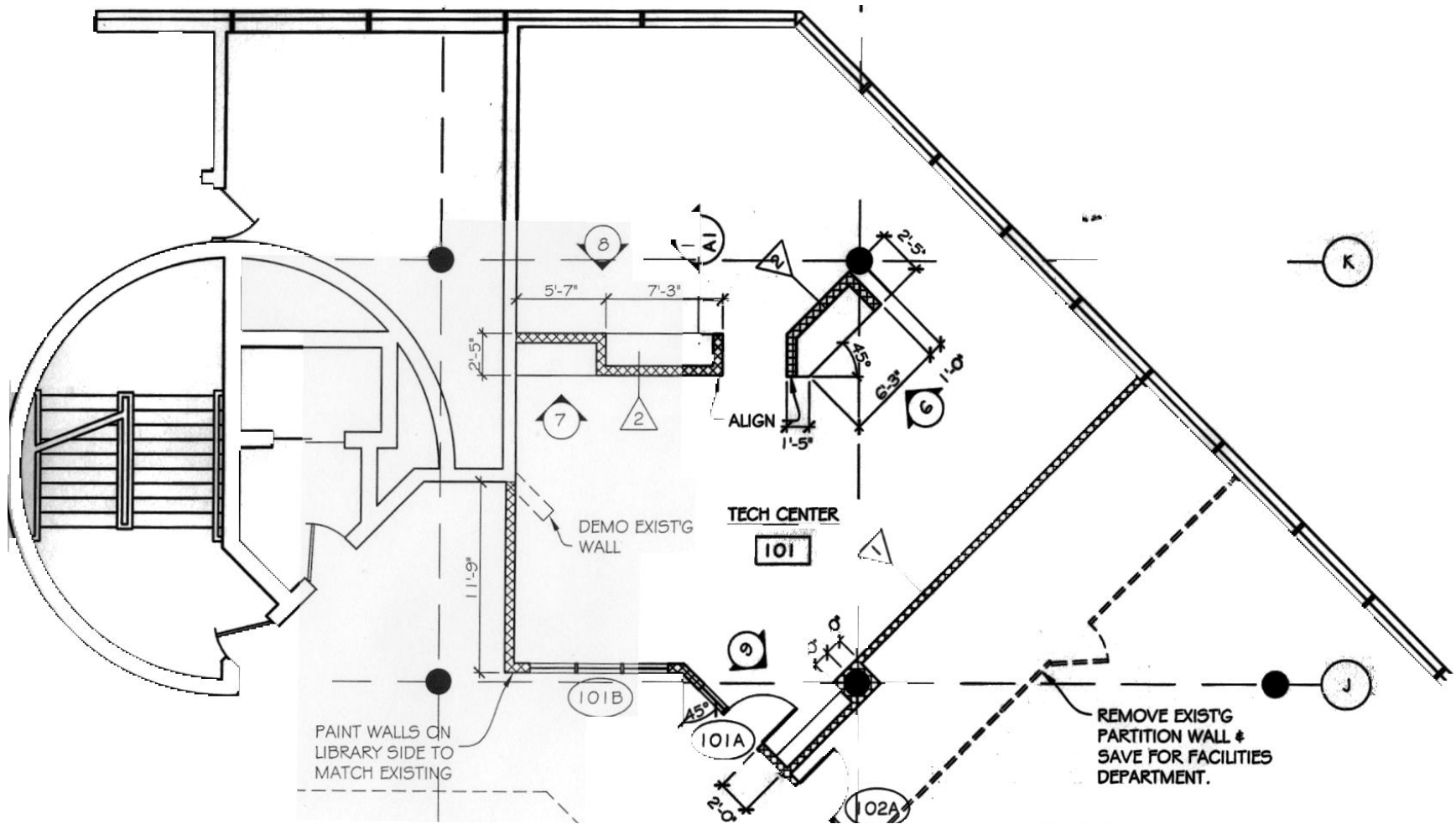


The Center for Teaching and Learning

AY08/09 Annual Report



Fiscal Challenges

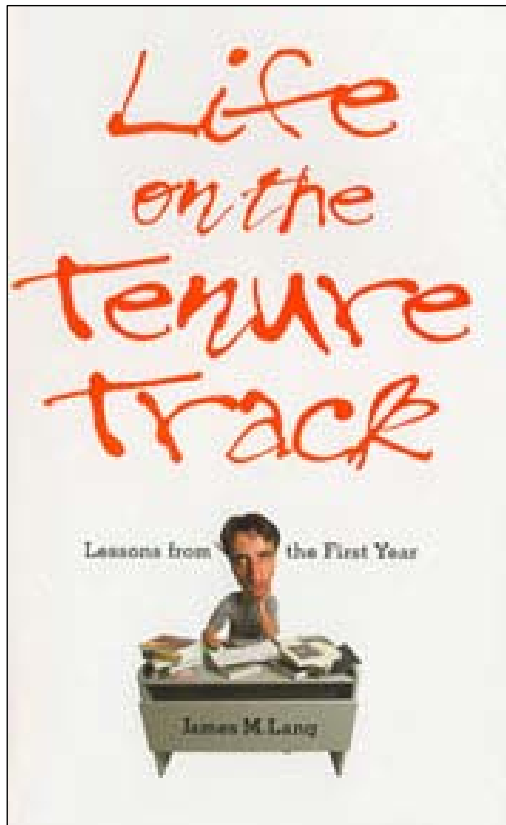
In the AY08/09, the Center for Teaching and Learning experienced a dramatic reversal of fortune. As state revenues dried up during the financial crisis, so too did support for the Center. Having lost our half-time instructional technologist, Jerome Favata, to retirement, we saw his position go unfilled. Then, late in the fall, the search for a full-time Program Manager was withdrawn, and further cuts saw the existing half-time position for a Program Manager disappear. In short, within the first six months of the fiscal year the Center lost one FTE of staff and thus a substantial portion of our budget.

The loss of Clair Degutis as Program Manager was a particular blow to the CTL. Clair was the guiding spirit behind the Center since its conception: it was she who made it a priority during the AY03/04 strategic planning to conceive a space devoted to innovation and experimentation; it was she who put the plan before the Board of Trustees; it was she who helped design the space in the AY05/06; and it was she who helped to craft the program in the last three years. It is safe to say that without Clair's dedication and persistence the CTL would never have come to be.

The one bright spot in the budgetary picture this last year was the survival of our core program. We offered more Innovation Grants than ever, and we were able to remake the mentorship program entirely, while our artists' talks, book signings, and brownbags are thriving.

The Mentorship Program

With the leadership of Dr. Lauren MacKenzie, during the AY0708 the CTL advisory board revamped the mentorship program for the current year. Rather than assigning two mentors for all new faculty and librarian hires, the board adopted a plan to pair one mentor to each to new hire.



