

**MINUTES**  
**COMMITTEE ON TEACHING**  
**May 14, 2007**  
**Wednesday, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m., Kerr Hall Rm 129**

Present: Murray Baumgarten (Chair), John Borrego, Henry Burnett (Media Services Director), Rachel Dewey (NSTF Rep), Ruth Harris-Barnett (CTE Director), Lindsey Hinck, Kevin Karplus, Roxanne Monnet (Senate analyst), Cynthia Polecritti.

Guest: Jaye Padgett, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy.

**Chair's Announcements**

COT Chair Baumgarten reminded the Committee to get feedback to him this week regarding the Instructional Technology Committee's budgetary proposal.

The Teaching Award Ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, May 23, 3:30-5 p.m. at the University House. Chair Baumgarten welcomed COT to give him input regarding either the introduction of the awardees or teaching at UCSC in general.

Media Services Director Barnett mentioned to the Committee UC Davis's instructional technology partner program and will provide more information via email.

**Director's announcements and updates**

The Instructional Technology Center and the Center for Teaching Excellence will co-sponsor a sponsored panel of speakers on large classes. The event is titled "Large Classes: Engagement, Interaction, and Management" and is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.-12 noon.

**Consultation with CEP Chair Jaye Padgett**

Committee on Educational Policy Chair Jaye Padgett visited COT to update the Committee on the status of CEP's work on general education reform starting with the writing-intensive (W) requirement. Last quarter's CEP report to the Senate and associated Resolution on the W requirement were discussed, specifically CEP's recommendations. Goals and possible directions for the near term were discussed, including a possible legislative proposal for next year, in collaboration with CPB and possibly the Graduate Council.

COT members re-enforced the need for the peer writing tutor program to be restored.

Members underscored how time consuming teaching of W courses can be and the challenge to get the discipline specific content into the 10 weeks as well.

Members shared the challenges they have experienced due to the level of writing students enter majors with. Transitions in writing arguments are a particular problem.

It is the experience of some members that students lack the ability to logically put forth their thoughts effectively by the time they reach the upper-division level.

COT continued to be concerned about how to reward faculty for teaching. It is their experience that the rewards are either non-existent or insufficient to warrant the high workload of a W course.

The highly successful technical writing course in engineering was developed by an engineering professor in collaboration with a writing instructor. The School of Engineering is committed to funding it at a ratio of 20:1. Recently SOE developed a similar course for graduate students.

Concern was expressed about the shift toward having TAs do all of the grading. The committee wonders how faculty will teach and evaluate writing if they are reading none of the course papers.

CEP Chair Padgett apprised COT of the significant percentage of students did not pass the Entry Level Writing Requirement upon entry this fall. The number is up significantly over the last two years. CEP is hearing concern about the lack of writing between the C (composition) and W requirements. It is expressed anecdotally that faculty have been gradually giving less writing homework over the past decade. It is recognized that writing takes practice and that it is a long-developing skill. CEP is about to send a letter to all departments asking what they think their students should have in the way of disciplinary communication/writing, what they are doing toward that goal and whether or not it is working. CEP hopes that upper division writing will be woven into the curriculum and not contained to one course. In the fall CEP will have more to say about progress made through meetings with departments. They know that resources are a big issue.

COT raised the idea of training graduate students to write and then having that training flow down to undergraduates through TAs. This training of graduate students would establish a core of people with writing skills and is synergistic with the plan to grow graduate programs while supporting the needs of undergraduates at the same time. COT expressed concern about how to achieve undergraduate excellence with the current push to focus on graduate student enrollments.

COT did not think it a good idea for W to be on capstone courses, even though they are aware that this exists in a number of departments.

The group wondered how the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) could interface with the writing needs. The Committee was made aware that the coordinator of Writing Across the Disciplines gave workshops sponsored by CTE in the past. COT asked the CTE director to consider, if funded, what could it do in this area.

COT would like to know where writing support fits into campus fundraising goals.

COT recommended a joint meeting to discuss teaching assistant training between COT, GC, CEP, and the Writing Program.

Chair Padgett relayed information from data provided by the Office of Institutional Research (IR) which suggests that the number of undergraduate courses has decreased while graduate level course offerings have increased. The shortfall of course offerings is expected to have worsening implications next year given the anticipated increase in entering frosh for fall. Chair Padgett offered to provide COT with the information received from IR.

**Where are we on raising the profile on teaching?**

This topic was carried forward to the next meeting.

**Review of mini grant and award processes**

COT discussed whether to change the rolling deadline for review of mini grants and continues to be supported, rather than establishing firm deadlines. Major grants will continue to be reviewed in a block.

The Committee considered new policies regarding collaboration and stipends. They recommended against implementing a policy to further encourage or require collaboration on grants. Regarding stipends, the Committee would like to allow faculty to choose a summer stipend rather than teaching relief during the academic year. The CTE director will investigate how to implement this change.

The Committee will discuss other possible changes to the processes either in a future meeting or via email.

Attest,

Murray Baumgarten, Chair  
Committee on Teaching