

Center for Academic Excellence Program Review Self-Study Report 2012-2020

Submitted by:

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Submitted on:

April 1, 2020

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Purpose and Mission

The purpose of the Millersville University's Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) is to:

- Provide professional development across the teaching-learning scholarship spectrum;
- Support campus wide learning communities;
- Foster innovative instructional strategies to promote learning through evidence-based practice;
- Examine local, state, and national trends and potential impact on the campus community;
- Respond proactively to university faculty needs; and
- Offer resources to support teaching, scholarship, and serve endeavors.

The mission of Millersville University's Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) is to:

- Promote excellence in teaching and learning;
- Encourage an atmosphere of collaboration and scholarly inquiry as an integral part of teaching and learning;
- Provide resources and programs to assist faculty with their professional development as educators;
- Promote a campus environment that fosters scholarship;
- Encourage teaching practices that are grounded in scholarship;
- Enhance learning through support of interdisciplinary collaborations across the university;
- Develop services and programs for faculty members of all experience levels;

- Engage critical thinking and discussion through open forums; and
 - Establish and maintain mutually supportive relationships with other institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania.
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Overview of Report

To discuss how the CAE fulfilled the Purpose and Mission through a variety of programming options, and to make recommendations for areas of growth, the Program Review Committee used “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix.” This matrix was co-created by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network, organizations devoted to the improvement of higher education teaching practices, student learning, and institutions. The matrix is designed to support Center’s for Teaching and Learning, the Center for Academic Excellence at Millersville University, set goals, plan strategically, self-study, and self-assess.

More information on the POD Network matrix can be found at this site:

<https://podnetwork.org/resources/center-for-teaching-and-learning-matrix/>

Members of the CAE Program Review Self-Study committee used the POD Network “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix” to assess the Millersville CAE, and offer recommendations for the CAE moving forward. This report begins with a brief history of the Millersville CAE, then uses the 17 domains of practice outlined in the matrix to assess the current efforts of the CAE. Based on best practices identified, domains in the matrix are ranked 1) beginning/developing, 2) proficient, or 3) accomplished/exemplary. The current CAE Self-Study committee ranked the Millersville CAE at proficient and accomplished/exemplary, with no domains of practice identified at the beginning levels. Using the best practices described by the POD Network and ACE, this report concludes with committee recommendations for continued excellence in teaching and learning support by the CAE moving forward.

A Brief History

Since 1997, the CAE has been led by a Director appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (currently Dr. Vilas Prabhu). Dr. Patricia Hill served as Director from 1997-2003 with ½-time release (1997-2002), and then ¼-time release (2002-2003). Dr. Marjorie Warmkessel served as Director from 2003-2007, Dr. Diane Zimmerman Umble served as Director from 2007-2009, Dr. Sharon Brusic served as Director from 2009-2012 all with ¼-time release. Dr. Oliver Dreon has served as Director since Fall 2012 with a ¼-time release.

The CAE is an independent entity. The CAE Director reports to the Associate Provost for Academic Administration (currently Dr. James Delle). Currently the CAE operates with limited Administrative support. Marie Zufelt (Administrative Assistant for the Associate Provost for Academic Administration) provides help with purchasing and budget management processes. Finally, the CAE has support from a full time GA (20 hours per week during the academic year).

In Fall 2013 the CAE moved to the 5th floor of McNairy Library. Since 2013, the CAE has made use of rooms within McNairy Library for programming. Initially the CAE was schedule to relocate from McNairy to Lyle late Winter 2020. The move was postponed until Spring Break as the Instructional Designers, the CAE, and meeting rooms were still being updated. Because Spring 2020 has been interrupted by COVID-19 closures the expected move is now Fall 2020.

The CAE has regularly updated a university web page (www.millersville.edu/cae) since 2008 including regular posting of upcoming professional development sessions, celebrations of faculty innovations, and access to teaching and learning resources to support educational development. In addition to regular website updates, the CAE maintains a calendar of events, and emails to a distribution once per week. These regular digital updates connect the campus community with CAE programming, and literature on best teaching practices in higher education.

