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# **CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



## THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This is the inaugural annual report for the new Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The official name change was approved by the Board of Trustees on December 3, 2014. During the past academic year the center has been targeting workshops, presentations, and other services that support the new focus and mission outlined by the Faculty Professional Development Center (FPDC) Re-design Steering Committee.

The committee recommended that the FPDC narrow its focus to primarily issues of teaching and learning at Kent State. This report outlines the work conducted by the center over the academic year that reflects our mission.

“The Center for Teaching and Learning has a primary mission to provide opportunities, leadership, and support for all faculty to grow in their scholarly and professional endeavors. The long term aim is to support community members in the process of creating, transforming, and/or maintaining Kent State University’s environments for learning as spaces where all students can succeed.”

## FOUR AREAS OF SERVICE

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- Connect, network, and support continuity in opportunities for faculty to explore, research, and support student learning.
- Serve as a portal of all information and services related to faculty at Kent State University.
- Offer expertise and consultation related to specific areas of scholarship and professional issues related to teaching and learning.
- Provide peer review and guidance on teaching innovations and improvement.

<b>*FACULTY INTERACTION</b>	<b>2013–2014</b> <small>Actual</small>	<b>2014–2015</b> <small>Goals / Actual</small>	<b>2015–2016</b> <small>Goals</small>
<i>Mild</i>	<b>475</b>	<b>525 / 673</b>	<b>550</b>
<i>Moderate</i>	<b>105</b>	<b>200 / 402</b>	<b>250</b>
<i>Intense</i>	<b>44</b>	<b>60 / 61</b>	<b>65</b>

\***Mild Interaction** is associated with large workshops, lectures, and short meetings.  
**Moderate Interaction** is associated with small group workshops and trainings.  
**Intense Interaction** is associated with one-to-one sessions and peer reviews.

<b>SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE</b>	<b>2013–2014</b> <small>Actual</small>	<b>2014–2015</b> <small>Goals / Actual</small>	<b>2015–2016</b> <small>Goals</small>
<i>Twitter</i>	<b>78</b>	<b>103 / 136</b> (followers) <b>188</b> (following) <b>113</b> (tweets)	<b>150</b>
<i>Facebook</i>	<b>110</b>	<b>145 / 132</b>	<b>150</b>
<i>Blackboard Learn</i>	<b>77</b>	<b>177 / 304</b>	<b>350</b>

## JUST AT A QUICK GLANCE...

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The impact of the center is captured in the chart on the previous page. Without question, in each area the CTL has expanded its outreach with the faculty. Additionally, in all areas but one (Facebook) the CTL exceeded the goals for the year. In mild and moderate faculty interactions as well as Blackboard enrollees the CTL had great success. The expectations in these areas will be adjusted as the goals are set for the next academic year. The following report, outlined by the four areas of service, provides a more detail description of these efforts.







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## PART I

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This part of the Center for Teaching and Learning mission is to assure that we are creating an environment at this university in which faculty can have access, through colleagues and relevant literature from the field, to the best practices that improve student learning environments. The Center for Teaching and Learning efforts in this area included the following.

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### ***Creation of the Intercultural Faculty Fellows Program***

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The Center for Teaching and Learning supported the development and delivery of a semester long program called "Enhancing Teaching and Learning in Kent State University's Intercultural Classrooms and Community" for the Fall 2014 semester. The program was developed and facilitated by Ken Cushner, Ed.D. serving as one of the first CTL Faculty Fellows.

Two of the goals of this program included: (1) Gaining a better understanding of the potential conflict between one's preferred teaching style and the range of learning styles and experiences international students may bring to the classroom, and (2) An increased consideration of culturally responsive ways to modify and/or enhance teaching practices and assessment strategies.

For more information go to <http://www.kent.edu/ctl/intercultural-faculty-scholars>

### ***Collaborated with Office of Global Education (OGE) and the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to deliver intercultural workshops for faculty***

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The goal of these workshops were to provide faculty with information and support to be better prepared for the ever changing cultural realities of our classrooms. Five different workshops for five different colleges were conducted over the academic year.

### ***Cohosted the Faculty Club during Faculty Appreciation Week.***

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This Thursday evening event is one of the highlights of the week that allows faculty to connect with colleagues from all of the campuses.

### ***Hosted a breakfast with Dr. Erica Suchman on teaching in the sciences.***

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Dr. Erica Suchman, a national expert in university science teaching, was a guest of the Biological Sciences Department. The Center for Teaching and Learning hosted a breakfast to allow colleagues from the sciences to discuss with her general issues in science teaching as well as the scholarship of teaching and learning.

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***Provided support for the first Science of Learning and Education Center (SOLE) conference.***

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The new SOLE center hosted their first conference in the 2014 fall semester. The CTL recorded each session and provided support for posting the recordings for future faculty use. This has started a partnership that is leading to other important collaborations.

