

Adams Center

FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

END OF YEAR REPORT

2016-2017



"I go to as many Adams Center sessions as I possibly can because they're so helpful. I incorporate the new ideas into my teaching and it makes me a better teacher." - ACU Faculty member

A Note from the Executive Director

When the Walter H. Adams Center for Teaching and Learning was established in 1992, the goal was to honor, promote and encourage teaching excellence at Abilene Christian University. Today, our purpose remains: to support faculty who - as the founding documents of the center say - "understand and appreciate the limitless potential for life changing, value building, and mind expanding achievements in the learning experiences at Abilene Christian University." Over the past five years, we've seen our programming continue to grow, providing faculty with increased opportunities to share ideas, learn skills and build relationships in the areas of teaching and learning, scholarship, and mission. We invite you to take a look at the work that we've done this year.

Jennifer Shewmaker

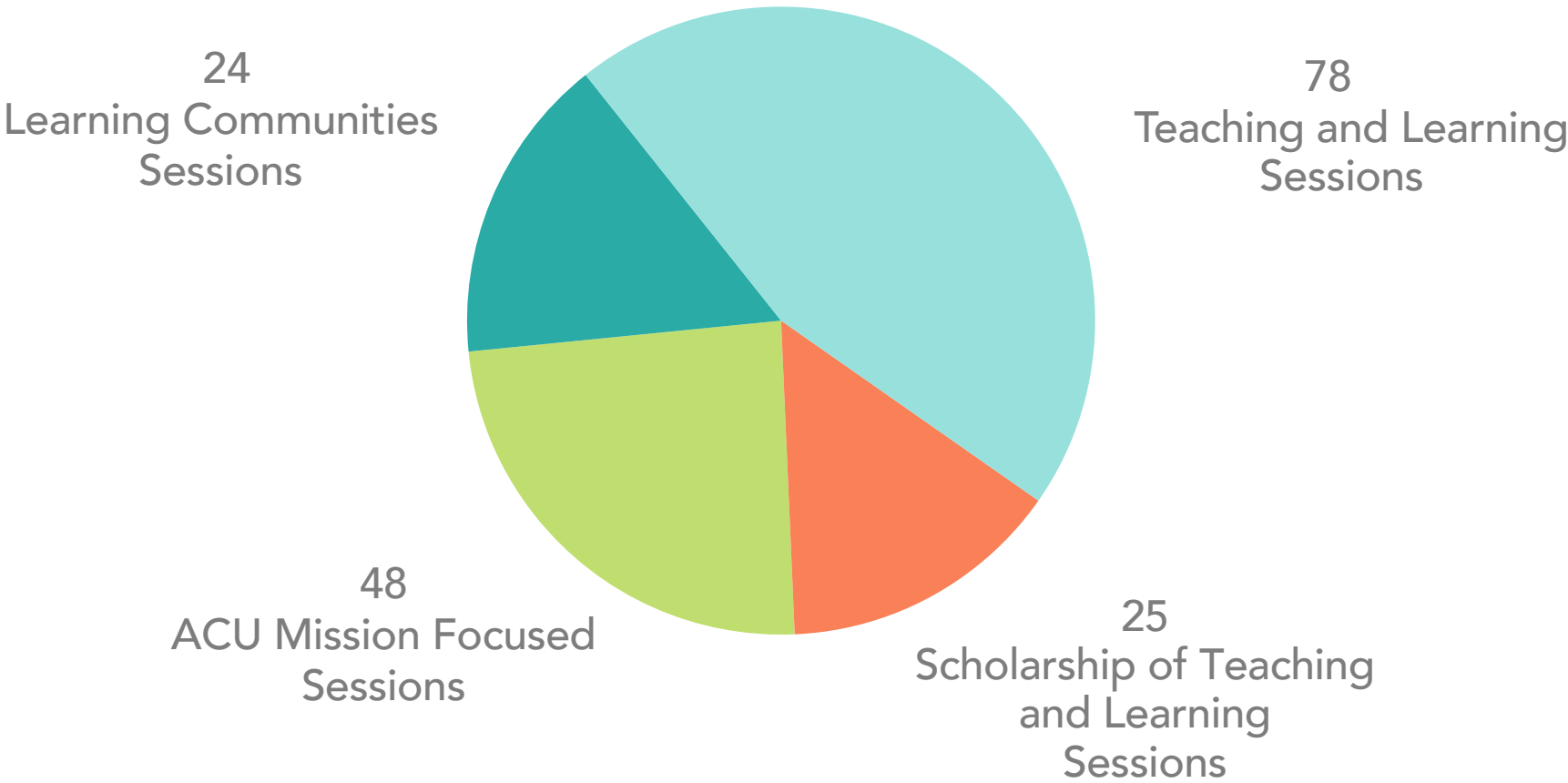
TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	<i>Adams Center Numbers</i>
3	<i>Online Teaching</i>
4	<i>Highlights</i>
8	<i>Spotlights of Teaching and Learning</i>
10	<i>Learning Communities</i>
11	<i>What's New?</i>

