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MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON TEACHING
December 9, 2008
Tuesday, 10-11:30 a.m., Kerr Hall Room 129

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Present: Elisabeth Cameron (Chair), Tammi Blake (Staff advisor) Jessica Fiske Bailey (Guest), Henry Burnett (Director of Media Services), Claire Max, Jim Phillips (Director of Instructional Technology), Ian Fullman (SUA Representative), Hongyun Wang. Absent with notice: Doris Ash, June Gordon

1. Chairs Announcements:

a. The committee received a letter from VPDUE Ladusaw regarding the decision to postpone hiring for the CTE Director position as options are considered. Chair notes that Ladusaw acknowledges the value of CTE and the director's position.

b. An additional committee meeting in February will be scheduled to adjudicate the major IIP grant. That meeting will be scheduled at the February 1 COT meeting.

2. Minutes from the last meeting approved.

3. Mini grants: One mini grant was approved. An adjustment in the IIP grant call will be made requiring a tentative syllabus to accompany the application if the grant is directly related to a course.

4. An invitation to Jim Phillips and Jessica Fiske Bailey to sit with the committee for the rest of the year was extended by the chair and supported by the committee. The invitations were accepted by both. Noted: June Gordon is cycling off the committee in winter; Daniel Sheldon is cycling on for the rest of the year. The committee thanks June for her service this quarter and welcomes Professor Sheldon to COT.

5. Online Evaluations: Jim Phillips and Henry Burnett report that response rates for the pilot program were good; over 50-70%. Example: 133 of 183 responded in one course. Participating faculty have access to percentages and numbers of responses. Names of students are recorded in the system as some instructors use it for extra credit.
Some students were confused accessing the form online but in the new LMS system the evaluation access will be immediately visible and instructor information will match the courses. The new system will be more automated, working better with faculty email and the data reporting system.

The following questions arose for discussion: Is extra credit or other incentives for completing online evaluations acceptable? How does the university work to inspire a culture of honest assessment and student feedback to influence teaching?
The committee will discuss the possibility of forming focus groups of students to discuss the online evaluations.

6. LMS: The ITG (Instructional Technology Group) is making a decision about which system to adopt. They have done a technical analysis and Moodle may work well. Sakai's functionality also works well with the university's needs (online evals and etc). ITS is doing more research, budgeting and working with a consultant group. The LMS steering committee (handout) results are online with an updated FAQ. March 1 is the target date to start the new LMS system. WebCT will be discontinued fall of 2010.
There is a student slot on the LMS committee; Ian has volunteered. Next meeting is December 17.The committee approves of and is excited about the LMS progress and the steering committee.

7. GE Reform: COT wants to be involved by speaking as a group about topics raised by CEP and agrees that GE requirements should be meaningful and exciting. Jim went to the brown bag workshop and reports that he discussed E-portfolios and use of portfolios to bring "fragmented" experiences of students in GE together. He was impressed that UCSC is committed to research in GE. CEP is working to have something to propose to the senate in the spring meeting. There was a discussion regarding interdisciplinary courses. There was resistance to "topicality" as it was felt that all courses should be topical in general. It was noted that there is no language requirement.

8. Forum on classroom environment: Chair Cameron attended the SUA forum discussing issues of instructor insensitivity in the classroom. She offered COT as a place to discuss or organize programs that students and faculty might bring us to alleviate this issue.

9. Symposium: Jim has suggested a technology symposium in lieu of the regular teaching and learning symposium, seeing it as a good opportunity to expose faculty to online evals, the LMS, clickers and other issues and gain support for these new systems. An event could be organized for February or March and could be large, with vendors, or small. The lack of a budget for this event tables current discussion. It will be revisited in January.

10. COT congratulates Claire Max on being awarded the Princeton Madison Medal for her research in Astronomy.

11. SUA Matthew Palm was an invited guest to discuss the promotion of the teaching awards.COT needs student input and promotion of the awards since nominations have been low. COT seeks a broad range of students nominating professors in different disciplines. In the 2nd week of winter quarter COT could put up signs at bus stops and also get an SUA person to go into classrooms and make an announcement. Matt states that mass emails to students are effective and flyers can be distributed to college senates which are well connected with the RAs that have regular contact with many students. Announcement at classes: Matt suggested covering all divisions and big departments, distributing quarter sheets of flyers (200 per class- 2K) plus more for councils and RAs. Full sheet flyers are to be used for bus stops and RAs. COT will put together a flyer and run it by Matt and Ian and will get numbers needed.