

MINUTES*
COMMITTEE ON TEACHING
June 4, 2007

Wednesday, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m., Kerr Hall Rm 129

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

Absent: Rachel Dewey (NSTF Rep).

Guests: Peggy Church (Director, Disability Resource Center), Karen Keen (Program Services Coordinator, Disability Resource Center).

Chair Announcements

The minutes from May 14 and 21 were accepted as amended.

COT was reminded of the Committee on Committee's Reception scheduled for tomorrow from 4-6 p.m. at the Center for Adaptive Optics.

The Committee will review these minutes and letters in draft form in coming weeks via email. The annual report will also be completed via email.

Director Announcements

One grant recipient has requested to convert \$350 of his award from student salaries to scan document to the purchase of a scanner. The Committee stands by the rule that COT grant funds will not be used to purchase equipment for personal use by faculty. In this case the request will be granted on the stipulation that the equipment will belong to the Department of History for general use.

Consultation With the Disability Resource Center

Peggy Church and Karen Keen visited COT from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to request input regarding outreach to faculty. One significant issue is exam accommodations. Another is when instructional technology is not compatible with adaptive technology. DRC will publicize to faculty how to check their web pages for compatibility. They noted that Podcasting works well with adaptive technologies and can be password protected.

COT members commented on the challenges around special exam accommodations particularly for large classes. One member described a situation for a class of >200 students where on the order of 20 students have special needs, on average. If more than one needs a separate test area, that leaves the instructor needing to walk to multiple locations at distances of up to ½ mile apart (based on a recent occurrence). Members listed challenges around lack of available rooms, costs

to hire proctors, time requirements for departmental staff at an already busy time, limitations of faculty to do anything about funding space. Some members related giving up their office for special test space or using space of fellow faculty member. The School of Engineering arranges rooms and proctors for special testing in SoE classes as needed without significant effort from the faculty. It was suggested by one member that this model should be adopted by other divisions. All agreed that there is a significant campuswide space issue for accommodation of special tests.

It was recommended that DRC contact divisions and department to offer to meet with faculty to discuss issues and resources available.

DRC informed the committee that they use the UCwide guidelines for assessing students, for which the needs of the individual must be well documented. These guidelines are linked to DRC's web site. Learning disabilities are their largest population.

The Committee was reminded that although it is a student's decision to disclose what are their special needs and to make the requests for support, they should be providing an assessment form to the instructor at the time that accommodations are requested if not earlier. DRC realizes the issues are created when student disclose their needs for special testing too late in the quarter and are seeking legal counsel to better understand that limits can be set in light of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

COT was apprised of the national effort toward universal designs for learning. Instructional strategies have been developed for more than just for the most common learning styles. Generally, these methods prove to be better approaches to serving the needs of disabled students than a reactive approach. Additionally universal design tends to minimize the need for last minute accommodation tack-ons. The Committee wonders whether these designs work well for large classes. The California State University campuses are being trained by Ensuring Access through Collaboration and Technology (EnACT). The presenter is UCSC alumnus, Dr. Amiliano Ayala. Dr. Ayala has offered to do a special 60-90 minute training at UCSC for a small group of faculty (up to 25 people). COT was provided with his brief biography and asked for advice on how to identify interest among the faculty.

DRC will work with Director Harris-Barnett regarding links of interest to be included on the Center for Teaching Excellence web page.

COT noted the importance of creating an open classroom and to be encouraging of the needs for support regarding learning differences. COT recognized that there continues to be an apparent shift in focus and resources away from undergraduate education. The Committee continues to discuss learning centered teaching and would be interested in the universal design approach described by DRC.

Strategic Academic Plan

COT was disappointed not to find a change in the definition of teaching in the mission statement of the latest version of the campus Strategic Academic Plan. In light of the data provided by

CEP Chair Padgett (created by the Office of Instructional Research), COT is highly concerned regarding what appears to be an increasing shift away from undergraduate teaching.

Due to lack of time to respond to the latest version of the Strategic Academic Plan, COT will not respond but members were invited to respond as individuals.

Comments of note:

The document should give a definition of planning.

COT is concerned that there are not enough instructors to teach the classes and that the plan is still too focused on research, forcing people into large classes.

Response to SEC regarding electronic evaluations

Chair Baumgarten noted to COT that he has not heard back from VPDUE William Ladusaw regarding the fall request that he work on a pilot electronic student evaluation of instructor performance project. To the best of his knowledge, no collaboration occurred with the Committee on Academic Personnel on this topic during 2006-07.

Course Count Data

The historical course count data provided by CEP Chair Jaye Padgett appears to confirm the concerns expressed by COT regarding a shift of focus and resources away from undergraduate teaching. It also shows a shift from regular faculty teaching of undergraduate courses.

Other

Chair Baumgarten asked the Committee for their feedback in light of the year's work by COT. He wonders whether COT should make big statements at Senate Meetings regarding such things as the apparent the shift away from teaching, the need for rewards for teaching, and the lack of funding for an honors program. Members support these points and expressed an interest in collaborating on an honors program with other Senate committees and the VPDUE in order to aid in attracting and retaining top students.

So attests,

Murray Baumgarten, Chair
Comment for Teaching

*Confirmed by a quorum of members via email.