One of the main initiatives of the Center for Teaching and Learning in 2006/2007 is to support new faculty and chairs through a mentoring program. In order to help define this program, all senior faculty members (full and associate professors) were invited to reflect on the teaching tradition at SUNY Orange and give ideas for how this tradition can best be passed on. This report summarizes the discussions held by those who attended the Senior Faculty Mentoring Workshop on May 31, 2006. A list of participants, discussion questions, and notes from each group's discussion are provided in Appendices A, B and C.

Participants discussed the most important values and traditions at SUNY Orange and these can be summarized into three categories. The SUNY Orange teaching tradition can be defined by 1) a strong focus on the student, 2) high academic standards, and 3) a commitment to excellent teaching. This first tradition, of close faculty and student contact, is one that is remembered by students long after they graduate. Several workshop participants told stories of alumni returning years after graduation, saying that it was at SUNY Orange where they felt the most cared for as individuals. All of the workshop groups mentioned this aspect of a SUNY Orange education as being special. Our faculty members show a great deal of respect for their students, are dedicated to their success, and possess a fundamental optimism in the abilities of their students. After hearing comments from the workshop groups, it was very clear to me how much faculty members care for their students and in their ability to achieve their highest potential.

The second hallmark of a SUNY Orange education is the high academic standards to which our students are held. Faculty members here take great pride in the academic quality of our programs and the reputation our students have at transfer institutions. We recognize the challenge that high academic standards pose to our students and so we work hard to support students in achieving these demanding standards. Our faculty takes time to teach students how to learn, and prepare our students for the rigor of a college education. We recognize that students do have the possibility of failure, yet we are committed to supporting our students so that they can succeed.

Getting our students to meet our high academic standards requires excellence in teaching. The third hallmark of the SUNY Orange education is that our faculty members are teaching-focused and they make teaching their top priority. They are interested in new ideas about teaching and have
respect for the views of new faculty. Also, senior faculty members are eager to support newly hired faculty in their efforts to develop as instructors. They are committed to familiarizing new faculty to the culture of SUNY Orange through a variety of methods.

Workshop participants spoke of both informal and formal ways of passing on the teaching tradition to the next generation of faculty. Informal methods include setting an example, having a positive, "this is a great place" attitude and being available and welcoming to newcomers. More formal ideas of passing on the teaching include: being a mentor to new faculty members, attending regular discussions focused on a reading or specific pedagogical topic, creating a list of people who could answer common questions new faculty might have, and inviting the winner of the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching to speak to new faculty.

In summary, the teaching tradition at SUNY Orange can be describe as being student-centered, having high academic standards, and excellent teaching. There are both formal and informal ways of passing these traditions on the new faculty. The comments of all that attended this meeting were invaluable in defining the teaching tradition at SUNY Orange. The CTL will work to pass on this tradition in its New Faculty and Chair Mentoring Program in the year to come. Many thanks to the senior faculty who shared their vision of the SUNY Orange teaching tradition and how it can be passed on to our new colleagues.
Appendix A. List of Participants in the Senior Faculty Mentoring Workshop 5/31/06

Deidre Costic
Ken Hirschel
Alex Jakubowski
Barry Kass
Stacey Moegenburg
Bob Moody
Vincent Odock
Max Shaefer
Judy Schwartz
Pat Slesinski
Roberta Smith
Jim Tarvin
Darlene Walsh
Cheryl Ward-Simons
Mary Warrener
Steve Winter
Diane Bliss
Judi Jaffe
Fran Cummins
Sue Krissler

Appendix B. Discussion Questions for the Senior Faculty Mentoring Workshop

1. How would you describe the SUNY Orange Teaching Tradition to incoming faculty members?

2. What are our most important values at SUNY Orange?

3. Which aspects of the SUNY Orange teaching tradition do we most want to pass on?

4. How can we pass these values and traditions on to new faculty members?

Appendix C. Notes from the Senior Faculty Mentoring Workshop 5/31/06

Groups Answers to Questions

1. How would you describe the SUNY Orange Teaching Tradition to new faculty members?

Group 1
You get the feeling you're in the "state system" re: specific rules
Students think of
- SUNY Orange is a "serious" place
- Deep respect for the school
- Appreciated the intimate contact with faculty
Caring, dedicated & available faculty here
As a student, Always remembers the teachers here
Yes, the students remember the faculty care, have great nostalgia about the nursing program
Integrity, we keep the standards up and inform new faculty of that

Group 2
Student Centered
Teaching at forefront vs. other faculty duties
Respect for incoming faculty-bring something new to mix
Mentoring also a tradition-sense of community with other faculty, same faculty came in with no formal teaching experience
Pride in academic quality and tradition (transfer and career programs)
Group 3
Excellence in Teaching- following in footsteps of excellent professors
Maintaining High Standards, demand a lot from students, but also help them to achieve those goals
Dedication to helping students succeed
Fundamental optimism for our students
Faculty and Students have a close one-on-one relationship, faculty here to help students succeed

Group 4
High Standards
The Individual Matters
Students will have the possibility of failure
Difference in the ways we teach (vs. high school)
Teach students how to learn
Tell new hires: you will face a disconnect between college standards and under-prepared students

2. Which aspects of the SUNY Orange teaching tradition do you most want to pass on to new faculty members?
Give faculty permission to fail students if need be, and know that the administration will support faculty in this effort to maintain high standards
Loyalty, Trust and Caring
"I should pass because I worked so hard"
Foreign students are harder working

3. What are our most important values at SUNY Orange?
Same as above

Rounded Education
Honesty
Professionalism within our community, faculty & administration and among faculty
Respect among faculty, face-to-students, students to each other

4. How can we pass these values and traditions on?
One-on-one mentoring
Be a "parent"
Set an example
Informal social gatherings
Do interdisciplinary course work
Administrators should attend social functions with faculty
Need more intellectually stimulating activities including and with the faculty
Say to new faculty "this is a great place"
Assign a specific person in the department to a new faculty member
Read a common book on teaching (or other common subject) include regular discussion (tea) at different locations on campus
Mentor everyone
Mentor should not be on evaluation teach or asked for input from evaluation team
Common meeting to address common needs
CTL-resource list of go-to people for specific needs (i.e. PPT mentor, BB mentor, etc.)
Mentor for multi-section courses 1-2 semester, sit in on course
Develop a sense of common standards in our own performance and expectations (from self & students)
Pres. Award for Excellence in Teaching, give presentation to incoming faculty on successful teaching methods
Educate new faculty to culture and professionalism (collegiality not competition)

By example
Mentoring
Workshops
Being Available and Welcoming to talk, share ideas, etc.