEP helped empower them as a teacher and/or build a teaching community.

Although the survey did not specifically ask about the wrap-up session, one participant appreciated the undergraduates' helpfulness and wrote,

*"The idea of having a feedback session by the undergrads was very helpful in seeing their perspective and how this event on the whole made an impact on them."*

Participants of GradSTEP 2008 were also asked to fill out a survey on the day of the event for each workshop they attended. The post-workshop feedback forms revealed that in all 7 workshops, students either agreed or strongly agreed that the session was useful.

*"This was my first GradSTEP. The MOST important thing I'm taking away is not a fact or a tip, but a sense of empowerment. I want to be a good teacher, but I've never understood how to get there. It's empowering to know there are strategies and methods."*

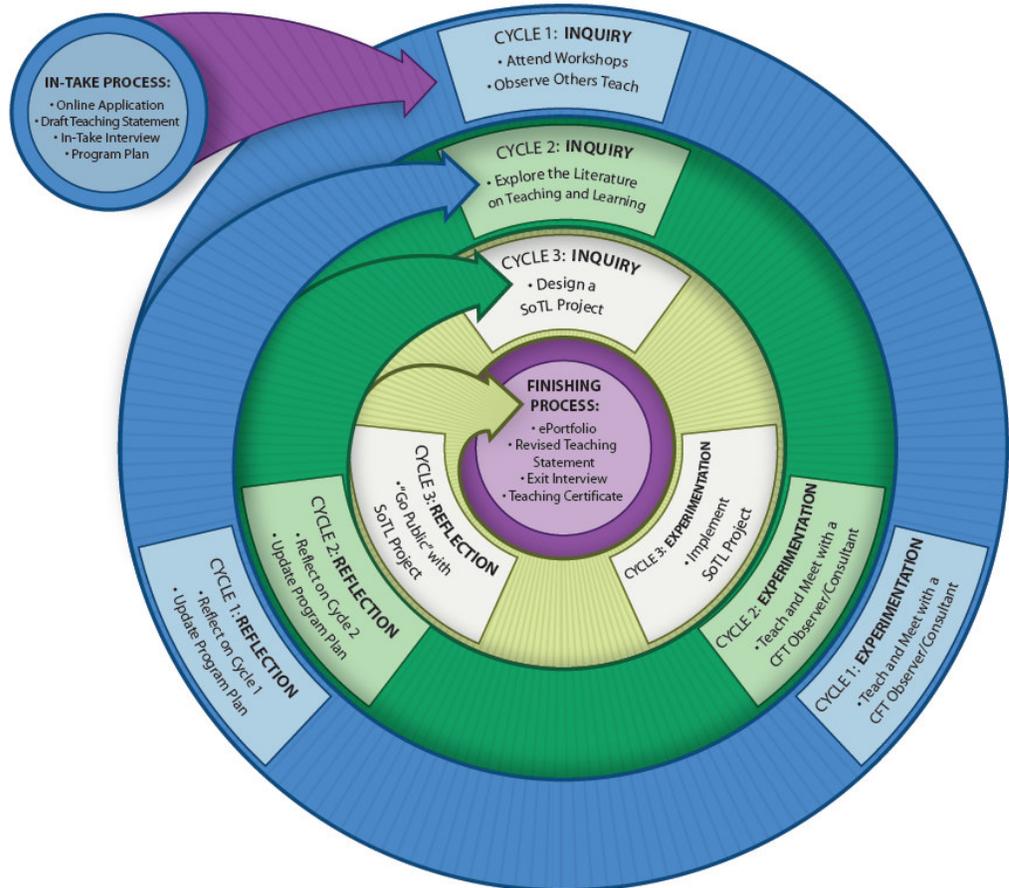
*~ GradSTEP 2008 Participant*

The Teaching Certificate program has been designed to help graduate and professional students and post-doctoral fellows develop and refine their teaching skills through three cycles of teaching activities, each consisting of inquiry, experimentation, and reflection phases. Participants who complete the program receive a Teaching Certificate from the Graduate School and the Center for Teaching. At the conclusion of the 2007/08 academic year, a total of 11 people had completed the program. Another 14 participants are actively engaged in the process. Visit [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate\\_student/tc.htm](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft/programs/graduate_student/tc.htm) for more information on the Teaching Certificate program.