As described earlier, the CAE Program Review Committee used the POD Network “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix” for this program review. Per the POD Network, “the matrix is organized so that CTLs (Centers for Teaching and Learning) can identify their development in 17 domains of practice across three levels that indicate institutional commitment to professional learning that leads to instructional effectiveness”. Using this professional network designed matrix allowed the Program Review Committee to

- assess the Millersville Center for Academic Excellence based on national best practices for Teaching and Learning Centers,
- assess the CAE’s impact within Millersville culture and context, considering Millersville’s mission and structure,
- highlight the importance of the CAE programming in support of professor teaching and student learning,
- offer suggestions for continuing to grow the effectiveness of Millersville’s Center for Academic Excellence in support of strong teaching and learning.

The POD Network “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix” evaluates the CAE as a whole, based on the 17 domains of practice. While the type of program offered is discussed below, individual assessment of these program offerings exists within the yearly reports completed by the CAE Director. This report focuses on the CAE as a whole.

Mission, Vision, and Goals (Organizational Structure Matrix)

The Millersville CAE is **proficient** with Mission, Vision, and Goals. The current Purpose and Mission of the CAE connect very strongly with meaningful teaching and learning, with identifying and communicating the value of the work of the CAE. They could be better aligned with how they support Millersville’s EPIIC values (exploration, professionalism, public mission, inclusion, integrity, compassion, more at <https://www.millersville.edu/about/eppiic-values.php>).

Millersville is currently in the process of revising the 5-year strategic plan. Support and development for faculty and staff is included as a Strategic Direction in the draft 5-Year Strategic Plan. While the CAE Director is not directly involved in that planning process which is being conducted through the All University Council, the strategic issues will be written for all campus units to connect with

goals and objectives moving forward. Additionally, members of this Program Review Self-Study are members of the AUC working to ensure the CAE and its mission are recognized as necessary for units to meet strategic issues that involve teaching, technology integration with teaching, and student success moving forward. This report presents a way to further demonstrate how the CAE Mission and Vision align with the Millersville strategic plan, how the CAE can support faculty in achieving many of the objectives identified as goals for the next 5 years.

Institutional Placement + Collaborations (Organizational Structure Matrix)

The Millersville CAE is **accomplished** and **exemplary** in institutional placement. The CAE is the sole educational professional development unit in the University and continues to offer faculty development that have led to improved teaching which translates to improved student outcomes. The CAE Director reports directly to and regularly meets with the associate provost, a required best practice according to the evaluation guideline.

The CAE has established a **proficient** collaboration with different units across campus. It has the learning space and resources that support teaching and learning. Specifically, there is a strong working relationship with instructional technology unit, graduate school, institutional review, academic departments and the library. Similar to the Mission, Vision, and Goals, the CAE could clearly identify where the mission and vision of the center align with Millersville's EPIIC values, and moving forward with the new 5-year strategic plan to increase collaborations with units. In clearly demonstrating where the CAE provides support to units and faculty meeting University values and strategic plans, the CAE can build stronger collaborative partnerships with the campus, directly connected to institutional missions and visions.

Reach (Programs and Services Matrix)

CAE's "reach" can be evaluated as **proficient**. The CAE has facilitated multiple workshops and a mentoring program geared towards new faculty and faculty in different career stages. Additionally, the CAE offers sessions for adjunct faculty to help support faculty teaching and student success. These workshops have been well received and are helpful to faculty particularly as they apply for promotions and tenure. The CAE offers attendance and presentation thank you letters as incentives to faculty to encourage and recognize engagement in CAE initiatives. The CAE in collaboration with Online Programs offers stipends for attendance at a week-long pedagogy and learning management system workshop, branded Camp IDEA.

The CAE has access to rooms in McNairy Library for programming, and utilizes 'common hour' to reduce date and time conflicts as much as possible so programming is accessible to all faculty. The programming date and time are strategically aligned with campus course scheduling. The range of sessions are diverse to appeal to faculty at various points in their career. Similar to mentoring efforts, programming goals could be set to continue to strategically reach faculty at various career stages to further the reach of the CAE at Millersville.

The following chart is an overview of the number of sessions offered with and in collaboration with the CAE. Attendance at sessions differs across years, is impacted by Middle States, All University Council strategic planning, and the normal pressures of semester schedules. The unique attendees shifts based on institutional activities like Middle States, where information sessions leading into Middle States review cycles increases programs offered and unique attendees. For the 2019-2020 academic year, Middle States review is underway, and the 5-year strategic plan is being created. Both require a significant time commitment which will ultimately reduce session attendance and unique attendees as CAE sessions.