***Completed the approval process for the newly structured Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Council.***

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As recommended by the FPDC Re-design Steering Committee, the new center needed to revisit the size and structure of its advisory council. Through the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees, this process was completed this past year and the newly formed advisory council will meet for the first time in early September 2015.

***University Teaching Council support.***

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Like the predecessor (FPDC), The CTL continued to support the work of the University Teaching Council. This includes managing the grant accounts and paperwork, updating the UTC website, providing support for the annual conference on college teaching, as well as general guidance on university policy and procedures.

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## PART II

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One of the concerns expressed when redefining the mission of the former center (FPDC) was that faculty would have a difficult time finding the general professional development support they needed to be successful. The Center for Teaching and Learning is committed to serving as a liaison to faculty services and striving to find ways to make it easy for faculty to identify support services. Center for Teaching and Learning's efforts over the past academic year in this area included the following.

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### ***Created and unveiled the FlashPort.***

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With the new focus of the center, the FPDC Re-design Steering Committee was concerned that there would not be a place on campus for faculty to easily access important faculty development support. The FlashPort was created to address the concern. The FlashPort serves as a faculty development informational support hub. For more information on the FlashPort, please visit <http://www.kent.edu/flashport>.

### ***Created a full-time position (Portal Liaison/Teaching Associate) to provide support for the FlashPort and the newly implemented FlashFolio.***

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The Center for Teaching and Learning has been given the charge to maintain the FlashPort and to provide faculty support for the new electronic portfolio system called FlashFolio. A new person has been hired to provide support for both of these additions. This provides faculty with consistent and direct support for their professional portfolios as well as information concerning broader professional needs.

### ***Participated in the "My KSU" campus visits.***

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During the 2015 spring semester the CTL participated in the Division of Human Resources "My KSU" campus visits. Many offices from across the university visited each regional campus to provide information directly to staff and faculty.

### ***Participated in the New Faculty Orientation.***

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Each year, the Office of Faculty Affairs plans a one day new faculty orientation. The Center for Teaching and Learning is a significant part of this planning and provides an informational session for new faculty members.

### ***Personally visited with 50 of the 64 new faculty hired last year.***

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The Director of the CTL sends out an invitation to all new faculty to meet with them during their first semester on campus to welcome them to the university and address any questions or concerns. This year the director met with 50 faculty. Thirteen did not respond and one declined the invitation.

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## PART III

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The focus of this element of the center's mission is to provide faculty with events and opportunities that showcase their best work in the field of teaching and learning. Experts from both outside and within the university highlighted their work in the following Center for Teaching and Learning programs and events.

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### ***Created and implemented the Faculty Fellows program.***

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One of the critical issues identified by the FPDC Re-design Steering Committee was the void in leadership that occurred when the previous director retired. The committee suggested that faculty have the opportunity to work closely in the center to consider the professional option of faculty development in the future. This led to the idea of the Faculty Fellows program.

The expectation of the program is that the selected fellows will serve as a mentor/support for other faculty within their chosen topic, create a university-wide workshop on their topic, create a deliverable (article, white paper, learning module) for future faculty use and participate, as much as possible, in the broader workings of the center. The first cohort of Faculty Fellows and their individual projects is discussed in more detail on the CTL webpage (<http://www.kent.edu/ctl/faculty-fellows>).

### ***Continued the Teaching Scholars Program***

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For over 12 years the FPDC and now the CTL has continued support for the Teaching Scholars Program. This program is built around collaborative relationships with interdisciplinary faculty colleagues engaging in the scholarly examination of learning. The primary goal of this program is to support faculty in the design, implementation, and assessment of scholarly projects that identify and create significant learning environments.

The broad aims of the program include:

- Assessing, developing, and enhancing student learning
- Building an interdisciplinary community of scholars around learning and teaching
- Building strategies for the scholarly study of student learning
- Identifying, through research, elements of significant learning environments

There were eight participants in the program this year. The program and the participants are discussed in more detail at the CTL website (<http://www.kent.edu/ctl/teaching-scholars>).

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### ***Hosted three campus-wide larger events.***

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During the 2014 fall semester, world renowned speaker and author Ken Bain was invited to the campus to discuss a variety of issues concerning the student learning. On Thursday evening he presented an overview of the practices associated with the best college teachers. On Friday morning he conducted a workshop entitled “The Promising Syllabus.” Based on his extensive study of highly successful college educators, Ken Bain has identified critical elements to the course syllabus and in this workshop he worked with faculty on how to incorporate these elements. Finally, on Friday afternoon he addressed his recent book, ‘What the Best College Students Do,’ and identified the key attitudes that distinguish the best college students from their peers. All three events were well attended and received very positive reviews.

