

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
Center for Teaching and Learning
 (CTL)

CTL Activities Report 2005/2006

A. Introduction

CTL activities for the academic year 2005/2006 were a mix of newly introduced seminars and other repeated events. New seminars were based on two ongoing discussions among AUB faculty via AUB faculty email, aub-faculty@aub.edu.lb, hence a need was created to follow up on those discussions with a seminar on *Teaching Large Classes Strategies* and a forum on *Instructor and Course Evaluations (ICEs)*. Activities that were repeated because, throughout the past 5 years, they have either met faculty needs: *Developing a Teaching Portfolio*, *Faculty Seminar on Learning and Teaching Excellence*, *Summer Seminar on Creative Use of Resources in Course Design*, or are activities that relate to University, faculty and CTL demands, *Updating on-line Academic Advising Guide*, *Participating in New faculty Seminar Orientation Program*, *Examining the Learning Outcomes Plan*, and finally *reserving a physical place for CTL / furnishing it and planning CTL logo / CTL promotion activities*. Table 1 presents activities conducted during the academic year 2005/2006; dates of each activity are included where applicable. Table 2 presents the number of participants in the seminars by faculty as well as the total number of participants in all the seminars. For more details on each activity and the participants' evaluation, kindly refer to the CTL website at <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webteach/>

Table 1: Activities conducted during the academic year 2005/2006

Activity	Date
1. Academic Advising Guide *	September/October 2006
2. New faculty Seminar	September 21, 2006
3. Seminar on Developing a Teaching Portfolio	Dec. 16, 2005 and March 2, 2006
4. Faculty Seminar on Learning and Teaching Excellence**	March 9 - April 20, 2006
5. Seminar on Teaching large Classes Strategies	January 20, 2006
6. Forum on Instructor and Course Evaluations (ICEs)	November 25, 2006
7. Summer Seminar on Creative Use of Resources in Course Design***	June 19-July 27, 2006

* The on-line Academic Advising Guide is updated annually in line with AUB Catalogue.

** Seminar met for 7 times, every Thursday between 5:00 and 7:00 pm.

*** Due to the war in Lebanon between July 12 and August 14 of 2006 and in line with AUB decisions, sessions in Summer Seminar on Creative Use of Resources in Course Design were suspended. Presentations given by Seminar participants were held on September 30, 2006.

Table 2: Number of seminars participants by faculty for the academic year 2005/2006

Seminar Title	Faculty							Total
	FAFS	FAS	FEA	FHS	FM	OSB	SN	
1. New faculty Seminar	1	26	3	4		1		35
2. Seminar on Developing a Teaching Portfolio	6	17	3	8	5	6	1	46
3. Faculty Seminar on Learning and Teaching Excellence	3	4	0	1	1	3	0	12
4. Seminar on Teaching large Classes Strategies	3	4	0	2	5	4	0	18
5. Forum on Instructor and Course Evaluations (ICEs)	1	20	2	3	0	1	1	28
6. Summer Seminar on Creative Use of Resources in Course Design**	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	5
Overall totals	15	47	5	14	12	14	2	144

B. Observations

It is important to note in this report that for the past four academic years starting 2002/2003 up to 2005/2006, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has been the major participants in teaching excellence activities, as shown in raw numbers in Appendix A, *Raw Numbers of Seminar Participants by Faculty and Academic Year*. However, there has been some noticeable decline in faculty participation. The seminar on Developing a Teaching Portfolio continues to attract the highest number of participants; this could be attributed to the fact that this Seminar meets faculty needs in that they compile their portfolios when applying for promotion and/or teaching excellence award. Based on anecdotal reporting by faculty members, it was suggested that as much as participating in the other seminars relate to faculty interests, they do not have direct/ tangible impact for promotion purposes. Consequently, the assumption arises that some faculty sign up for seminars but do not attend, or they do not sign up at all.

Follow up on Previous Recommendations

1. CTL has a physical location now in ADA Dodge Hall, 2nd floor, Chimney room. Furnishing the Center is almost completed.
2. The Learning Outcomes Plan is in its initial stages of implementation.
3. A logo for CTL has been designed by Ms. Lara Captan from the Graphic Design Department at AUB. The Logo is adopted and published, Appendix B.
4. The website has been updated and redesigned. Kindly, check <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webctl/>

5. New workshops have been proposed for academic year 05-06, Appendix C.

C. CTL Recommendations

1. Since there is an evident attrition rate in attendance and evidence collected is only informal anecdotal reporting, a close and more scientific examination of faculty decline of attendance in teaching excellence activities needs to be conducted.
2. As part of its mission, individual consultations are part of CTL activities. Now that there is a physical place, it is time to experiment with scheduling individual consultation sessions based on seminar offered at this point. The boundaries for now would be consultation/follow up sessions for faculty who request such service.
3. There should be reconsideration for offering the Mellon summer seminar on *Creative Use of Resources in Course Design*, in the summer session **only**. An identical seminar could be offered in the spring semester, twice/three times a week, to accommodate interested faculty who can not allot 6 weeks in the summer for the Seminar. Another recommendation for this Seminar is dividing it into two sessions, three weeks each so that faculty can attend to their research and other professional activities in the remaining time of the summer session. The recommendation is to keep the three Seminar components however leave it open to faculty to sign up for what they deem necessary; this ensures as much flexibility as possible. Heads of Departments need to be made aware of the Mellon Seminar and probably study the feasibility of offering it by one faculty/department at a time.
4. A CTL brochure should be developed in order to introduce CTL to AUB Faculties and Schools as well as other educational institutions interested in CTL activities.
5. From seminar evaluations for the academic year 2005/2006, it has been reported that these seminars have been helpful in methodology and issues of teaching. Consequently it is recommended that CTL continue to offer seminars as they meet faculty needs.

