

## **Teaching and Academic Support Center: Strategic Plan**

### **Mission**

The Teaching and Academic Support Center (TASC) fosters excellence in education throughout the University of Kentucky by providing academic support services for faculty that enhance student learning, promote scholarship, and facilitate teaching innovations.

### **Values**

- Integrity
- Reliability
- Quality
- Scholarship
- Innovation

### **Vision**

TASC is a resource that provides services and programs to faculty members, chairs, deans, and others that enable the most effective instructional methods, tools and strategies for accomplishing our shared goals to:

1. Reach for National Prominence
2. Attract and Graduate Outstanding Students
3. Attract, Develop and Retain a Distinguished Faculty
4. Discover, Share and Apply New Knowledge
5. Nurture Diversity of Thought, Culture, Gender and Ethnicity
6. Elevate the Quality of Life for Kentuckians

TASC fosters an environment within the University that promotes educational excellence by leading efforts in instructional innovation, providing efficient stewardship of instructional resources, and encouraging active participation in the creative exchange of ideas. TASC responds to faculty inquiries by offering an array of teaching and learning services. TASC faculty and staff – including instructional designers, assessment experts, media creation artists, and information technology specialists, as well as librarians -- incorporate innovative strategies for effective learning within the unique educational setting of particular courses and curricula. TASC works with faculty to design, implement and support Distance Learning courses or programs that meet the strategic instructional needs of departments and colleges.

TASC collaborates with faculty and administrators to assemble comprehensive services that meet strategic planning and instructional needs for all teaching environments throughout the university. Where standardized services are unavailable to address specific requirements, TASC helps to find and implement solutions to instructional challenges. Thus, TASC contributes significantly to achieving meaningful national prominence for the University of Kentucky.

### **TASC Strategic Goals**

1. Enhance student-centered learning and teaching effectiveness
2. Facilitate educational innovations and implement instructional technology that supports effective pedagogy
3. Foster and promote scholarship and faculty professional development
4. Foster an inclusive teaching and learning environment that promotes multicultural diversity
5. Provide, maintain and support academic and classroom resources to accomplish UK's educational mission and to connect all of the Commonwealth to UK's academic programs.

## **TASC Strategic Plan Aligned with UK Strategic Plan: *The Dream and the Challenge* (July, 2003)**

### **UK GOAL I: Reach for National Prominence**

*One of the great strengths of the University of Kentucky is the richness of a campus that brings together undergraduate, graduate and professional students in an unusually comprehensive array of programs. This variety encourages shared ideas across disciplines, promotes multidisciplinary endeavors, and enriches the educational and social experiences of a highly diverse and talented student body. While the richness and variety of campus life are among UK's greatest strengths, the University's progress depends upon a well-conceived concentration of its resources. The full implementation of the Provost model will facilitate the University's ability to capitalize on its intellectual diversity through the integration of all its resources.*

*As we strive to become one of America's 20 best public research universities, some programs will build upon or attain national recognition and will serve a global constituency. Other programs will advance the land-grant mission by creating the professional, educated citizenry and scholarship needed to serve Kentucky. Although particular areas will be emphasized, comprehensive excellence is essential to the mission of serving as the premier teaching, research and land-grant institution for the Commonwealth. This level of excellence also will be required in other endeavors for which we can serve as a national model, including the creation of a prosperous and mutually beneficial "college town" environment. Over the next three years, we will support our faculty and staff in delivering a comprehensive array of academic programs and other activities and services as we reach for national prominence in priority areas.*

### **UK Objectives:**

1. *The University will increase the prominence of faculty scholarship.*
3. *Increase resources in order to offer high-quality instruction, research, and service.*
5. *The University will streamline its business and information technology services*

### **TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will develop a viable Teaching and Academic Support infrastructure within the University.
2. TASC will develop resources (such as high-quality staffing, updated educational infrastructure, and technical or pedagogical expertise) that enhance its capacity for contribution within the university.
3. TASC will foster and promote scholarship and research that will contribute to Top 20 status.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