## Program Overview

The Teaching Certificate program is made up of three cycles, each of which includes phases of inquiry, experimentation and reflection.

- **Cycle One: Building a Teaching Foundation**—The purpose of this cycle is to build a strong foundation of understanding and practice in basic teaching practices. During the cycle, participants focus on one or more teaching practices to develop and/or refine.
- **Cycle Two: Putting Pedagogical Theory into Practice**—During the second cycle, participants directly engage the literature on teaching and learning in higher education.
- **Cycle Three: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning**—In the third cycle, participants design and implement a scholarly project on student learning, joining a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Working Group for this purpose. The goal is for participants to reflect on their own teaching by analyzing evidence of student learning.



Teaching Certificate Program Participants (as of May 2008)

79

Applications

53

In-Take Interviews

25

Cycle 1 Completed

18

Cycle 2 Completed

11

Program Completed

# Teaching Certificate Program

## Participant Feedback

Higher Education Leadership and Policy doctoral students Mark Bryant and Chris Rowe conducted an assessment of the Teaching Certificate program during the 2007/08 academic year. Through document analysis and participant interviews they discovered an indication of improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the following areas:

- Undergraduate teaching and learning
- Self-assessment of personal teaching practice
- Engagement in teaching communities
- Realization of ways to approach teaching as a scholarly activity

Participant interviews also revealed the following:

- Participants are intentional about measuring student learning as an indicator of their effectiveness as teachers.
- Participants expressed a desire for engagement regarding their teaching with peers and colleagues.
- Usefulness of teaching skills in current doctoral work varied with teaching opportunities.
- Participants responded favorably about their experience in the program.
- Time flexibility is a critical component to participants' success.
- Departmental perception of the programs usually either insignificant or supportive.

## Teaching Partners Pilot

A "Teaching Partners" pilot program was implemented this year. The goal of the Teaching Partners program was to provide a faculty member with resources for designing and assessing curricular innovations, provide a graduate student with training and development in the design and assessment of teaching and learning activities, and benefit the learning of undergraduate students through the development and assessment of curricular innovations.

This year, Sandra Rosenthal, Associate Professor of Chemistry, and Timothy Troyer, chemistry graduate student, participated in the pilot program. Professor Rosenthal obtained funding from the CFT and from the Dean of the College of Arts & Science to fund a graduate student teaching assistant for one semester to assist her in the design, implementation, and assessment of curricular innovations in her general chemistry course. Their project was entitled "Assessing the Impact of Chemistry-in-Context: Vignettes on Student Engagement and Learning." Tim presented on the project at Vanderbilt's Graduate Student Research Day, and highlighted his participation in the project during his successful search for faculty positions this spring.

In the coming year, the CFT plans to partner with the CIRTL (Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning) Network to expand the program to more faculty and graduate students in the STEM disciplines.

2007/08 graduates of the Teaching Certificate program pose with Dennis Hall, Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education and Allison Pingree, Director of the CFT at the annual Celebration of Teaching event hosted by the Center for Teaching on April 30, 2008.



## 2007/08 Teaching Certificate Program Graduates

Holly Algood,  
Infectious Diseases

Katherine Fusco,  
English

Brandon Lute,  
Neuroscience

Rachel Nisselson,  
French

Gladys Robalino,  
Spanish

Kylee Spencer,  
Human Genetics

Leah Spradley,  
Civil & Environmental  
Engineering

Timothy Troyer,  
Chemistry

## Program Overview

On Wednesday, April 30th the Center for Teaching hosted a Celebration of Teaching in conjunction with the Graduate School. The event celebrated the part of the Vanderbilt culture that practices, values, and rewards university teaching and learning as vital forms of scholarships.

This year's celebration paid particular honor to two groups on campus: those who won university- or school-based teaching awards during the past year, and the 2007-2008 graduates from the Center for Teaching's Teaching Certificate program.

Highlights of the event included a reception with music provided by a Blair School of Music student string quartet, opening remarks by Associate Provost for Faculty, Timothy McNamara, and an overview of the Center for Teaching's outreach over this past year provided by Allison Pingree, Director of the Center for Teaching.

The event concluded with the recognizing of this past year's Teaching Award honorees, reflections on teaching given by Rachel Nisselson (French) and Timothy Troyer (Chemistry), 2007-2008 graduate of the Teaching Certificate program, and the awarding of the Teaching Certificates by Dennis Hall, Associate Provost of Research and Graduate Education, to this year's finishers.



