To: Bapat, Harshavardhan, Chair Undergraduate Council

From: James Ermatinger, Dean College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

RE: CTL program review

Date: April 22, 2011

I have read the CTL self study and the CLAS Curriculum Committee's memo for the CTL program review. What follows below are my recommendations concerning the program, especially as they relate to their recommendations as outlined in lines 1140-1204. The self-study is thorough and complete giving the mission, changing mission, and history of the program. Since the last review the Center has undergone a change in its mission and more importantly in the number of students served.

Strengths: The Center has a strong commitment to helping all students succeed as shown from the data they have submitted indicating the number of students served in tutoring, test proctoring, supplemental instruction, and overseeing the writing and math labs. The center has successfully integrated their goals and mission into the University and CLAS' goals and mission. The Center and its staff are to be commended to continually willing to experiment with new ideas to help our students succeed. Finally, the Center has accomplished all of this with a reduced budget and a tenuous permanent staff.

Weaknesses: The Center suffers from a tenuous permanent staff issue dating almost from its creation. The Center has not had a permanent director for some time, and has had interim and visiting individuals for several years. The College plans to remedy this weakness this coming Academic year. The Center has issues with outdated technology amounting to about $10,000. This weakness is currently being addressed with new technology from the College's budget. The issue of space is tied up with the library renovations and unfortunately out of the scope of the College.

Recommendations: The Center has provided 11 recommendations. The College's Curriculum Committee supports recommendation #1, certification of CTL staff; I concur and will work with the director to set up funding for this program. Recommendation #2 concerns the creation of a solely online learning assistance program; I recommend that CTL work with COLRS to develop and implement this program. Recommendation #3 suggests expanding the SI program. The College's Curriculum Committee endorses the collection of more data and identifying specific courses; I concur with their assessment. Recommendation #4 suggest expanding its community networking efforts; I believe that this would be valuable, but do not consider it a high priority. Recommendation #5 concerns space which is on the drawing table but is a campus issue. Recommendation #6 suggests the placement of more signs across campus; the Center should draft a plan to submit to CLAS Executive Committee for funding.
Recommendation #7 argues for a student advisory board; College's Curriculum Committee questions the need for this suggesting instead surveying students to see what their needs are; I would suggest perhaps a compromise of having a student member sit on the CTL Advisory Board (if one exists, if not, perhaps create a board with faculty and students). Recommendation #8 concerns staffing; College’s Curriculum Committee recognizes the issue as does the College and it will hopefully be resolved this coming year. Recommendation #9 indicates a need to collect more data from faculty concerning CTL's success and issues facing faculty and students; I encourage them to follow through with this plan. Recommendation #10 suggest expanding their hours and College’s Curriculum Committee agrees but desires information be forwarded concerning the financial impact; I agree with the committee and encourage this endeavor but also will need more financial information. Recommendation #11 indicates the need for a University Testing Center. The College’s Curriculum Committee believes that CTL should continue this and it is good for the faculty and students to have this service. While I agree that the University should have a Testing Center, I do not believe that CTL can physically and financially continue to do this task. The amount of time, space needed, and difficulties concerning a testing center in a limited space area with limited staff make this impractical for a University our size. While CTL’s 2^nd goal includes this task it is clear from their data that over the past two years the need as increased dramatically. I believe that the University needs to have a conversation on the best way to accommodate this goal without CTL being the sole unit involved. I do know that the Math Department has recently begun to examine its testing policies in light of this issue.

The Center for Teaching and Learning has changed over the past several years and the staff has continued to offer our students with help in order to succeed. The unit has continued to work with all units of the University in a collegial fashion. CTL has recently undertaken more tasks at the behest of the institution, namely the administration of scheduling Faculty Professional Development Workshops which in my view has been quite successful; and the implementation of the Intensive English Program (ESL) which re-establishes ESL in the Center and will serve our international students.