- Implement communications and marketing plans to better understand the needs of faculty for TASC services
- Use objective measures to plan and implement responsive changes that improve TASC services
- Demonstrate consistent professionalism (high quality of work, reliability, timeliness, courtesy)
- Create an environment and incentives where TASC personnel learn new skills and capabilities
- Establish a mini-grant program to encourage faculty development and effective, innovative pedagogy
- Facilitate faculty presentations at local, regional, national or international meetings
- Provide national leadership by inviting leaders and experts to campus
- Be an innovator and leader in the use of new technologies for instructional purposes
- Provide integrated instructional technology solutions

### **Key Indicators:**

- TASC will participate in grant development initiatives related to teaching and learning.
- TASC will maintain at least one extramural education grant as the core sponsoring unit.
- TASC will work with faculty to create and develop posters and high-quality educational products (CD-based information resources, online course materials, video productions, digital images, animations, etc).
- TASC will host state-wide conferences or training events that bring together faculty from research, regional and community colleges with nationally recognized experts in higher education.
- TASC will help develop university policies and recommendations related to e-learning.
- TASC will establish 24/7 user support for Bb services via a third party contract (Presidium Learning).
- TASC will collaborate with the Library, the Study, and Information Technology to create an Information Commons in the basement of WT Young library.

## **GOAL II: Attract and Graduate Outstanding Students**

*Educating students is a core mission of the University. In order to attain excellence and achieve national recognition, we must recruit, retain and graduate a diverse group of outstanding undergraduate, graduate and professional students, representing Kentucky, the nation and the world. We expect our graduates to become productive citizens who make significant contributions to their professions and communities. To achieve this valued outcome, we will expand initiatives to attract and graduate outstanding students.*

### **UK Objectives:**

1. *The University will admit and enroll an increasingly higher caliber of student.*
3. *The University will engage students in rigorous educational programs and provide an environment conducive to success. Students succeed when they form meaningful connections with the University community.*

### **TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will work with faculty, administrators and other units to provide educational materials for University of Kentucky students to better prepare them for academic success.
2. TASC will engage faculty in defining and supporting a teaching environment that emphasizes student-centered learning, application of instructional technology, and effective pedagogy.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

- Provide management for the creation, maintenance, and support of classrooms and classroom academic resources
- Collaborate with other units and individual faculty to enhance student-centered learning and facilitate innovation in education
- Provide leadership in the implementation of instructional technology that supports effective pedagogy

### **Key Indicators:**

- TASC will maintain a website that identifies TASC-supported services and describes best practices for online distributed education.
- TASC will provide strategic planning for the maintenance, upgrade and purchase of audio-visual equipment for existing and planned 'smart' classrooms.
- TASC will collaborate with deans, chairs and administrators to identify new courses for development as distance learning courses, and work with the appropriate units/individuals to design and implement such courses.
- TASC will work with an e-learning council and other institutional units to identify a process that ensures all instructional materials comply with Section 508 accessibility standards.
- TASC will continue pilot initiatives for closed-captioning of targeted online courses.
- TASC will continue to provide faculty with student evaluations of online courses administered through Distance Learning Programs, and will work with IRPE to incorporate such summative assessments into existing services.
- TASC will work with faculty to implement a graduate certificate in Distance Education.

## **UK GOAL III: Attract, Develop and Retain a Distinguished Faculty**

*A distinguished faculty is the cornerstone of a successful research university. An excellent and diverse faculty, characterized by exceptional scholarship, superb teaching, and dedicated service, is essential if the University is to gain greater national prominence. The faculty members need the broad-based support of the University community – partnerships with superior staff, excellent facilities, and a commitment to quality – if they are to realize their full promise. A primary focus for the University will be to attract, develop and retain a distinguished faculty.*

### **UK Objectives:**

3. *The University will institute policies to attract and retain a distinguished faculty.*
4. *The University will strengthen support to faculty and staff. Providing exemplary support to facilitate effective faculty-staff partnerships is essential to our success.*
5. *The University will increase the recruitment and support of high-profile faculty capable of conducting influential scholarship and leading major scholarly initiatives.*

**TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will ease the transition to the University of Kentucky for new faculty.
2. TASC will enhance and centralize educational and support services to provide 'one-stop shopping' for faculty.
3. TASC will strengthen support to faculty in their professional development.
4. TASC will provide high-quality classroom support and participate in the strategic planning of classroom support services.
5. TASC will assist faculty in the appropriate and innovative application of instructional technology.
6. Support and maintain a state-of-the-art classroom management system available to all faculty and learners

**Strategies/Actions:**

- Inform all campus faculty of resources, programs, and services offered through the TASC
- Coordinate new faculty orientation with the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education by providing logistical and administrative support
- Provide support (particularly in the first year) for new faculty instructional responsibilities through mid-semester course feedback, a teaching enhancement workshop series, and assistance with assembling a teaching portfolio
- Advocate implementation of instructional technology in the classroom
- Maintain and support a TASC library devoted to faculty development and academic support
- Assemble packets of materials on college teaching topics
- Determine services or workshop topics of greatest interest to faculty and administrators
- Provide ongoing programs for faculty development and services to support academic and technical needs
- Provide hands-on instructional technology consulting and support to faculty in all colleges
- Staff and maintain two instructional technology centers (main campus and CoN building) where faculty can receive support on creating, testing, and evaluating technology-based educational materials
- Increase communication between TASC and other administrative units (e.g., Library, UKIT, the Study, Multicultural Affairs) thus enhancing academic support services.

**Key Indicators:**

- TASC will serve on the Classroom Improvement Committee and will use available funding to install and support instructional communications technology in the classroom.
- TASC will contribute to development of new 'smart' classrooms and enable temporary use of 'smart' carts.
- TASC will assist with the development of a 'smart classroom' database.
- TASC will develop, in cooperation with other stakeholders, standards for 'smart' classrooms.
- TASC will upgrade and modernize the Distance Learning network (KPEN, KY Telecare, web conferencing).
- TASC will re-evaluate and reorganize AV staffing in White Hall classroom building.
- TASC will design equip, maintain and staff a new IT center in White Hall classroom building.
- TASC will coordinate with Library Services to provide a system for faculty to search for and borrow TASC library materials.
- TASC will add publications and maintain journal subscriptions addressing key college academic topics.
- TASC will establish a TASC newsletter to inform faculty of upcoming events and highlight key initiatives.
- TASC will maintain a TASC web site with links to important articles, upcoming events and key initiatives.
- TASC will conduct periodic needs assessment surveys to assess college and campus-wide needs, e.g. for instructional technologies.
- TASC will conduct workshops/seminars for educational development ascertained through needs assessment.
- TASC will provide the opportunity for formative feedback on instructional materials and practice.
- TASC will provide equipment and expertise via Instructional Technology Centers that extend and promote educational innovation.
- TASC will collect data on the quality of services provided and number of faculty served through the two IT Centers and educational development programs.
- TASC will provide to all department chairs and college deans information and introductory material on the role of TASC in supporting new faculty success.
- TASC will provide, upon request, formative feedback during the semester to faculty and instructors through classroom observation and/or student input.
- TASC will coordinate Blackboard updates with UKIT and train faculty on new features or applications. Establish links and collaborative ties to the Study and to First Year initiatives.

- TASC will compile resources and links on the TASC website for use by faculty and other administrative units.

#### **UK GOAL IV: Discover, Share and Apply New Knowledge**

*As a doctoral, research-extensive institution, the University of Kentucky must demonstrate excellence in discovery and innovation, characterized by preeminent scholarship – encompassing research, creative activities, teaching and learning, and extension, as well as professional practice. Faculty, staff and students participate in the process of research and discovery throughout their careers at the University. To meet our research challenge and maximize its potential for the advancement of Kentucky's economy and way of life, we will identify and pursue innovative ways to discover, share and apply new knowledge.*

#### **UK Objectives:**

1. *The University will aggressively pursue targeted strategies to increase extramural research funding.*
3. *The University will cultivate the success of diverse efforts in scholarly achievement and research.*