In the AY08/09, we came close to meeting this goal: including temporary full-time staff, we had nineteen new faculty and librarians and fourteen mentors.

Moreover, the Center sponsored a series of events designed specifically for

mentorship. To kick off the year, we hosted James Lang, author of *Life on the Tenure Track* (Johns Hopkins, 2005). Lang gave a talk entitled “Mental Models: Helping Students Unlearn What They Think They Know” from his new book, *On Course* (Harvard, 2008). New hires were also invited to a series of social events – including a walking tour of the city of Fitchburg – and hosted to discussions on mentorship itself, and they were given the chance to meet one-on-one with Dr. Robert Antonucci, the President of the College.

Faculty Innovation Grants

For each of the last three years the Center has awarded a series of competitive grants to spur innovation in teaching methods and the use of new instructional technologies. Since the inception of the Innovation Grants, the Center has awarded ten grants totaling \$15,000.

This year's Innovation Grants went to six proposals: Profs. Laura Baker and Susan Williams' for the creation of a GIS research database mapping historical sites in Fitchburg; Prof. Paul Beaudoin's for the development of an online “History of Jazz” course; Prof. John Chetro-Szivos' (et al.) to further departmental assessment; Prof. Matt McGee's for training on (ITEC) construction management software; Prof. Tom Pelling's for the development of new EXSS case studies; and Prof. Ben Railton's for funding the development of a resource library for the nascent American Studies program.

Percentage of Events in the AY08/09