Continuing to offer sessions that meet the various needs of faculty at various career stages, with modest incentives for participation will continue to see these levels of participation, and this swing in participants.

Academic Year	Number of sessions	Attendees	Average attendance	Unique attendees
2013-2014	60	448	7.46	128
2014-2015	26	283	10.88	77
2015-2016	35	370	10.57	134
2016-2017	60	765	12.75	215
2017-2018	38	403	10.61	139
2018-2019	49	611	12.47	256

Operational Procedures and Archives (Organizational Structure Matrix) + Online Resources (Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Matrix)

The CAE has a **proficient to accomplished** level of organizational procedures and archives. The CAE’s website includes 6 years of annual reports which include records of past programming, description and impact of events, attendance at sessions, and assessment data from an annual survey.

The CAE has an **accomplished** level of Online Resources. The CAE’s website includes video recordings of Open Education Week sessions, monthly celebrations of innovative teaching through its Innovative Practices Spotlights, resources for teaching and learning, resources for adjuncts, resources for Universal Design for Learning, resources for centers for teaching and learning, resources for grant writing and opportunities, resources for instructional technology, and resources for UNIV 103. These additional guides for faculty help connect them with various best teaching practices in an on-demand fashion to meet faculty needs outside the CAE sessions.

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Scope + Approach + Content + Impact (Programs and Services Matrix)

The CAE is **accomplished/exemplary** in scope of programs offered, **accomplished/exemplary** in approach to program offerings, **accomplished/exemplary** in content of programs offered, and **accomplished/exemplary** in impact of programs offered. Currently, the CAE offers an excellent and a wide range of programs from short to long, from online content to week-long retreats for incoming faculty and development of technological skills to enhance the teaching experience. The programming responds to current needs on campus.

The Director disseminates information via a weekly newsletter about the programs available during the regular school year. Some content is delivered online while a lot of content is delivered in person, helping to forge and develop relationships across the campus and to strengthen faculty and staff knowledge. There are programs and sessions directed at early, mid, and late career academicians and university staff providing an inclusive environment for which all can grow. Given the budgetary constraints within which the CAE must work, the CAE does an amazing job of stretching the resources to deliver substantive and relevant content in a professional way. The CAE has offered some grant opportunities through the Open Education Resources (OER) program but the CAE could benefit from offering more grant opportunities rewarding faculty who significantly improve course content being inspired by scholarly approaches. The CAE can also benefit from offering another retreat that focused on enhancing teaching strategies and informing new faculty regarding scholarly approaches to teaching and learning.

Type of Programs Offered Overview

The CAE programming includes:

- Campus Learning Communities
 - Interdisciplinary, faculty-led groups engaging with a selected topic and book over the course of several weeks during the semester. The book selections are faculty driven. The groups are faculty led, providing both leadership opportunities for faculty and focus in a variety of topics.
- Camp IDEA
 - A week-long teaching with technology program offered jointly with Instructional & Technology Support and the Office of Online Programs. Camp IDEA is typically offered in January and May each year to support faculty innovation in instructional methods and assessments.
- Professional Development Sessions
 - Sessions include: technology integration, promotion and tenure discussions, pedagogical theory sessions, advising sessions, and more.
 - Sessions are led by faculty, staff, and Instructional Designers to support quality teaching, successful tenure and promotion, engaging student-centered pedagogy, and meaningful support of students.
- Open Education Week
 - Working with the OER Working Group, the CAE helped plan virtual conferences during Open Education week in 2020, 2019, and 2018. These virtual conferences were offered twice per day, recorded, and shared through the CAE website.
- New Faculty Mentoring