#### **TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will pursue efforts to obtain extramural research funding that facilitate academic research and innovations in higher education.
2. TASC will foster preeminent scholarship throughout the University; commemorate the accomplishments of faculty and students; and communicate their successes to the Commonwealth and beyond.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

- Participate in the preparation and implementation of grant proposals related to teaching and learning
- Assist faculty in their preparation of regional, national and international presentations
- Encourage faculty to share results of educational research, including examples of best pedagogical practices

#### **Key Indicators:**

- TASC will use funding from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) to lead a statewide effort in "Programs for Course Redesign".
- TASC will sponsor and lead a statewide training program for implementation of Blackboard's full Academic Suite.
- TASC will assist faculty members in preparation of grant proposals related to teaching and learning.
- TASC will assist faculty in their preparation of national and international presentations.
- TASC will maintain multimedia production services for faculty and TASC clients.
- TASC will provide essential support to extramurally funded activities (Frazer grant, Moorehead project).
- TASC will support the ACRES national conference in March, 2006.

#### **GOAL V: Nurture Diversity of Thought, Culture, Gender and Ethnicity**

*The University of Kentucky is committed to creating a diverse, multicultural community of scholars and learners. To advance this commitment we must move forward with specific actions that demonstrate our belief in the value and richness of human differences. We must provide a model for the Commonwealth of a truly diverse society that celebrates human differences, promotes fairness and equity in policies and practices, and upholds basic principles of social justice. To become one of the nation's best research universities, we must foster a creative, supportive environment that will nurture diversity of thought, culture, gender and ethnicity.*

#### **UK Objectives:**

1. *The University will improve the climate for diversity.*
2. *The University will create a diverse workplace and learning community.*

#### **TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will improve the climate for multicultural diversity through policies and programs that create a diverse workplace and learning community.
2. TASC will assist in the development and implementation of best policies in minority faculty recruitment.

**Strategies/Actions:**

- Promote and participate in regular professional development activities devoted to better understanding diverse workplace and learning communities
- Assist faculty in developing teaching and learning environments that promote multicultural diversity
- Improve minority faculty retention by offering individual support

**Key Indicators:**

- TASC will solicit input from diverse populations including advisory board members, faculty and students.
- TASC will enhance opportunities for faculty to understand diverse student populations through increasing participation in appropriate workshops and programs by 10%.

**UK GOAL VI: Elevate the Quality of Life for Kentuckians**

*Since its founding in 1865 as a land-grant college, the University of Kentucky has applied knowledge and resources to address the Commonwealth's economic, social and cultural needs. We must improve the lives of Kentuckians in the areas of education; health and economic well-being; arts and culture; community vitality and civic engagement; and the environment. We must identify new resources and find innovative ways to use existing means to elevate the quality of life for Kentuckians through partnerships with communities and by expanding and amplifying the original land-grant vision to all spheres of life.*

**UK Objectives:**

1. *The University will engage its people and resources in a renewed commitment to outreach.*

**TASC Objectives:**

1. TASC will recognize outreach as a means of education that transcends traditional classroom experiences and involves the application of knowledge and discovery to societal problems.

**Strategies/Actions:**

- Develop and implement a plan that integrates service into the curriculum and recognizes faculty engagement
- Collaborate with the other university outreach units to enhance or provide quality educational services to the citizens of Kentucky.
- Connect the Commonwealth to UK's academic programs through multiple approaches, including online courses and other means of distributed education

**Key Indicators:**

- TASC will increase the number and kinds of instructionally-based collaborative relationships within the University of Kentucky, between fellow institutions of higher education within Kentucky, and beyond.
- TASC will assist faculty in development of online courses that are available to traditional and non-traditional students across the Commonwealth.
- TASC will serve on committees and policy workgroups sponsored by the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) that encourage multi-institutional, collaborative approaches to distance learning in Kentucky.
- TASC will lead efforts to establish a statewide standard and contract for a common classroom management system.
- TASC will lead efforts to establish a statewide contract for extended, 24/7 user support services.