

Appendix A: UCAT Philosophy of Practice Statement

The support and services we provide are guided by the core principles of **Service**, **Community**, and **Scholarship**.

Service

Our role within The Ohio State University is to support instructors at all levels of their development, in order to advance the institution's ultimate goal of enhancing students' academic success. We do this by meeting the individualized needs of instructors, working with university departments, programs, and administrators, and creating a student-centered community and culture of teaching.

We are proactive about understanding instructors' and partners' needs because we are in a reciprocal relationship with instructors at the university; their needs inform our services, and our disciplinary expertise informs their teaching, leading to evolving needs. Satisfaction surveys after events, annual surveys that include both quantitative and qualitative responses, the numbers of return users of our services, events attendance, email and comments (solicited and not), and grants awarded all afford evidence of the effectiveness of our work. These data also allow us to continue to improve the service we provide.

We aim for a collaborative relationship with instructors. In our consultations with both individual instructors and academic units, we listen carefully to ensure we are responding to each of their unique situations. By first gaining an understanding of their needs, we are able to provide them with relevant resources that can help them make informed decisions about their teaching practice. Together we work to refine teaching methods, design courses and curricula, internationalize curricula, support GTA development, and assess and improve student learning.

We consistently advocate for a culture of effective teaching at the University. In our collaboration with other sources of teaching support on campus, it is important that we create and maintain productive relationships. We understand that we work within a network, and we exchange knowledge in order to enhance the university culture of teaching. To this end, we design workshops with and co-sponsor events with Writing Across the Curriculum, the Office for Distance Education and eLearning, the University Libraries, the Graduate School, Student Life, the Office for International Affairs, and others. We advocate for best pedagogical and administrative practices through our participation in processes that shape instruction and policy in critical ways, including the Senate Committee on Peer Review of Teaching, SEI Oversight, Assessment of the GEC, and several college and departmental efforts to assess and improve the quality of teaching and student learning across campus.

Community

We believe knowledge is most effectively produced in a diverse community of learners. To

that end, we continuously strive to foster relationships with and between instructors to encourage growth in the context of teaching, forming a collaborative community in which people can share and learn from one another's expertise and experience. This work does not stop at the university walls. We are committed to enhancing teaching experiences by developing communities of peers at the local, national, and international levels, and advocating for a collaborative culture that continuously explores and celebrates the complex practice of university teaching.

We understand that community requires a place where trust and a sense of safety can be established. Locally, our goal is to establish this safe and trustworthy environment for instructors with whom we work, in anticipation that they will take what they learn to their own communities. In this way, we work to spread the importance and rewards of teaching throughout Ohio State. We become partners with individual instructors, university departments and programs, and administrators, as we create and advocate for a culture that enhances teaching effectiveness.

Another way we foster community at Ohio State is by sponsoring faculty/professional learning communities that are part of the Ohio State Teaching Enhancement Program (OSTEP). These communities each focus on a specific issue (globalizing curricula) or gather a cohort at a selected point in their career (mid-career and senior faculty). Participants in these learning communities meet regularly for a year, working together to support each other's efforts on a teaching-related project. Similarly, we support other communities of teacher-scholars, such as the Academy of Teaching, the Starting TA Resource Group, and the Course Design Institutes. We also facilitate workshops and book groups, both campus-wide and within academic units, as a form of multi-level community wherein participants share the experience of learning together, and then reflect together on the process of putting into practice the ideas about which they discuss and read. Through social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and our blog, we are connected to a community of instructors both within and beyond Ohio State. We use these online spaces to discuss topics and perspectives of importance to our partners and instructors.

In all our work, we know it is important to evaluate the impact on individuals. Our feedback indicates that instructors, and UCAT staff alike, value the community fostered by UCAT. We continually strive to be reflective about our interactions with each other and in the work we do with the wider Ohio State community. It is important to us that participants in our community of learners feel a sense of connectedness with other people and units on campus, find pathways to identify common challenges and solutions, and grow in their own knowledge and expertise of teaching through the opportunities provided by UCAT.

Scholarship

As members of the academic community, we understand that scholarship is the core value and practice of our institution. We believe that this culture of analytic rigor and evidence should guide teaching and service, just as it does discovery-focused research. We adopt the view of our late colleague Donald H. Wulff of the University of Washington who described

the relationship of educational developers to scholarship as a three-legged stool: we help instructors apply scholarly strategies to their teaching; we are critical consumers and interpreters of the literature on teaching and learning; and we are actively engaged in producing scholarship on teaching and learning and scholarship on educational development practice.

As experts in university pedagogy, we are in a unique position to assist instructors by grounding all of our resources and services in foundational and current scholarship on teaching and learning. Because teaching is a defining feature of all departments on campus, we share our evidence-based knowledge of best pedagogical practices with instructors across disciplines. In addition to using this ever-expanding corpus of knowledge to guide our work, we engage participants and colleagues in transferring the scholarly methodologies of disciplinary research to their teaching, engaging them in a culture of evidence-based pedagogical practice. We help in clarifying their instructional goals, generating testable questions about how best to achieve these goals, and gathering useful data to answer their questions about how effectively students are learning.

Finally, we seek to add to scholarship on university pedagogy and the scholarship of educational development. We conduct research on our own work to measure and expand its impact, we partner with instructors and administrators to generate scholarship on teaching learning, and we regularly participate in national conversations about university teaching. We present at conferences and have an active research and publication agenda exploring both university teaching and efforts to enhance and support such teaching. Including edited volumes, book chapters, published articles, conference and invited presentations, and efforts supporting funded projects, UCAT staff members have been involved in 78 completed scholarly works between 2009 and 2014. Working independently, with Ohio State instructors, and with educational developers at other institutions, our staff has recently produced scholarship on course design, graduate and professional student development, adjunct faculty support, models for consultation, gathering and using student feedback, assessing our own work, diversity in the classroom (language learners), technology (MOOCs), and supporting scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) efforts.

We understand that it is important to model for instructors a scholarly approach to teaching, learning, and the support thereof. With that in mind, we incorporate and generate scholarly work and insights in all that we do to support the University's mission of offering a quality learning experience for students through teaching excellence.