- Beginning Fall 2017, the CAE partnered new faculty with tenure faculty members from a different department. Mentors and mentees met regularly in an informal yet structured mentoring process. New faculty in Fall 2019 were similarly paired. This program is also developing into mentoring of second-year faculty and mid-career faculty. In Fall 2019, the CAE began offering a series of “PreTenure Sessions” which focus on the specific needs of untenured faculty members at the early stages of their career.
- Lancaster Learns
 - This annual conference is a collaborative effort of 8 institutions of higher education in Lancaster County. The conference promotes quality teaching and learning through faculty led sessions on evidence-based pedagogy and learner-centered instruction.
- Adjunct Orientation Workshop
 - In meeting the requirements of the collective bargaining agreement, Millersville is required to offer orientation to all new adjuncts. The CAE offered professional development opportunities to new adjuncts in August 2018 and August 2019.
- Open Textbook Initiative
 - Working with the Open Educational Resources (OER) Working Group, the CAE helped launch a faculty grant program to support faculty adoption of OER and zero-textbook cost materials in classes beginning Fall 2019. The program was repeated with planned adoption Fall 2020. The CAE continues to work with the OER Working Group to expand the support and training of faculty in finding OER and ZTC materials to support student-centered teaching.
- Monday Morning Mentors
 - In addition to the face-to-face sessions, the CAE offers “Monday Morning Mentors” through its subscription with Magna Publications. These short, online sessions were available on-demand each Monday.
- Innovative Practices Spotlight
 - Each month the CAE recognizes a faculty member (or members) for innovative teaching approaches. Faculty are encouraged to nominate others, self-nominate, and/or reach out to the CAE Director. The unique pedagogy is discussed and shared on the CAE website, and a CAE email applauding the work of that faculty member is shared with the list serv.

The CAE Director includes yearly reports on the attendance of each event. These reports include the impressive variety in topics covered, especially in the Professional Development Series and Campus Learning Communities. These reports are available on the CAE website: <https://www.millersville.edu/cae/resources/years-in-review.php>.

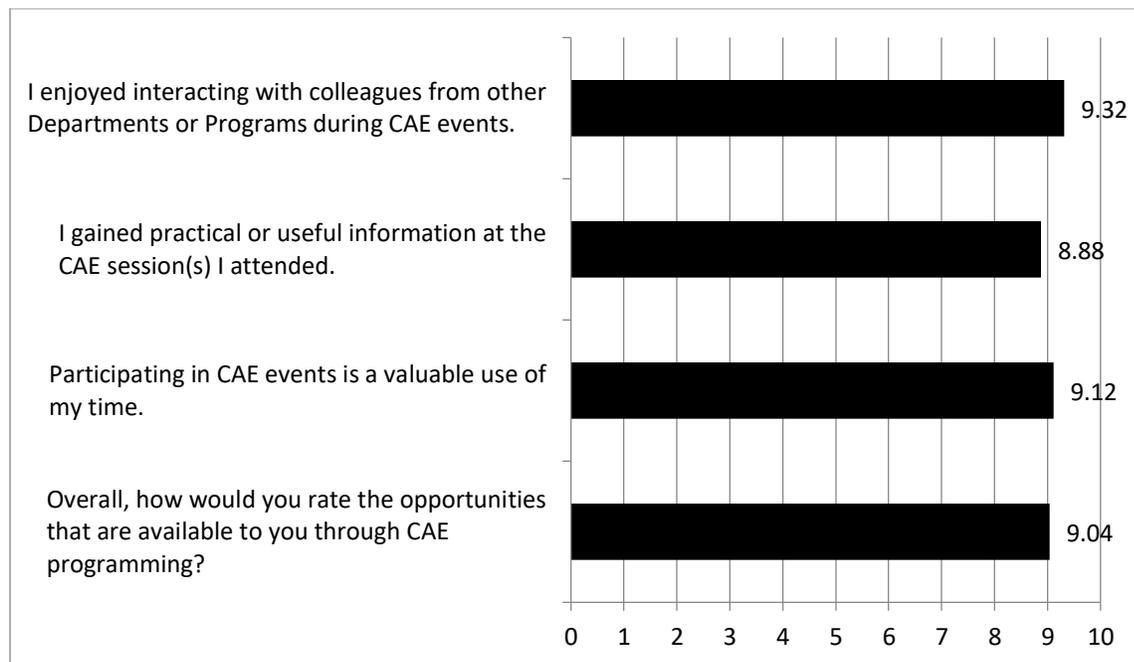
Communication and Reputation (Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Matrix)

The CAE is **proficient** with communication and reputation. The advertising of CAE events is included in weekly e-mails to an opt-in list. Events are also advertised in the official university daily communication, “The Ville Daily”. The CAE’s Innovative Practices Spotlight recognizes a new faculty member each month for innovative teaching approaches.