THE NUMBERS

A YEAR IN REVIEW

THE BREAK DOWN



We welcomed
1,523 VISITORS
in 2016- 2017.

In '16-'17,
the Adams Center
SERVED 280 UNIQUE
faculty members.

ONLINE TEACHING



The Adams Center continues to offer certificate programs to promote and educate faculty about online teaching at ACU. Participants work in a cohort to learn, discuss and share best practices, gathering monthly to learn to translate face-to-face content into online formats, promote online interaction, design online assessments, and create instructional media. In addition, participants learn the advanced use of our instructional tools, such as Canvas, to design and deploy their online teaching.

12 faculty in certification program
with 8 departments represented

HIGHLIGHTS

MASTER TEACHER PROGRAM

This year-long program provides empirically-based instructional design training and opportunities to try new research-based strategies in the classroom. Through observing colleagues' classrooms and being observed, participants are able to get real time feedback on these new techniques and see their colleagues share their favorite teaching practices. This program is provided to all second year faculty (as a part of a continuing New Faculty Orientation) and to experienced faculty who are nominated to participate.



15

faculty members received their Master Teacher Certificates in 2016-2017, with 46 faculty members receiving the certificate over the past 4 years.

"This is a valuable program that distinguishes ACU as a teaching university. The class visits by qualified Master Teachers is beneficial."
- Master Teacher participant

My Best Lecture

In the fall of 2014, the Adams Center began our popular “My Best Lecture” series, which spotlights faculty presenting on a topic that excites them and engages their students. The series connects colleagues across the university, engaging them in meaningful conversations and nurturing our relationships with one another.

7 faculty members participating from left to right: Beatrice Walker, Rebecca Hunter, Josh Brokaw, Josh Willis, Al Haley, Darryl Tippins, and Cherisse Flannagan



20/20 Program Updates



Dr. Stephen Baldrige - 20/20 Project Spotlight

Stephen Baldrige's project set out to determine if significantly restructuring face-to-face instruction could improve learning outcomes by bringing a cohort closer together through an experiential learning retreat. Two upper-level social work courses were restructured from the typical weekly face-to-face model. These courses replaced approximately 26 hours of face-to-face instruction with highly engaging and active learning weekends at ACU@CitySquare. These weekends consisted of lecture, group work, alumni engagement, and in-depth interactions with CitySquare clients and staff. Overall, this proved to be an extremely engaging, beneficial, and replicable model. Anecdotally, students reported loving the sustained learning and relationships that were made possible through this experience. Outcome data on learning competencies as well as student feelings of belonging among their cohort is being collected and analyzed.

Learning Communities

Each semester, the Adams Center offers a series of reading groups, which evolved into learning communities. These groups gathered faculty and staff to discuss topics of key importance spiritually and professionally, promoting diversity, teaching excellence, leadership, and effective work-life balance. These energizing sessions share principles and tools faculty can apply in their day-to-day work and life.



HOSPITABLE CLASSROOM



Parker Palmer claims that creating hospitable spaces means "receiving each other, our struggles, our newborn ideas with openness and care," yet the hospitable classroom does not lack rigor and challenge. It is a means to an end, "offered for the sake of what it can allow, permit, encourage, and yield."

In spring of 2017, the Adams Center began a Hospitable Classroom series, asking what it means to create a stance of openness where the stranger is fully welcomed and hosting series of conversations where we consider how best to receive all students, especially those least like us.