Images: John Russell/  
Vanderbilt University





## **Research, Resources & Outreach**

***The CFT creates and disseminates research-based best practices, models, and approaches to university teaching and learning — and facilitate access to resources that support them.***



June 1, 2007—  
May 31, 2008  
CFT Website Data

91,980

Visitors to CFT  
Website

72,671

Unique Visitors to  
CFT Website

9,923

Visitors to CFT  
Website from  
Nashville

514

Podcast Downloads  
since 2/17/08

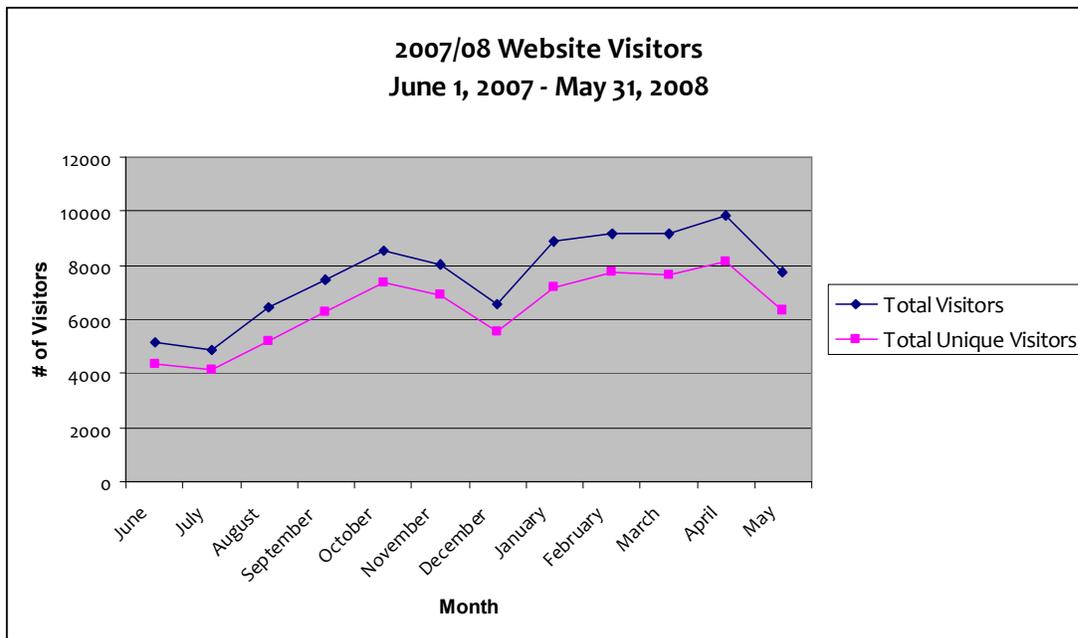
### Website

The website continues to serve as an important tool for disseminating research-based best practices and information regarding center activities. Between the months of June 2007 and May 2008 the CFT website received 91,980 visits from 72,671 people.

### Visitor Overview

- 91,980 visitors to CFT website
- 72,671 unique visitors; 21% return rate
- 9,923\* (10.5%) from Nashville

\* This number only includes data from those visitors who have designated a city with their IP address; 3,047 have no designation, therefore the actual number may be higher.



### Site Usage

- 76.98% of visitors spend less than 10 seconds on our site; average time is 1 min., 20 sec.
  - o Nashville visitor average time is 2 min., 24 sec.
- 85.4% of the visitors to our site visit 2 pages or less
  - o Nashville visitor average is 2.91 pages

### Content/Traffic Sources

- Top 5 Teaching Guides (# pageviews)
  - o Classroom Response Systems (12,248)
  - o Diversity & Inclusive Teaching (8,553)
  - o Motivating Students (6,947)
  - o Problem Solving (3,283)
  - o Bloom’s Taxonomy (3,265)
- 61,841 Visitors were directed to our site via a search engine keyword
- Top 5 Keywords (# visits from keyword)
  - o Team Teaching (1,772)
  - o Motivating Students (1,683)
  - o Cooperative Learning (990)
  - o Course Design (837)
  - o Diversity in the Classroom (666)

## Website, Podcasts & Library

### Teaching Guides

Throughout the years, senior members of the Center for Teaching staff have prepared guides to a variety of teaching topics with summaries of best practices, links to other online resources, and information about local Vanderbilt resources. Referred to as “Teaching Guides”, these compiled write-ups are made available on the website. During 2007/08 the following Teaching Guides were either created or updated.