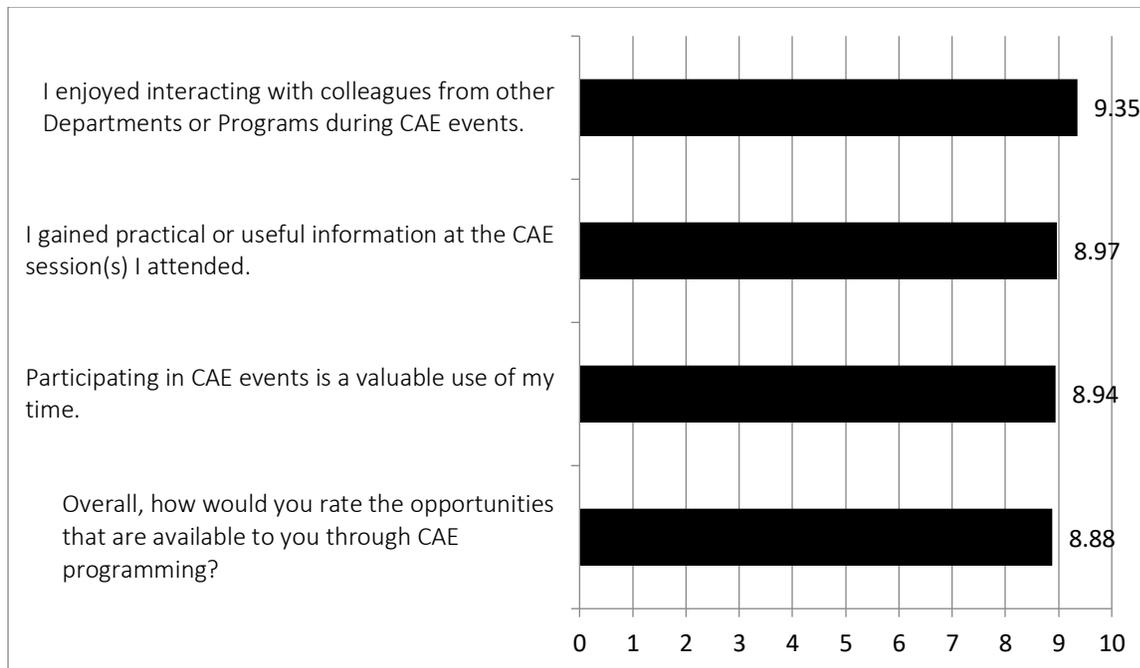
Additionally, the CAE Director sends a weekly overview email that includes events, Monday Morning Mentor, and other elements of note to an opt-in list serv. These communication practices are regular, and thorough. The CAE has a Facebook page “MU Center for Academic Excellence”. While posts here regularly advertise the programming developed by the CAE, the posts have no likes that we can see, so aren’t reaching the audience of faculty available on Facebook.

Average attendance at CAE face-to-face sessions is 10-12 per event. The profile of the attendees is unknown or unanalyzed in regards to department, career-level, or part-time/full-time status. The “Communication & Reputation” domain of practice seeks ‘well attended’ programming, that is perceived as open and available to all. As a university with a significant service component, ‘well attended’ may be difficult to achieve, while perceived as open and available to all could come as a result of explicit connection to EPIIC values and the 5-year Strategic Plan.

Each year the CAE Director sends a survey to faculty on the list serv, faculty who have attended sessions, and the broader university community through The Ville Daily. The 2017-2018 faculty survey results indicate the CAE has a strong reputation with faculty at Millersville.



The 2018-2019 faculty survey shows consistent results across the questions about the CAE. This faculty response demonstrates consistent reputation of the CAE across academic years.



The 2017-2018 faculty survey included responses from 32 faculty members, representing a mix of adjunct, tenure-track, and tenured faculty. The 2018-2019 faculty survey included responses from 40 faculty members, also representing a mix of adjunct, tenure-track, and tenured faculty. With 139 unique faculty attendees in 2017-2018, and 256 unique faculty attendees in 2018-2019 these results are only a small percentage of the attendees at events. The CAE might benefit from additional surveys administered directly to event attendees, or directly after events occur to gather information from a larger sampling of attendees.

