

## **COMMITTEE ON TEACHING**

### **Annual Report, 2002-03**

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Teaching (COT) met regularly every other week throughout the academic year to deal with an extensive agenda related to its charge to foster and promote good teaching and to oversee instructional support services on campus. The work and accomplishments of the Committee during the 2002-03 year are summarized below.

#### **Budget and Planning Initiatives**

Cognizant of the fiscal difficulties facing the state and university, COT did not request any budgetary augmentations to the programs under its supervision for 2003-04. However, we would like to outline several growth initiatives that we feel should be given high priority at such time as the university returns to financial health and resumes its anticipated growth path. These initiatives include:

Augmentation of the Instructional Improvement Grants Program (IIP) by \$100,000 and subsequently by \$15,000 per year for seven years, bringing the base budget for IIP to \$325,000. The budget for IIP has remained stagnant at \$120K per year for over a decade. Our growth request would maintain teaching support at its current relative level as the university adds anticipated new faculty and would address the growing cost of innovative instructional initiatives that increasingly incorporate some form of instructional technology or e-learning component.

Permanent augmentation of \$7000 in order to double the amount of the Excellence in Teaching Award, raising it from \$500 to \$1000 per recipient.

Permanent augmentation of \$40,000 in the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) budget to allow for 1) expanded services and workshops for a growing campus faculty; 2) an upgrade of the half time Program Coordinator staff position to full time at the Assistant III level or above and; 3) funds to hire a part time graduate student staff associate to assist with implementing TA support programs and to conduct research (including program assessments) for the Center.

#### **Instructional Improvement Program Grants**

The Instructional Improvement Program (IIP), which dates back some thirty years in the University of California, provides seed money to encourage experimentation with new ideas in teaching and learning at the undergraduate level. UCSC receives an annual Instructional Improvement allocation from the Office of the President, a portion of which (\$120K) is earmarked for individual grants to UCSC faculty and staff. One agenda item that COT has identified and intends to pursue in 2003-04 is to work with administrative budget analysts to determine the full amount of the IIP allocation from the Office of the President and to track how these funds are used across campus.

One of the regular charges of the committee is to adjudicate applications for Instructional Improvement Program (IIP) Grants. Adjudication of IIP grant proposals is a responsibility that COT takes very seriously and on which it spends a great deal of its time throughout the year. Faculty who request grants must make clear in their applications exactly why and how the proposed innovations will benefit student learning. Applicants must also indicate how these learning outcomes will be assessed. Both of these factors are critical to COT's funding decisions and will become increasingly more important in the future. COT has charged the new Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence to work closely with future applicants to help them articulate clearer learning objectives and outcomes and to develop more effective and appropriate assessment instruments to measure those outcomes. We understand, based on discussions with the administration, that future funding of the IIP grants and their potential augmentation is dependent on our ability to present clear and demonstrable measures of the short and long-term impacts of funded initiatives on undergraduate teaching and learning.

The Committee considered a total of 51 IIP grant proposals. In all, 31 were funded for a total of \$118,055.54 out of requests totaling \$275,122.28.

IIP grants fell into the following categories:

- **Mini-grants** are available throughout the year when COT is in session. They support small-scale projects designed to improve undergraduate instruction. Mini-grants have a maximum budget of \$2000. In the yearlong competition for Mini-grants, there were 26 submissions requesting approximately \$41,315.00. Of these, 19 were funded for a total of \$27,351.54.
- **Course Development Fellowships** provide \$6463-\$8100 (depending on division) to cover one course release for fellowship recipient. Course Development Fellows use the course release to develop a new undergraduate course or program in their departments or to make significant revisions in an older course. Eleven faculty submitted applications for Course Development Fellowships, with a cumulative budget of \$71,093.00. Eight were funded for a total of \$51,704.00.
- **New Technologies in Teaching Grants** offer up to \$15,000 for faculty who wish to experiment with incorporating new forms of technology into instruction. Projects might involve specialized computer software or hardware, course web sites, or technology more specific to a discipline. There were six applications within this category requesting \$70,749.97. Only one request was funded, for a total of \$10,000.00.
- **Major Grants** are for major projects aimed at improving undergraduate education. These might involve the hiring of student assistants, the development of internships, among other possibilities. Of the eight proposals received for a total of \$91,964.52 requested, COT funded three for a total of \$29,000.00.