Recommendations Currently Considered from Annual Report of 2004/2005

6. **Follow up Sessions.** Teaching excellence activities become more relevant and meaningful if follow up sessions are offered as part of the seminar design. Meeting with faculty members after implementation of techniques, approaches and otherwise should help all concerned participants and facilitators assess the effectiveness of implementing activities suggested in the seminars and forums. These follow up sessions can be designed in the form of focus groups, questionnaires, interviews etc
7. **Student Involvement.** It is important to invite AUB students (*USFC / SRC / recommended by faculty*) to seminars which may have direct bearing on their experience at AUB such as Academic Advising, ICE, Grading/Assessment / Academic Integrity etc.

8. **Seminar/Forum Facilitators.** The past five years have shown that inviting AUB faculty to facilitate the seminars has been quite effective. The recommendation here is to continue to seek AUB faculty to facilitate the seminars. *This, however, should not in anyway prevent CTL from inviting experts from abroad whenever the need arises.*
9. **Needs Assessment.** When properly staffed, CTL should develop a needs assessment plan which explores the needs of AUB faculty in professional development. As such, CTL could offer either consultation sessions, seminars or recommend seminars abroad to interested faculty.
10. **Centers Abroad.** CTL activities would be greatly enriched if the Center communicates with teaching excellence centers abroad by actually visiting such centers or inviting center directors from abroad to share their experiences with CTL. This would enhance and refine the Center's vision and activities.
11. **Scholarship Subscriptions.** CTL should subscribe to teaching excellence journals and purchase publications, videos and CD's in this area. Having a rich library, the Center will become a reference point to scholarship in teaching and learning excellence.

Appendix A

Table 3: Raw numbers of seminar participants by Faculty and academic year

Faculty	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	Total Number of Participants by Faculty
FAS	97	108	45	47	297
FHS	30	18	15	14	77
FAFS	25	14	16	15	70
FEA	33	36	11	5	85
FM	41	57	1 (SN)	12 (FM) + 2 SN =14	113
OSB	11	29	0	14	54
Number of Seminars	4	7	7	5	
Total Per Year	237 participants Portfolio most 82; most from FAS	262 participants, PBL 69, Portfolio 68; most from FAS	117 69, Portfolio 68; most from FAS 26	114 portfolio most, 46; 47 from FAS	Grand Total: 730

Appendix B

CTL LOGO



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Appendix C

<p><i>Center for Teaching and Learning</i></p> <p>2005/2006 Teaching Excellence Activities</p>			
Seminar/Forum Title	Suggested Date	Suggested Time	Overview
Forum on Instructor Course Evaluation (ICE)	Friday, November 25, '05	3:00pm – 5:00pm	This Forum is meant to continue the dialogue on ICE. The purpose is to share experiences and concerns in a collegial context. Recommendations that ensue from the Forum will be recorded and followed up with concerned parties.
Developing a Teaching Portfolio*	Friday, December 16, '05	3:00pm– 6:30pm	This Seminar focuses on the why and how-to prepare a teaching portfolio for the purposes of improving and assessing one's teaching. The Seminar assists faculty members in developing their own teaching portfolios and proposes a framework for assessing and documenting their scholarship of teaching.
Seminar on Teaching Strategies in Large Classes	Friday, January 13, '06	3:00pm – 6:30pm	In this Seminar, participants will be introduced to teaching strategies which could be implemented effectively in your large classes. The Seminar will highlight those strategies which allow for an interactive environment in large classes.
Developing a Teaching Portfolio*	Friday, February 10, '06	3:00pm– 6:30pm	This Seminar focuses on the why and how-to prepare a teaching portfolio for the purposes of improving and assessing one's teaching. The Seminar assists faculty members in developing their own teaching portfolios and proposes a framework for assessing and documenting their scholarship of teaching.
Faculty Seminar on Teaching and Learning Excellence	<u>Every Saturday Starting</u> Saturday, March 11, 2006 to Saturday, April 7, 2006		This Seminar introduces faculty to teaching strategies (<i>Interactive Lectures, collaborative/cooperative learning, problem-based learning, discussions, assessment of student performance</i>) which could

			improve student learning and teaching practices. The Seminar sessions will be interactive and facilitated in an atmosphere of collegiality.
Academic Advising*	Friday, April 28, 2006		The Seminar focuses on the importance of academic advising. The role of the administration, advisor and advisee will be discussed. Issues and problems in academic advising will be addressed. This Seminar will yield recommendations on how to improve the academic advising process.
Forum on Teaching Excellence and Promotion Criteria	Friday, May 19, 2006	3:00pm – 5:00pm	This Forum is meant to provide faculty with a platform for a collegial dialogue on teaching excellence and promotion criteria at AUB. Recommendations will be recorded and followed up.

Developing Learning Outcomes*			The Seminar focuses on developing course general instructional objectives (GIO) and specific learning outcomes (SLO). The Seminar shows how GIO and SLO align with program goals and University mission.
Assessment at course and Program Levels*			The Seminar focuses on the basic principles and approaches to outcomes assessment. Faculty members will select, discuss and develop assessment tools that measure their students' learning. The process of program assessment will also be addressed.