Leadership (Organizational Structure Matrix)

The Director of the CAE, Professor Oliver Dreon, PhD and is faculty in the Educational Foundations Department in the College of Education and Human Services. Dr. Dreon has served as an **accomplished/exemplary** Director since 2013, providing stable, consistent and visionary leadership to the University. His extensive and varied teaching, passion, and research aligns with the CAE's mission. He works diligently to invite representation from across the University in programs and participation. He encourages new and senior faculty to take leadership rolls expanding the CAE influence across the university. Millersville University is a regional comprehensive university, Dr. Dreon strives to have our CAE mirror practices followed at large research institutions. Dr. Dreon is a unique leader and as long as he is the leader, the CAE will flourish but if he decides to leave the position, the CAE would lose the energy that has been built. One recommendation for continued growth would be to appoint/elect an Assistant Director who may step into the Director roll when Dr. Dreon decides to step down. The Assistant Director will provide a smooth transition and will provide opportunities for new leadership. A second recommendation includes arranging an advisory committee of faculty who formally commit to the mission of the CAE and to support the Director's leadership.

Staff Expertise and Preparation (Organizational Structure Matrix) + Staffing (Resource Allocation and Infrastructure)

Director Dreon is **accomplished/exemplary** with expertise and preparation. Dr. Dreon has significant organizational and management experience and ability. The CAE utilizes both internal and external sources to provide professional development topics spanning faculty orientation to technology, learning, and assessment. All of these are critical components in faculty development. There is a significant emphasis on encouraging SoTL, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, too. Consistently, the CAE's offerings are communicated and delivered professionally, speaking to the expertise and preparation devoted to the CAE's mission. The CAE solicits and receives participation from across the campus in developing and delivering original content.

In staffing, the CAE is **proficient**. The Director receives administrative support from a Graduate Assistant, currently Sadie Wentland. The CAE receives some limited support from an administrative assistant, but would benefit from a full-time administrative support person. Additionally, as mentioned above, the CAE would benefit from an Assistant Director to help the sufficiently meet operational and programming needs, and to support with connecting the CAE Mission and Vision with both the Millersville EPIIC values and 5-year Strategic Plan.

Budget (Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Matrix)

In staffing, the CAE is **proficient**. Currently the Millersville CAE operates on a budget of \$10,000, \$5,000 of that allocation allotted to the GA stipend, \$5,000 allotted to programming. The majority of the CAE budget is spent on educational supplies, the books and materials used by Campus Learning Communities, and luncheons that incentivize participation in larger events. Some of the CAE events presented in collaboration with other groups that include lunches will draw from outside funding for the lunches, including the Assessment Luncheon, Library Liaison luncheon, OER Celebration luncheon and others. None of the CAE budget incentivizes participation beyond lunch. Additionally, none of the CAE budget goes to cover outside speakers brought to campus in support of faculty professional development, a cornerstone of most centers for teaching and learning.

Based on the findings reported in *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence* (Andrea L. Beach, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Ann E. Austin, and Jaclyn K. Rivard, 2016), over 70% of centers for teaching and learning operate on programming budgets over \$24,999 (p. 45-46), this is five (5) times the programming budget of the MU CAE. While these findings include the budgets at research one institutions, these findings also represent comprehensive universities, community colleges, and liberal arts colleges. In comparison the Millersville CAE is incredibly underfunded.

Discussion & Recommendations

Based on the evaluation matrix we have identified the following areas for potential growth:

- Mission, Vision, and Goals: An area for potential growth is writing and aligning the goals of the CAE with the in-progress 5-year strategic plan. Setting goals for each year that connect

with Millersville's EPIIC values and the 5-year Strategic Directions (as possible) will help demonstrate the value of the CAE within Millersville's community.