This year four areas were given special emphasis in our adjudication of IIP grant applications. These areas included: the development of new writing intensive courses across the curriculum (2 proposals, 2 funded), support of co-taught inter-divisional courses (1 proposal, 0 funded), collaborative learning initiatives (4 proposals, 2 funded), and innovative approaches to the teaching of large classes (10 proposals, 7 funded).

These foci were developed in consultation with faculty and the VP/Dean of Undergraduate Education, and based on our own assessment of campus needs. The request for proposals to improve the teaching of large courses appears to have been particularly fruitful. Faculty proposed several enhancements to large courses, including the incorporation of interactive web sites, additional visual materials to supplement lectures, individual or group student projects, and improvement of supplemental peer tutoring through analysis of placement scores and outcomes.

The majority of IIP proposals in all categories now include a technology element. That these requests are not confined to the “New Technologies” category suggests that many faculty no longer view learning technology as “new” or unusual. As a result, we have decided to eliminate the New Technologies in Teaching Grants as a distinct category, while continuing to give innovative approaches to incorporate technology in teaching and learning high priority in our funding decisions. Applicants who justify the addition of technology in terms of new pedagogy and student learning stand a much higher chance of having their projects funded.

Several proposals were received this year for translating existing teaching materials to digital format. Only two of these were approved. The committee felt that such proposals should only be funded when there is a strong case made for how such conversion will substantially modify the instructor’s pedagogical approach and improve outcomes in student learning.

Various methods were used to publicize the availability of grant funding. The annual Call for Proposals was sent out early last Fall quarter; announcements were also made by e-mail. The Chair of COT and Director of CTE held two open forums, one at the end of Fall Quarter and one at the beginning of Winter Quarter for faculty interested in the application process. The Center for Teaching Excellence also offered individual consultations to grant applicants all year long, as it has in the past.

The Committee worked this year with the Director of CTE to revise the Call for Proposals for 2003-04 to make it more user-friendly for applicants.

### **Ninth Annual Convocation on Teaching**

With the Center for Teaching Excellence, COT co-sponsored the Ninth Annual Convocation on Teaching, held on February 11, 2003. The theme was “**Undergraduate and Graduate Teaching, Learning and Research: Can We Achieve a Balance?**” This mini-conference explored successful strategies for integrating graduate and undergraduate teaching, learning and research with examples drawn from a variety of disciplinary practices. An excellent panel was assembled that featured speakers drawn from UCSC faculty as well as graduate and undergraduate students. The participants included: David Swanger, Professor of Education and Creative Writing, Russ Flegal, Professor of Environmental Toxicology, John Dizikes, Professor Emeritus of American Studies, David Jones, Professor of Music, Marcos Lopez, Graduate Student in Sociology and Vanessa Enriquez-Rios, Chemistry Major. Chair Judith Habicht-Mauche acted as moderator. Subsequent to the panel presentations there was a spirited period of questions

and answers and discussions. A reception was held in the rotunda of the new University Center after the event.

Next year the Convocation will most likely take the form of a more informal "Instructional Technology Fair" with various workshops, programs and demonstrations spread throughout the day, rather than a single panel discussion. We will distribute surveys to the participants to get their input on the most appropriate structure, format and content for this event in the future.

### **Excellence in Teaching Awards**

As in past years, in selecting recipients for this award, COT considered nomination letters from students, endorsement letters from department chairs, and statements on teaching from the nominees themselves. Nominees who had already received an Excellence in Teaching Award within the last 5 years were excluded from consideration. Following past practice, COT also took into account information provided by the Registrar's Office about outstanding narrative evaluations. Nominees with substantial numbers of missing evaluations were given an opportunity to explain or correct the Registrar's report. Only those who were up to date on their narratives were considered for an award.

COT selected 10 faculty for Excellence in Teaching Awards. The Chancellor and the COT Chair presented the awards at a University House reception on May 23, 2003. The recipients were: Margaret Brose of Literature, Ann Caudle of Science Communication, Nancy N. Chen of Anthropology, Sandra Chung of Linguistics and Philosophy, E. Melanie DuPuis of Sociology, Lori G. Kletzer of Economics, Marc Mangel of Applied Math and Statistics, Wendy Martyna of Sociology, Bruce A. Schumm of Physics, and Eugene Switkes of Chemistry.

In addition, COT gave honorable mentions to the following faculty: David Dorfan of Physics, David Draper of Applied Math and Statistics, Greg Fritsch of Theater Arts, Jenny Keller of Science Communication, Ian Pollack of Art, John H. Schaar of Politics, and Hirotaka Tamanoi of Mathematics.

