Committee on Teaching (COT)
MINUTES
February 7, 2012, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Kerr Hall 129

Present: Daniel Selden (Chair), Pascal Garaud, Dee Hibbert-Jones, Maria Schonbek, Graeme Smith, Mary Flannery (NSTF), Nicol Gaffney (SUA), Michael Tassio (ASO staff)

Guests: Jessica Fiske-Bailey, Jim Phillips

Absent: Peter Rovegno (GSA)

The minutes of January 10 and 24 were approved.

Chair's Announcements
Chair Selden reported on conversations he recently had with colleagues and campus deans regarding offering more cross-divisional courses at UCSC. From what he has gathered, there is momentum behind offering cross-divisional courses on campus, especially in the Arts and Humanities divisions.

One member questioned what might be causing the momentum. Chair Selden reported that large cross-divisional courses were once a pillar of the educational foundations at UCSC and helped shape its educational mission. These courses were regularly offered in the 1960's and 70's and taught by celebrated faculty including Norman O. Brown, Page Smith, etc. Opportunities to teach these courses have since dissipated and the bureaucracy involved in proposing them has grown overly burdensome for faculty and departments.

Offering an alternative point of view, one COT member noted that the process to apply for approval to teach cross-listed courses is not overly burdensome and that the bulk of the additional work involved gathering signatures from department chairs and divisional deans.

Updates from the Director of Learning Technologies
Jim Philips, Director for UCSC's Learning Technologies, consulted with COT on three topics: Online Instruction, Remote Instruction Policy Changes at UCSD, UC-wide Efforts to Identify Pedagogical Issues Facing Faculty.

Online Instruction
The conversation on online instruction was focused on the need to have a clear policy from University of California Online Instruction (UCOI) for how students taking online courses will be examined. Will they, for instance, take online exams? If they do, how will instructors proctor the exams and ensure that students submit their own work? Alternatively, will UCOI set up testing-centers where students will be required to take exams? Members reported that divisions and departments are holding off on submitting proposals for online-courses largely due to a lack of leadership from UCOI in developing a clear policy on this issue.

Video capture of lectures is an essential component of many online courses and has benefits for non-native speakers, students with disabilities, and for students reviewing course materials to prepare for exams, research papers, etc. One member noted that it would be beneficial to host a campus-wide discussion regarding using lecture capture in courses and, more generally, online instruction.

Remote Instruction Policy Changes at UCSD
UCSD recently revised their Remote Instruction Policy to make it easier for faculty to engage in online instruction by deciding that it was not appropriate to hold "Remote Instruction" courses to a higher quality of academic standards. They decided, in part, that as long as courses meet in person for at least one hour per week, they do not need any special annotations in their request for course approval. This change is expected to compel departments to offer more "Remote Instruction" courses.

One member stated that COT has a role to play in codifying a formal connection between COT and online education efforts underway at UCSC. In doing so, COT has the opportunity to take a leadership role in online education. Chair Seldon wondered whether or not this was CEP's domain, but vowed to continue this discussion once COT has more data on what types of courses at UCSC have been approved for online instruction.

In concluding this discussion, several members argued that any decision to transition existing courses to online platforms should be done for compelling pedagological reasons, and not solely due to budgetary considerations.

Pedagogical Issues Facing UC Faculty
Chief Information Officers from all UC campuses have formed a committee to study pedagological issues facing UC faculty members. They have begun surveying faculty and have identified three central issues: time constraints, staff support, and funding to meet faculty needs. Jim encouraged members of COT to think about pedagological hurdles they face and to report back to him.

Teaching Excellence Nominations Questionnaire
The nomination process by which students nominate teachers for excellence in teaching is transitioning to an online based submission. COT took this transition as an opportunity to rewrite the nomination form. Members reviewed a draft and made recommendations for several revisions.

Other Items
Two agenda items were postponed due to a lack of time. The Statistical Reasoning General Education Requirement, and Campus Policy on the "C-" Grading Option will be discussed at the COT meeting on February 21.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Selden, Chair
Committee on Teaching