#### Updated Teaching Guides

- Teaching Activities: Writing Activities
- Reflecting on Your Teaching: Teaching Statements
- Interactions with Students: Motivating Students

#### Newly Added Teaching Guides

- Technology & Teaching: Blogs & Wikis
- Technology & Teaching: Learning Spaces
- Technology & Teaching: Podcasting
- Teaching Activities: Mentoring Graduate Students

### Podcasts

The Center for Teaching published its first-ever Podcast interview on December 28, 2007. The interview featured Chancellor’s Professor of History, Michael Bess discussing his uses of Wikipedia in the classroom. Since then, the CFT has published three additional Podcasts featuring faculty from Economics, Chemistry and Biomedical Engineering. A fifth podcast was added at the end of May featuring an interview with James Lang, associate professor of English at Assumption College. Since February 8, 2008, the Podcast website has received 765 visitors; 38% from the Nashville area, indicating that perhaps a third of the podcast’s listeners are affiliated with Vanderbilt.

| Episode                                     | Date Posted | Downloads from Feed (since 12/28/08) | Downloads from Web Site (since 2/8/08) | Plays from Web Site (since 2/17/08) | Total      |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 01 — Michael Bess – Wikipedia               | 12/28/07    | 66                                   | 29*                                    | 1*                                  | 96         |
| 02 – Stephen Buckles – Clickers             | 12/28/07    | 81                                   | 20*                                    | 13*                                 | 114        |
| 03 – Michelle Sulikowski – SafeAssign       | 1/24/08     | 61                                   | 13*                                    | 9*                                  | 83         |
| 04 – Duco Jansen – Laptops in the Classroom | 2/7/08      | 101                                  | 65                                     | 3*                                  | 169        |
| 05—James Lange—Teaching First-years         | 5/27/08     | 38                                   | 12                                     | 2                                   | 52         |
| <b>Total</b>                                |             | <b>347</b>                           | <b>139</b>                             | <b>28</b>                           | <b>514</b> |

\* = Tracking mechanism was implemented after this episode was posted. Actual number of downloads / plays may be higher.

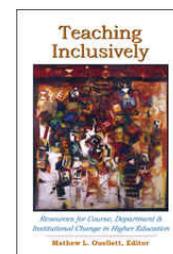
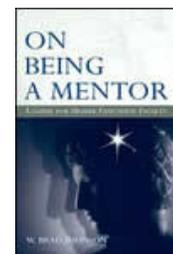
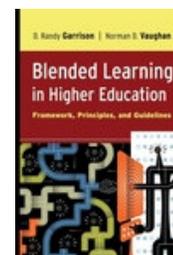
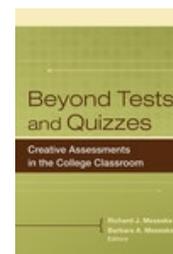
### Library

The Center has a steadily growing library related to teaching and learning, including books, journals, videotapes and DVDs, and articles. The library holdings are listed in [ACORN](#), Vanderbilt’s online library catalog. These holdings address a variety of issues, and are particularly rich in the areas of active and collaborative learning, course design, assessment, educational theory, and professional development.

- 715 Library Holdings Listed in ACORN
  - 691 Books
  - 9 Reference Books
  - 15 Videotapes
- 11 Journal Subscriptions
- 78 items checked out in 2007/08 by 53 users
- 14 new acquisitions in 2007/08



### Sample of 2007/08 Library Acquisitions



In addition to their work in consultations and programs, CFT staff contribute to the Vanderbilt community by teaching credit-bearing courses, offering presentations and tailored workshops, and serving on committees and in other liaison capacities. The following represents highlights of this work from 2007/08:

### Teaching at Vanderbilt

#### Fall 2007

- FREN 261 (The Age of Louis XIV)
- Vanderbilt Visions (2 sections)

#### Spring 2008

- MUSL 278 (Music and Religion: God in Music City - undergraduate seminar, Blair)
- MATH 216 (Introduction to Probability and Statistics for Engineers)
- Oceans (Weekend seminar, Vanderbilt Program for Talented Youth)
- Vanderbilt Visions (2 sections)

### Liaison Collaborations / Presentations / Events at Vanderbilt

#### Biological Sciences:

- Designed a half-day training session for BSCI 111a lab TAs and discussion leaders—August 2007

#### Center for Ethics

- Collaborated to host four Conversations on Teaching workshops

#### Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL):

- Met with CIRTL Assessment Team during site visit - February 2008
- Coordinated “Teaching-as-Research: A Roundtable Discussion with Carl Wieman for Scientists, Engineers, and Mathematicians,” with CIRTL and the Department of Physics - April 2008.
- Attended CIRTL Forum, Madison, Wisconsin - June 2008.