### **Review of the Center for Teaching Excellence**

Eileen Tanner resigned her position as Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence at the end of the 2001-02 academic year. Program Coordinator, Jennifer Swanson, also resigned over the summer. This left the Center for Teaching Excellence without a director or staff at a very critical moment of financial crisis for the University. Fearing that the Center might be closed as a cost saving measure, as it had been during the last fiscal crisis during the early 1990s, the Chair of the Academic Senate, George Blumenthal, and incoming COT Chair Habicht-Mauche, lobbied VP/DUE Lynda Goff for the immediate appointment of a new Director for CTE. On September 1, 2002, Dr. Ruth Harris-Barnett was appointed for one year as interim Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. In return, VP/DUE Goff requested that the Academic Senate conduct a review of the mission and programs provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence and that it then make a formal request to Provost Simpson for a waiver to hire a permanent Director for CTE based on that review. The Committee on Teaching, as the

oversight committee for CTE, was charged by the Chair of the Academic Senate to conduct this review.

The Committee examined CTE's Annual Reports for the last several years. In addition, interim Director Harris-Barnett prepared a report ("The Center for Teaching Excellence: Refining the Mission," submitted to VP/DUE Goff and COT on 12/06/02), which evaluated the current programs of CTE within the context of both its stated mission as well as identified "best practices" drawn from comparative teaching support and development centers nationwide. This review identified some of the Center's current strengths, but also revealed potential areas of growth.

Currently, the Center for Teaching Excellence provides a defined set of services to the campus. These consist of:

- Offering mid-quarter feedback for instructors
- Administering Instructional Improvement Grants
- Coordinating the Excellence in Teaching Awards
- Coordinating annual Convocation on Teaching
- Producing *Faculty Focus* newsletter
- Maintaining a web site with links to teaching support services on campus
- Providing Scantron instructor evaluation services

In addition, the director is available for consultation with instructors regarding their teaching and consults with administrators and other service providers on campus regarding instructional issues and coordination of services.

While CTE has in place strong mechanisms for providing individual services to instructors wishing to improve their teaching, it lacks a comprehensive range of programs to train new instructors, to promote a wider awareness of best teaching practices and to disseminate the results of innovative research on teaching and learning. We recommend that CTE develop more workshops/seminars in partnership with knowledgeable faculty members on issues related to teaching and learning. The series of workshops held this year on teaching writing, coordinated collaboratively by interim Director Harris-Barnett and Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator Virginia Draper, represent an excellent model for such programs. The Center also needs to re-establish some form of TA training. Development of such a training program needs to be coordinated with the Graduate Division, the TA union and individual departments to ensure that it meets the needs of its varied constituents. CTE also needs to work more closely with the office of Academic Human Resources to develop effective training workshops and mentorship programs for new faculty. Increased outreach to part-time, non-tenure track instructors is also needed.

Available statistics suggest that a large number of students at UCSC are potentially affected by their teachers' participation in CTE programs. Enrollments for courses utilizing evaluations, Mid-Quarter Feedback, and Instructional Improvement Grant funding totals more than 15,000 per year. However, the impact on instruction and learning has not been formally assessed for any of these programs. Annual Reports have

tended to summarize rather than analyze and assess the Center's activities. We recommend that CTE begin to develop appropriate assessment instruments and more systematically collect data that will allow it to better evaluate both the short term and long-term impacts of its programs on undergraduate teaching and learning at UCSC. The results of these assessments will be critical to the continued funding and potential growth of the Center.

However, maintaining its current level of service while implementing these extremely modest improvements will require increased funding for CTE. At a minimum, we recommend a permanent increase of \$40,000 per year in the budget of CTE. This augmentation would allow for the reclassification of the Program Coordinator position from half to full time and provide funding for a part time graduate student assistant. The Program Coordinator provides essential administrative support for a number of the Center's programs and a graduate student assistant would help coordinate TA outreach programs and conduct research and assessment analysis. Also included in this proposed augmentation are funds to support several additional faculty workshops or seminars per year.

