Changing the CITDE’s Name to CII

The mission, scope, and direction of the Center for Instructional Technology & Distributed Education (CITDE) has been shaped by over 15 years of discussion, debate, vision, planning, and integration involving deans, departments, the Faculty Senate, the Teaching Learning Technology Roundtable (TLTR), the CITDE Advisory Council, committed faculty and staff, and Dr. Kim Rynearson, Dr. George Mollick, and Dr. Karen Murray.

Housed within Academic Affairs, the mission of the Center is to foster the University’s culture of teaching excellence by supporting faculty in their use of innovative tools and strategies for teaching and learning. Center staff draw upon expertise in instructional technology and in a wide variety of teaching strategies, and support faculty with the evaluation and implementation of tools for instruction. The Center seeks to encourage the sharing of information across the university about effective teaching practices and examine the effect of technology on teaching and learning.

The roles of all three divisions within the Center are intricately interwoven to accomplish this mission.

- The Online Instructional Support Services division focuses on helping faculty effectively integrate online instructional tools into their teaching. The team supports faculty (and by extension, their students) in the use of widely adopted learning platforms like Blackboard, Chalk & Wire, and Turnitin, as well as ancillary tools like SoftChalk, Captivate, and Respondus. These tools were originally purchased solely for distance learning needs, but are now used for all modes of instruction at Tarleton (fully online, hybrid, and lecture with online component). Furthermore, the tools can be used separately, for a wide variety of instructional purposes, and do not require that a faculty member use Blackboard to have access to use them.

- The Classroom and Lab Support Services division focuses on helping faculty effectively integrate classroom technology into their teaching. Each college-level tech has a keen awareness and the skill sets to support faculty in their use of instructional technology in classrooms and computer labs. CLSS supports Smartroom technologies and software applications that are vital to classroom instruction. The team has made great strides over the last four years in implementing a campus standard for classroom technology, so that a faculty member will know what to expect no matter which classroom or lab they teach in.

- The Faculty Training & Innovation division offers a robust program of both training and instructional innovation events geared towards effective teaching. Training is offered on all online and in-class instructional technology available to instructors. Instructional innovation events are led through our in-house faculty fellowship program, and include Faculty Roundtables, Course Re-Design projects, and outside speaker presentations. All of these efforts are closely aligned with and dependent upon the OISS and CLSS divisions being “plugged in” to all facets of instruction.

The strength of this model is that it positions the Center to assess faculty needs for instruction, plan and implement institutional-wide instructional technology projects, train and support faculty both remotely and in-person, and, because of the aforementioned strengths, naturally foster a conversation with faculty about effective teaching.

Having the necessary skill sets in the Center to deploy and support instructional technology (both online and face-to-face) is fundamental to our mission to foster the University’s culture of teaching excellence. The overwhelming success of the Instructional Innovation initiative thus far has been in direct response to our ability to assist faculty with their technical, training, and pedagogical needs in an integrated way. The success of the initiative, coupled with the long-standing need for a simplified name that reflects our core mission is our impetus for proposing to change the Center’s name to the Center for Instructional Innovation.