In the 2015 spring semester the Teaching Scholars conducted a university-wide workshop entitled “Rethinking Evidence of Quality Teaching: A Multi-Faceted Approach”. Current student-driven models of the evaluation of teaching only capture a portion of the classroom experience. A better model would incorporate growth and development, best practices, and insightful formative assessments. In this session the scholars modeled for participants how a greater understanding of the scholarship and practices associated with mentorship, peer reviews, student input, and self-reflections could help to craft a teaching portfolio that captures the complexity teaching.

Also in the 2015 spring semester, as part of Faculty Appreciation Week, the Faculty Fellows hosted an event entitled “Faculty Success: New Perspectives on Teaching, Faculty Leadership and Mid-Career Development”. During this workshop the Faculty Fellows led a discussion on their respective areas of study. Chris Was and Swathi Ravichandran focused their efforts on specific strategies faculty can use to improve student learning. Dr. Was’ project examined how faculty’s metacognitive and self-regulation strategies influence factors such as student engagement and achievement of course objectives. Dr. Ravichandran’s project focused on identifying faculty strategies that can support the writing challenges faced by international students. Kathryn Kerns’ work identified programming and institutional strategies that can be implemented to support faculty development beyond the tenure process. Ken Cushner discussed the semester long train-the-trainer program developed to prepare faculty leaders in the area of international and intercultural student issues.

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### ***New Teaching Assistant workshop and orientation events***

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Each year the director of the center is invited to speak at the Graduate Student Orientation for new teaching assistants. The title of the talk this year was “Inviting your Students’ Brains to Class”. Additionally, the director provided a mid-year workshop for the Graduate Professional and Academic Development program entitled “Why? Why? Why?: Five questions (at least) you’ve always had about your students but were afraid to ask”. This year the center also provided resource information at the Graduate Student Resource Fair.

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## PART IV

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One-on-one consultation and guidance as well as focused workshops provide important opportunities for improvement. The Center for Teaching and Learning efforts in this area over the past year include the following.

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### ***Conducted multiple peer reviews.***

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Conducting classroom visits and providing direct feedback on teaching practices is one of the most important services offered by the center. During the past academic year the director provided seven different faculty with this one-on-one feedback through a series of visits and discussions.

### ***Conducted a variety of department workshops on time management, working with millennials, and active learning.***

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Department workshops on specific topics is another area in which the center can provide direct support to faculty to improve student learning. Five different departments directly requested specific services from the center over the last academic year. The plan is to increase these offerings in the future.

### ***Conducted several workshops on reducing DFW courses.***

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As part of the larger goal of the university, the center has continued to offer workshops and provide resources for departments that are attempting to reduce the number of D, F, and W grades assigned in a course.

### ***Helped to design a peer review process for one department.***

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The director worked closely with one department to develop a peer review process to improve classroom teaching. Two other departments have already requested this service for the upcoming academic year.

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***Offered a series of workshops on integrating technology into the classroom.***

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The manager of the center collaborated with Instructional Services to offer a variety of workshops on integrating technology into the classroom. Due to the fact that these workshops were not well attended and that the manager has left the center, these will not be continued next year.

***Redesigned room 233 to become a flipped/interactive classroom space.***

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In an effort to support alternative classroom approaches and offer support for studying student learning, the CTL provided the funds to re-tool room 233 as a flipped classroom space. This included purchasing new tables that encourage student collaboration, installing whiteboards for student group work around the space, and the purchase of Google Chrome books to assist interactive learning. The original plan was to have an extensive workshop in collaboration with Office of Continuing and Distance Education (OCDE) to demonstrate to faculty the possible uses of the space. With the departure of the CTL manager, this did not occur. The plan is to re-visit this concept during the next academic year.





## CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING GOALS

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The inaugural year of the Center for Teaching and Learning was a success in terms of contacts with and services provided to faculty. The staff of the center, through feedback from the faculty, have identified service focus areas for the next academic year. Additionally, the staff has considered ways to improve these services. The following goals for 2015-16 are separated by the identified areas of service in the CTL's mission statement.

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### ***Organize and re-energize the CTL Advisory Council.***

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For the past several years the FPDC advisory council has not been active. One of the goals of the new Center for Teaching and Learning is to re-energize this council and find ways for more university input into the programs and workings of the center. This body will be critical to this process and will be re-activated this year.

### ***Hire replacement for manager.***

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Based on the input from the CTL Advisory Committee, one of the primary goals this year is to hire a replacement for the manager which may involve re-thinking this position.

### ***Continue to collaborate with DEI and OGE.***

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When applicable and possible, the CTL plans to continue the collaborations with both of these offices through faculty workshops on diversity issues.