COT also developed and administered an on-line survey of faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants to assess their knowledge of and satisfaction with the mission and programs of the Center for Teaching Excellence. The Committee was assisted by Julian Fernald, Assistant Director of Institutional Research in the Office of Planning and Budget, who volunteered his time to help us develop and administer the survey using new web-based software. The survey received 120 responses, spread broadly across all ranks of the campus instructional staff. The responses were compiled and summary statistics were generated over the summer by student intern, Michael Chou, in the Office of Planning and Budget. These responses and summary statistics have yet to be fully analyzed and discussed by COT. In general they suggest that a majority (65%) of the respondents considered themselves to be somewhat to very familiar with the mission and programs of CTE and 55% thought these services were somewhat to highly valuable to teachers at UCSC. However, 25% of the respondents indicated that they first learned about the programs offered by CTE by taking the survey and close to 35% were uncertain of the value of CTE's programs. These results indicate that although a majority of the campus instructional staff value the current mission and programs of CTE, we need to do a better job of publicizing the availability of these services to a broader cross section of faculty, instructors and teaching assistants.

### **Search for Permanent Director of CTE**

In March 2003, COT requested a waiver to conduct a search for a permanent Director of CTE. This request was endorsed by VP/DUE Goff and forwarded to Provost Simpson, who approved the request. The job was posted in May. A search committee, composed of Judith Habicht Mauche (Chair, COT), Bakthan Singaram (COT member), Bruce Cooperstein (former Chair of COT), Henry Burnett (Director of Media Studies), and Ken Christopher (Chancellor's Office), met at the beginning of July to review applications. Four candidates were selected to interview at the end of July. Based on these interviews, the search committee recommended to VP/DUE Goff that interim Director Ruth Harris-

Barnett be offered the position as Director of CTE. Director Harris-Barnett's new appointment is effective as of September 1, 2003.

### **Miscellaneous**

COT continued to have a representative (Chair Habicht Mauche) on the Information Technology Committee (ITC) chaired by Vice Provost Larry Merkley. An outgrowth of this committee was the creation of the Learning Technologies Committee (LTC), chaired by CTE Director Harris-Barnett. Chair Habicht Mauche is also a member of this new committee and as a result will probably stop attending the less relevant ITC meetings. LTC will follow up on the initial work of the Instructional Technology Task Group (chaired by former COT Chair, Bruce Cooperstein) in 2001-02.

COT Chair Habicht Mauche served on the University-wide committee which adjudicates the Teaching, Learning and Technology Collaborative (TLtC) Grants which fund intercampus implementation projects with up to \$75,000 a year for up to three years. All three of the UCSC applicants (Elizabeth Abrams, "UC Write"; Victoria Gonzalez-Pagani, "Electronic Language Materials Archive" and Ben Crow "Atlas of Global Inequality") received funding. All were proposals for continued funding. Only two other projects were funded, meaning that UCSC-led projects received 60% of the total TLtC funding awarded this year.

COT and CTE chose Instructor Don Rothman of the Writing Program as its nominee for the US Professor of the Year Award, which is administered jointly by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

During the Fall Quarter, the Committee met with Evaluations Coordinator Chris Lee and Professor Barbara Rogoff to discuss their efforts to simplify and support the writing of student performance evaluations. While there was some difference of opinion among the members of COT regarding the pedagogical value of narrative student evaluations, there was general consensus to support efforts to make writing them more efficient and to increase compliance with existing campus grading regulations, as approved by the Academic Senate.

CTE Director Harris-Barnett brought to the Committee's attention several important issues related to the confidentiality, secure archiving and release of information related to the Scantron instructor evaluation forms. Our discussions led to the development of formal procedures that clearly spell out both CTE's and departments' responsibilities for ensuring the confidentiality and security of these forms and their summary information. Director Harris-Barnett will send copies of these new procedures to each department and will hold an orientation for department representatives next Fall to clarify these procedures. This discussion also led to a broader consideration of the security, confidentiality, fairness and equivalency of instructor/course evaluation procedures across campus. COT plans to make an analysis of current campus instructor/course evaluation practices a central agenda item for 2003-04.

**Acknowledgements**

The Committee is grateful for the indispensable contributions of Ruth Harris-Barnett, interim Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence. She performed her duties with competence and grace under extremely difficult circumstances. We would also like to thank Henry Burnett, Director of Media Services for his invaluable contributions to the Committee. The Committee on Teaching was expertly staffed by Jan Carmichael from the Academic Senate Office. Additional support to the Committee was provided by Julian Fernald, Assistant Director of Institutional Research, Office of Planning and Budget, who helped us develop and administer the on-line faculty survey. Student intern, Michael Chou, in OPB, compiled responses and calculated summary statistics.

Respectfully submitted,

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