#### Center for Science Outreach - School for Science and Math

- Math Mentoring Workshop—February 5, 2008

#### Center for the Study of Religion and Culture:

God in Music City: a semester-long series of events including the release of a CD compilation, a bus tour of Nashville houses of worship, musical events throughout the city, and a capstone conference—all a culmination of Music, Religion and the South: An Interdisciplinary Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (3-year project funded by the CSRC)

- Guest on *Issues in Faith* talk show, Channel 5 - Taped January 23, 2008
- Presentation to the Nashville Chapter of the Religion Communicators Council - a national organization of communication professionals working in religion environments - March 19, 2008
- God in Music City Conference workshop: “Using Music to Explore and Expand Religious Identity in Teaching and Preaching”

#### Chemistry Department:

- Developed Teaching Affiliate-led sessions for the Chemistry Department teaching assistant training hosted the week prior to TAO—August 2007
- Presented on opportunities for graduate student teaching projects at a faculty meeting- May 2008

#### College of Arts & Science

- Pre-Major Advising

#### English Language Center

- Shared administrative responsibility for the International Teaching Assistant Program

#### Graduate Department of Religion

- Led workshops on grading students writing—Fall 2007 & Spring 2008

## Contributions to the Vanderbilt Community

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### **Human & Organizational Development:**

- Course Design Working Group for faculty cohort

### **Mathematics Department** — Presentations in

- Teaching seminar for first-year graduate students
- Undergraduate Mathematics Seminar
- First-year seminar on mathematics and games

### **McTyeire Residence Hall:**

- Faculty Adviser, French Hall—Fall 2007

### **Medical School:**

- Small Group Discussion-Leading workshop for Intersession group leaders, Microbiology and Infectious Diseases - April 2008

### **Nursing:**

- Two curriculum design sessions for the Family Nurse Practitioner program— January & October 2007
- Two-part curriculum design process for the Midwifery Program faculty—Summer 2007
- Curriculum design presentation for graduate course on teaching—summer 2008

### **Physics:**

- Trained a member of the Physics department in how to conduct an SGA in order to assist in the assessment of their developing lab program—Fall 2007

### **Professional & Career Development Series:**

- Co-sponsored A&S mentoring program for junior faculty

### **Special Education**

- Presented on course design in graduate course on leadership in special education

### **Teaching & Learning**

- Undergraduate course on teaching mathematics in elementary school

### **University Library:**

- Assisted university librarians in facilitation of sessions on information literacy for all Vanderbilt Visions sections
- Met with candidates for University Librarian search

### **Vanderbilt Visions:**

- Provided design, facilitation and resources for VUceptor Training - August 2007

### **Vanderbilt Initiative for Scholarship and Global Engagement (VISAGE):**

- Curriculum and Assessment Planning

## **Committee Work / Other Service at Vanderbilt**

### **CFT Staff served on the following committees across the university:**

- Ad Hoc Committee on Classroom Response System Adoption
- Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Academic Policies
- Committee on Undergraduate Information Literacy
- Graduate Student Professional & Personal Development Collaborative
- Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life (Warren Center)
- Master Clinical Teachers / Clinical Transaction Project (Medical School)
- Peabody College Faculty Teaching Committee
- Quality Enhancement Plan Assessment Committee
- Vanderbilt Assessment Implementation Committee
- Vanderbilt Visions Executive Committee
- Writing Advisory Board

The Center for Teaching staff develop and disseminate our scholarly work through publications, presentations, and interactions with other professionals in the educational development field. Listed below is a summary of scholarly publications and presentations by CFT staff during 2007/08:

### Conferences / Invited Presentations

- Armstrong, Patricia (co-facilitated). "Training Graduate Students to be Effective Peer TA Developers," Professional & Organizational Development (POD) Network Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, October 2007.
- Armstrong, Patricia. "Introducing Undergraduate Research into a 17<sup>th</sup>-century French Literature Seminar," Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Chicago, December 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "An Introduction to Teaching with Clickers," Castleton State College, Vermont, September 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Classroom Response Systems: An Introduction to Teaching with Clickers," University of Georgia, October 2007.
- Bruff, Derek (with Don Gillian-Daniel, Jennifer Robinson, Don Wulff). "Supporting Graduate Student Scholarship of Teaching and Learning," Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, October 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Classroom Response Systems: Teaching with Clickers," Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT) Group's FridayLive Web Conference, November 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Classroom Response systems: Teaching with Clickers," Middle Tennessee Math Teachers Conference, Nashville, November 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Thoughts on Backchannels," Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT) Group's FridayLive Web Conference, December 2007.
- Bruff, Derek (with Kelly Cline, Matthew Leingang, Mark Parker, Holly Zullo). "Teaching with Clickers," Joint Mathematics Meetings, San Diego, January 2008.
- Bruff, Derek. "Clickers as Tools for Engagement: Removing 'Cloaks of Invisibility,'" Teaching, Learning, and Technology (TLT) Group's FridayLive Web Conference, March 2008.
- Bruff, Derek. "Teaching with Clickers: Engaging and Assessing Students with Classroom Response Systems," San Joaquin Delta Community College, California, April 2008.
- Bruff, Derek. "Connecting In- and Out-of-Class Learning Experiences through Pre-Class Reading Quizzes in Statistics," London Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference, May 2008.
- Bruff, Derek. "Valuing and Evaluating Teaching in the Mathematics Faculty Hiring Process," Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning Forum, Madison, Wisconsin, June 2008.
- Pingree, Allison (with Virginia Lee and Douglas Robertson). "Uncovering the Heart in Higher Education: Implications for Educational Development," Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, October 2007.
- Pingree, Allison (with Patricia Breivik, Ralph Wolff, Louise Kelly and Jo Bell Whitlatch). "Assessment and Accreditation as Tools for Library Management and Public Relations." Summer Institute for Academic Library Leadership, July 2008.

### Publications

- Armstrong, Patricia. "Introducing Undergraduate Research into a 17<sup>th</sup>-century French Literature Seminar," *Council on Undergraduate Research publication*, 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "A TA Orientation Plenary Session on University Policies and Resources for Teaching," in *Strategies for Teaching Assistant and International Teaching Assistant Development: Beyond Microteaching*, edited by Catherine Ross and Jane Dunphy, Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Valuing and Evaluating Teaching in the Mathematics Faculty Hiring Process," *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*, Vol. 54, No. 10, 2007.
- Bruff, Derek. "Clickers: A Classroom Innovation," *National Education Association Advocate*, Vol. 25, No. 1., 2007.
- Pingree, Allison. "Teaching, Learning and Spirituality in the College Classroom." *Essays on Teaching Excellence*, Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, 2007/08.



# *CFT People & Places*

## Full-time Staff & Advisory Board Members

### Full-time Staff

The Center for Teaching said “goodbye” to a number of staff in 2007/08. In September 2007 Joyce Bartlomain, Administrative Assistant, left the CFT to move back to California for family reasons. During that same month Program Coordinator Carolyn Miller accepted a position as Activities Coordinator with the Vanderbilt International Office. In April 2008, Jeff Johnston moved to Washington for family reasons.

With each goodbye the Center also said “welcome” to new members of the staff. We welcomed both Julie Shadburne, Administrative Assistant, and Melissa Krasnove, Program Coordinator in October 2007. Kat Baker, Assistant Director, joined the staff in June 2008.



Allison Pingree,  
Director



Patricia Armstrong,  
Assistant Director



Kat Baker,  
Assistant Director  
(June 2008—Present)



Derek Bruff,  
Assistant Director



Jeff Johnston,  
Assistant Director  
(through April)



Joyce Bartlomain,  
Administrative  
Assistant  
(June – September)



Melissa Krasnove,  
Program  
Coordinator  
(October—Present)



Carolyn Miller,  
Program  
Coordinator  
(June – September)



Melissa Penix,  
Administrative  
Assistant



Julie Shadburne,  
Administrative  
Assistant  
(October – Present)

### Advisory Board Members

The following faculty members, university administrators, and students served as members of the CFT’s Advisory Board during 2007/08, which met twice this year.

