

Center for Teaching & Learning

CREATING CONNECTIONS. TRANSFORMING TEACHING. LEADING CHANGE.



Background and Distinctions

The Office of Professional Development and Faculty Affairs at UTHealth School of Dentistry was established to provide leadership, advocacy, support and assistance to administration and faculty in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The commitment to carry out this mission has led to the creation of the Center for Teaching & Learning.

In 2013, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Dentistry became one of the first dental schools in the United States to establish a Center for Teaching & Learning (CT&L) to focus on oral health professionals' transition into skilled, effective educators. The CT&L strives to work with incoming faculty members for a lifelong commitment to mentoring, masterful teaching, and leadership.

The CT&L is led by Professor and Associate Dean for Professional Development and Faculty Affairs Karen Novak, DDS, MS, PhD; and Associate Professor and CT&L Director Harold Henson, RDH, MEd, PhD.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Fifty percent of new full-time clinical faculty members come from private practice. By helping faculty become better teachers, we foster the development of enriched learning environments.
- New faculty members consider mentoring a key factor when choosing to enter an academic career.
- Academic dentistry thrives on the vision and innovation of its leaders. Developing the leadership skills of our faculty is important for the continued success of our school and programs.

The CT&L is of benefit to *all* dental educators. Through workshops, seminars and individual consultations, we assist new faculty and seasoned educators in learning evidence-based teaching strategies. In addition, we offer innovative pathways for developing skills in mentoring, leadership, and scholarship.

DISTINCTIONS

In its first year, the CT&L has served nearly 100 faculty through 21 programs. One participant later described the aspect she found most helpful as, "the reminder that today's students don't learn the same way I did, and that I need to adapt my teaching style to today's students."

A unique CT&L program is the Dean's Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars. The mission of the academy is to promote, support, recognize and reward the scholarship of teaching and learning through a variety of programs. Examples include the Dean's Excellence Awards, distinguished faculty development speakers, and special projects that enhance and enrich the academic environment.



PROGRAMMATIC OFFERINGS

Since its inception, the CT&L has offered a variety of presentations and workshops on classroom teaching, clinical teaching, educational technologies, educational psychology, and developing an area of scholarship. Some of the center's past offerings include:

- **Clinical Teaching: The Essentials**
Dimensions of Clinical Teaching; Assessing the Clinical Student; Clinical Teaching Strategies and Techniques; Evaluation Process; Career Development as a Clinical Faculty Member
- **Classroom Teaching: The Essentials**
Course Preparation; Teaching Academically Diverse Students; Effective Teaching Strategies; Assessment Development and Analysis; Evaluating Your Teaching Effectiveness

“This school has always been forward-thinking with professional development of faculty. This center takes it to another level.”

– Karen Novak, DDS, PhD, Associate Dean for Professional Development & Faculty Affairs

“The center will also help the many dental professionals joining the faculty after being in private practice. They need classes and opportunities for development as they teach the curriculum to the students.”

– Harold Henson, RDH, MEd, PhD, Director, Center for Teaching & Learning

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Gifts to the Center for Teaching & Learning can support dental education in a variety of ways:

- **Naming the Center:** A gift of this size would enhance the CT&L's reach, sustainability and impact, while linking the donor and community to faculty development in mentoring, teaching and leadership.
- **Naming and Establishing Faculty Endowments:** Faculty endowments ensure a basis of financial support, allowing innovative educators to broaden their expertise. These funds also support educational research — by putting the “evidence” in “evidence-based” outcomes.
- **Lectureships or Lecture Series:** Providing an endowment for a lecture series allows faculty and students to meet and learn from distinguished scholars. Funds from this type of endowment also may be used to finance travel expenses to bring such speakers to campus. Visit go.uth.edu/Lectures to see examples.
- **Current Use Funds:** To support faculty development in teaching and learning, such as attendance and participation by faculty and program staff at international conferences, workshops and other training.

For more information on ways to support teaching, learning and faculty excellence at UTHealth School of Dentistry, please contact:

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Mission

To advance human health by providing high-quality education, patient care, and research in oral health for Texas, the nation and the world.