MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON TEACHING
October 16, 2007
Tuesday, 10-11:30 a.m., Kerr Hall Rm 129

Present: Doris Ash, Henry Burnett (Media Services Director), Elisabeth Cameron (Chair), Ruth Harris-Barnett (CTE Director), Kevin Karplus, Roxanne Monnet (Senate analyst), Jie Qing.

Absent: Rachel Dewey (NSTF Rep).

1.   Chair's Announcements.

Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) Chair Barry Bowman will attend the October 30 COT meeting from 11-11:30 a.m.

2.   CTE Director's Announcements.   None.

3.   Minutes. The October 2 minutes were accepted as amended.

4.   Mini grants.

One grant proposal and one revision request were discussed. The new mini grant proposal was awarded at ~$1770. It was noted that it is unusual to fund foreign travel. The revision request was to shuffle a portion of the budget of a previously approved proposal (~$200). The request was approved.

5.   State of on-line evaluations.

CTE Director Harris-Barnett apprised the Committee regarding the history of COT discussions and actions related to on-line evaluations in the past two years. She provided a handout that summarized COT's proposal of 2006 which was sent to the Senate Executive Committee in 2006. All UCs are at least discussing a shift to on-line evaluations. At UC Berkeley a number of departments use them. Some departments at UC San Diego have gone on-line with their evaluations. The UC Davis Veterinary School has also gone on-line, and all of UC Irvine.

Comments and considerations of note:

Should UCSC be proactive and provide valid data publicly?

Most campuses have seen a drop in response rates when moving to an on-line format. However, there has been some success with ways to redress that.

COT agrees that the potential for abuse of data requires care in decision making as to how the data would be used.

The Committee favors an evaluation format with one section available to all involved in the personnel process, and possibly for other uses, and another section that would be available solely to the instructor.

Director Harris-Barnett provided an update regarding the pilot for on-line evaluations that last year's COT encouraged VPDUE Ladusaw to create. It is hoped that the pilot will be ready sometime this academic year. The pilot will likely make use of WebCT even though the future of WebCT is not clear at UCSC. In any case, WebCT seems the most efficient format for a pilot at this time.

6.   Discussion regarding on-line evaluations.

Talking points were developed for the upcoming consultation with the CAP Chair.

The following points were made for those questions:

What is CAP's vision for on-line evaluations?

What questions would CAP need to see on an on-line evaluation?

COT is discussing a multi-tiered evaluation system, with the evaluation being divided into two sets of questions: summative data from one set of questions would be available to CAP, Division, Department, and professor; formative data from a second set would be available only to the faculty member him or herself and a possible set for public access. COT would be interested in CAP's response to this proposed system.

What concerns would CAP like to see addressed in a pilot on-line program?

COT discussed their goals regarding this project and maintain that their highest focus is to foster improved teaching. COT would like to tie the project to improving awards for outstanding teaching.

When asked what are CTE goals, the Director responded that it would foster CTE's goals to have departments get data regarding their teaching effectiveness and course quality.

It was noted that the School of Engineering has a consistent evaluation form.

7.   Preliminary discussion of symposium topic.

COT discussed their ideas for this year's Teaching and Learning Symposium. Topics of interest included those associated with growing class size at UCSC, such as teaching large lecture courses. They discussed a possible change to the half-day format. Instead or in conjunction

there could be a series of "how to" workshops. It was noted that a unified series of events is a new idea for the CTE/COT.

The Committee decided to poll the faculty to better understand their concerns, perspectives regarding large lecture courses, and interests for this year's symposium.

At the next meeting COT will discuss a keynote speaker, title, and event format.

Other ideas and comments of note:

A focus on partnerships would be of interest to members such as library/faculty, graduate student/faculty, student services/faculty.

The Library has expressed willingness to be more involved in these symposia. One suggestion was for the Library to explain the program available for course resource web pages.

The idea for a separate spring event around writing topic in teaching was raised.

8.   Discussion regarding doubling the symposium audience.

At the February 2007 symposium, 65 people attended of which 30 were faculty. The format for the past 4 years has been a half day. The faculty attendance has been about the same each year. The discussion will be continued at a future meeting.

So attests,

Elisabeth Cameron, Chair
Committee on Teaching