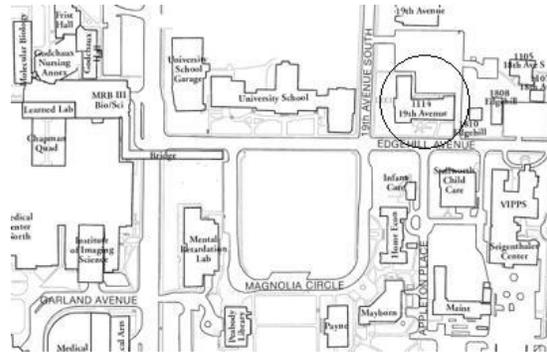
| <b>Advisory Board Member</b>                | <b>Department</b>                              |
|---|--|
| Roberta Bell                                | Vanderbilt Institutional Research Group        |
| Stephen Buckles                             | Department of Economics                        |
| Marshall C. Eakin ( <i>Board Co-Chair</i> ) | Department of History                          |
| Paul Gherman                                | Jean and Alexander Heard Library               |
| Nancy Lea Hyer                              | Owen Graduate School of Management             |
| Anita Mahadevan-Jansen                      | Biomedical Engineering                         |
| Sarah Kersh                                 | Department of English/Graduate Student Council |
| Kimberly Lomis                              | Division of General Surgery                    |
| Richard Nagareda                            | Law School                                     |
| Kenneth Schriver                            | Department of Physics and Astronomy            |
| John Shatzer                                | Office for Teaching & Learning in Medicine     |
| Marcy Singer-Gabella                        | Department of Teaching and Learning            |
| Melissa Snarr                               | Divinity School/Graduate Division of Religion  |
| Patricia Trangenstein                       | School of Nursing                              |
| Mark Wait                                   | Blair School of Music                          |
| Francis Wcislo                              | Dean of the Commons/Department of History      |

## Office Location—Old & New



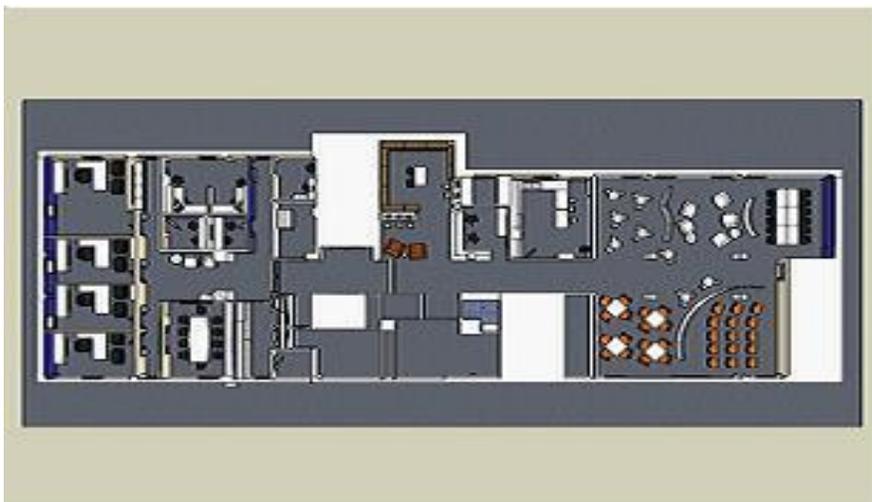
In August of 2008, the Center for Teaching will say goodbye to its home of 15 years in rooms 116 and 007 of Calhoun Hall. The Center will begin its next chapter in August of 2008 when the doors open to its new home, 1114 19th Avenue South.

Located at the corner of 19th and Edgehill, the new space will offer the Vanderbilt teaching community opportunities to discover, experiment, reflect and rejuvenate.



The new Center for Teaching home will include:

- A large, flexible workshop space for 50-75 people equipped with moveable work walls and presentation technologies
- An expanded library area for faculty to study and prepare for class while browsing through the latest collection of books on teaching
- Opportunities to try-out new technologies such as clickers and tablet PCs
- Wireless internet capabilities
- Conference room equipped with a smart board
- Private office spaces for members of the Center for Teaching staff



Architectural drawing of the new Center for Teaching space. Image provided by Hastings Architecture of Nashville.





**Center for Teaching**

Vanderbilt University

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[www.vanderbilt.edu/cft](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cft)