

MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON TEACHING
September 29, 2009
Tuesday, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Kerr Hall Rm 129

Present: M. Victoria Gonzalez-Pagani (Chair), Dan Scripture, Hongyun Wang, Stephanie Casher (ASO)

Guests: Bill Ladusaw (VPDUE), Jessica Fiske-Bailey

Absent: Claire Max, Kate Edmunds and Gordon Wells (with notice)

Chair Gonzalez-Pagani welcomed everyone to the Committee on Teaching, and reviewed the committee charge. She then provided an update regarding items carrying over from the previous year:

- Instructional Improvement Grants (IIG) – in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) the committee will continue its work this year on redrafting the call for proposals, with an eye towards tightening the award criteria to focus on innovation, impact, and assessment.
- Learning Management System (Sakai) – with web CT scheduled to phase out at the end of this academic year, it is imperative to keep the rollout of Sakai on track. ITS is conducting workshops to train subgroups of volunteer users October 13-16. The main focus for the initial training phase is Sakai configuration. Greater faculty participation in the test phase will be needed in subsequent stages.
- Online Instructor Evaluations (OIE) – COT will need to continue discussing whether or not we should move to online instructor evaluations. Sakai has the capability to perform this function, but we need to garner greater faculty support for transitioning to online evaluations. At a future meeting, Jim Phillips will provide background information and research about the utilization of online evaluation systems at other campuses.

Due to a lack of quorum, COT was unable to vote on the changes to committee charge (i.e. changing the name of the ‘Center for Teaching Excellence’ to the ‘Center for Teaching and Learning’, and inviting the Director of Learning Technologies to ‘sit with’ the committee). It was noted that with such a small committee membership, one or two absences can really impede the committee’s ability to do its work. Chair Gonzalez-Pagani would like to look into increasing the COT membership to six Santa Cruz Division members in the future.

Visit by Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) Bill Ladusaw and Assistant Vice Provost Jessica Fiske-Bailey

VPDUE Ladusaw updated the committee on the status of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Due to the budget crisis, there is still no funding to hire a full-time Administrative Director for the CTL; in the interim, Jessica Fiske-Bailey will be fulfilling this role, as she did last year. He would like to appoint a Faculty Director of the CTL, but would like COT’s help in formulating a concrete list of goals/tasks/action items with which to charge the Faculty Director. The committee discussed what some of these goals might be, and the general consensus was that we need someone to help design and lead a strategic reorganization of the teaching and learning

infrastructure here on campus. One specific area that could be addressed is building a better bridge/partnership between research on teaching and learning done by UCSC faculty, and campus practices. We should be taking advantage of all the resources at our disposal, but there seems to be a disconnect in this area. There are also many things being done in various divisions to increase recruitment and retention, as well as improve instruction, but no central apparatus to coordinate resources and efforts. Hopefully the Center for Teaching and Learning can be reconfigured to facilitate greater synergy between divisions and departments.

VPDUE Ladusaw also gave the committee an update on the Instructional Improvement Grant program. He would like to rethink the award criteria, and explore ways to rewrite the call to achieve maximum impact for the small amount of funds we have to award. One idea was to tailor the call to solicit applications for projects around a common theme, such as Sakai (the new learning management system) or GE reform. Although he is reluctant to do so, to give the committee time to rethink the best use of funds in this program, VPDUE Ladusaw may suspend the program for the 2009-10 academic year. COT will work with Jessica Fiske-Bailey over the coming months to redraft the call for proposals, with an aim towards increasing the effectiveness of the program.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

So attests,

M. Victoria Gonzalez-Pagani, Chair
Committee on Teaching