- Drawing from the successful collaboration with Mentoring and the OER Working Group, goal setting for the year should involve a small group of faculty, or faculty and staff to help expand programming. Instead of serving as a 'Board of Advisors' that dictate the direction of programming, the collaborative board should help take on the work as part of CAE programming, help write and seek grants for future programming, help identify and develop the areas of growth for the CAE. It is very important that the board be collaboratively created for this direction to be successful in the future, if the CAE chooses to implement this approach.
- Millersville appears to be moving toward a one-time funding model for projects, working through and designing the projects, and then supporting the implementation of those projects. The CAE may benefit from collaboration to successfully use this funding model to provide meaningful programming in support of the CAE Mission and student success.
- **High Priority**
- Scope + Approach + Content + Impact: While the CAE has been responsive to campus needs as student learning needs shift, as approaches to student support shift. Expanding the budget and staffing would help the CAE respond more effectively to campus needs.
 - The recent successes of Mentoring programs, Camp IDEA, and the OER Working group demonstrate how effectively the CAE can work with groups of faculty to meet campus innovation needs.
- Institutional Placement + Collaborations: An area for potential growth for the Center is more engagement with diversity and inclusion units and community service learning.
 - While the current assessment surveys provide rich data to understand participating faculty and staff members, the CAE could be more strategic in targeting groups for participation (similar to initiatives targeting adjunct faculty. This would require understanding more about who is participating, and the needs of the groups not currently participating in sessions.
 - This would also benefit from an investigation of additional/alternative communication spaces to understand new-to-CAE avenues for advertising that could yield meaningful participation, and participation from new groups.
 - **High Priority**
- Communication and Reputation: An area for potential growth would also require additional data analysis. The CAE could analyze the program offerings to understand not just how many faculty accessed and/or attended, but the career level and department of that attendee. This could lead to information on which departments and/or faculty career levels are underrepresented in the current programming.
 - **Low Priority**
- Communication and Reputation: The POD Network "A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix" explicitly states social media accounts for centers for teaching and learning are beneficial with communicating to campus community stakeholders, the Millersville CAE could use social media more effectively – directly connect with faculty and faculty groups on Facebook so the posts achieve more reach. The CAE Director is active and present on social media. The CAE could use social media like Facebook more to communicate events. This could be completed in collaboration with the CAE GA.
 - **Low Priority**

- Leadership and Staff Expertise & Preparation: Appoint an Assistant Director to help provide a smooth leadership transition and will provide opportunities for new leadership.
 - The POD Network “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix” explicitly states that Directors of centers for teaching and learning should have experience and expertise with higher education administration and management, specifically in the context of centers for teaching and learning. If Director Dreon decides to step down at the end of his current administrative term, his expertise will leave a large void in the CAE. Transitioning to include an Assistant Director could increase the strategic reach of the CAE, and develop more expertise for a smoother transition between Directors.
 - **High Priority**
- Leadership: Similar to ideas included in this list, arrange a collaborative advisory committee of faculty who formally commit to the mission of the CAE and to support the Director’s leadership.
- Budget: The budget for the CAE has not allowed for professional development stipends that would help offset time commitments, paid course release time, conference registrations, or leadership opportunities to impact teaching culture, policies, and procedures. With sufficient budget, this may as well be the next step the CAE embarks on.
 - Reach: The POD Network “A Center for Teaching and Learning Matrix” explicitly states that centers for teaching and learning programming is more effective when stipends, paid course release time, conference registration, and leadership opportunities are funded through the CAE. An area for potential growth is to further incentivize programming offered, which would require an increase in budget.
 - Connected to early suggestions, including a collaboration board and/or Assistant Director could help the CAE develop programs that request specific funding for implementation. In addition to significantly higher budgets, results presented in *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence* also describe centers for teaching and learning include outside funding like external grants, endowments and gifts, onetime university allocations for specific projects, cost share with other units, fees for services, fund-raising, and union money (p. 45-46). The CAE could operate on a significantly higher budget, with more meaningful incentivized programs, if it developed one-time funded projects, similar to the Open Textbook Initiative.
 - **High Priority**

The Future

Overall the report should demonstrate the high effectiveness of the Millersville CAE under the direction of Dr. Oliver Dreon. The programming shifts to meet teaching and learning needs, assessment is regularly completed and shared in digital spaces, digital spaces provide content to meet instructor needs on-demand. The recommendations offered in this self-study are offered to further extend the existing work of the CAE.

As the CAE moves forward to a new location, and establishing new uses for fully designated teaching and learning spaces in Lyle Hall, new ideas for programming may become more apparent, and new approaches to programming may become possible. We look forward to the possibilities as the CAE grows into the new space on campus, and explores options for connecting with the new 5-year Strategic Plan of the university.