### ***Complete the process of reviewing all materials for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.***

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Currently, two members of the staff are reviewing all CTL materials for ADA Compliance. One of the CTL goals is to have all resource materials compliant by the end of the academic year.

### ***More systematic feedback on events and faculty support services.***

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The CTL is creating a more systematic feedback system to gain information from our constituents to improve and evaluate our services.

### ***Collaborate with OCDE on variety of projects.***

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The previous manager of the CTL had extensive expertise in online teaching and learning. In an effort to fill this gap, the CTL plans to work closely with OCDE to identify collaborations that can fill faculty needs in online and distance learning.

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***Provide support for faculty coaching program and post-tenure goal setting/visioning program.***

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Based on the recommendations from a Faculty Fellow last year, the Center for Teaching and Learning will provide support for a faculty coaching program and a post-tenure goal setting event. These programs are designed to provide faculty support through post-tenure career decisions.

***FlashFolio implementation and support as needed.***

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As the university moves to the full implementation of FlashFolio, the center, and in particular the Portal/Teaching Liaison, will be critical to this process. The goal is to provide clear and timely assistance to faculty with this new system.

***Provide support as needed for New Faculty and Graduate Student Orientations.***

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Providing support and presentations to these two events has become standard practice with the CTL and will continue during this academic year.

***Continue visits with all new faculty.***

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These visits, along with attending new faculty luncheons, has been one of the most highly regarded practices of the director. These will also continue the 2015-2016 academic year.

***Continue to manage the FlashPort.***

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The FlashPort is continuing to become a key resource for faculty. The CTL is committed to keeping this resource vibrant and updated over the next academic year.



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***Change from a large event approach to smaller monthly working lunches around teaching/learning strategies.***

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In the past the FPDC and the CTL has focused on two or three larger events each year with nationally predominant speakers for at least one of these sessions. This approach limits the interaction with faculty and is also extremely costly. This year the CTL plans to offer monthly “working lunches” on topics submitted by faculty. Regional and Kent State University experts will lead these lunch discussions and allow faculty more time to consider implementation of ideas. This approach will be assessed throughout the year to identify faculty satisfaction.

***Continue Teaching Scholars and Faculty Fellows program.***

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These two programs have been quite successful. The goal is to continue to provide support for these faculty members and also find ways to increase the public profile of their work.

***Create early calls for the Faculty Fellows and Teaching Scholars programs.***

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Feedback from faculty have encouraged applications to these marquee programs go out earlier in the academic year. The goal is to have these calls in February to provide faculty more time to consider possible projects.

***Provide continued support for International Faculty Scholars.***

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The center will continue to provide support to the International Faculty Scholars as they implement their projects.

***Support review of Student Surveys of Instruction.***

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Faculty Senate recently voted to re-visit the structure and format of SSI's for the entire university. The center will, as needed, provide resources and evidence to help Faculty Senate with this process.

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***Convert the website from an event-based to resource-based format.***

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Current resources on the CTL website are organized under previous campus events. This makes it difficult for faculty to find resources by type and does not align with best practices of teaching and learning centers across the country. The current webpage will be redesigned to match this model and provide faculty with easier access to resources.

***Continue to develop peer review models.***

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Both individual peer review and larger department models for review are a consistent request of the center. This will be one of the primary services provided over the next academic year.

***Initiate an evidence-based blog with the SOLE center.***

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In an effort to widely share evidence-based practices that improve student learning, the CTL is collaborating with the SOLE center to create "Change in a Minute". This monthly blog, due to be released in August, will offer quick tips and suggestions to improve student learning that are based on high quality research.

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## IN CONCLUSION...

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The Center for Teaching and Learning had a successful inaugural year. As noted above, some critical programs and services will continue over the next academic year. Additionally, some new collaborations will lead to more services and resources. There are still some challenges to be faced by the center over the next year. During the past two years, the Office of the Provost has generously provided extra funding for the implementation of specific programs. This is not a predictable funding source and limits the ability for the long-term planning of new programs and services. Hopefully, this will be addressed in the future either through more permanent funding increases or through possibilities not previously examined with the Office of Institutional Advancement.

A second challenge to the center will be the replacement of the center manager. The FPDC Re-design Steering Committee offered some suggestions on appropriate center staffing. The CTL Advisory Council will be asked to review these recommendations and offer suggestions on the type of position that seems best for our university. Center staffing for a university of our size is critical to the services and programs that can be provided. This will be one of the most important decisions made over the next year.



"The Center for Teaching and Learning is off to a fantastic start. The goal is to continue to offer the high quality support that the faculty expect and deserve at Kent State University. This past year the CTL has been successful in its outreach and looks forward to continuing to find ways to support the student learning environments at this university."



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