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Minutes
Committee on Teaching
October 18, 2011
Tuesday, 10:00am – 11:30am, Kerr Hall 129

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Present: Daniel Selden, Chair, Brandin Baron-Nusbaum, Pascal Garaud, Maria Schonbek, Stephanie Casher (ASO)

Guests: Jessica Fiske-Bailey, Jim Phillips

Absent: Mary Flannery, Graeme Smith

There were no announcements. Chair Selden solicited volunteers for the Information Technology Security Committee (ITSC) and Learning Technology Committee (LTC). Maria Schonbek volunteered to serve on the Learning Technology Committee. Dan will ask Graeme or Mary if they can serve on ITSC.

General Letter to Faculty
COT reviewed the draft letter introducing COT to the faculty. Jessica notified the committee that there is no more funding for Instructional Improvement Grants (IIGs).

One member suggested that we list specific topics that COT has discussed in recent years, such as: Universal Design and Instruction, Online Instructor Evaluations, the Class Times Proposal, Remote and Online Instruction.

COT will also add a section on the new Faculty Instructional Technology Center (FITC) in McHenry Library, and inform faculty that a survey from COT is forthcoming, which is intended to gauge the interest of faculty in pedagogical issues.

Chair Selden will revise the letter based on committee discussion, and circulate another draft for review.

Classroom Climate Question
COT discussed the addition of Classroom Climate Question to the Instructor Evaluation Form. One member felt it was odd to have this question added without the proper context for faculty. Another questioned if this question was appropriate for a "scale of 1 to 5" metric, rather than a space where students can leave comments and constructive feedback. Also, is this an appropriate metric for *faculty* evaluations? Also, what is the definition of "inclusiveness?"

CAP could look at this information, if a faculty member receives consistent feedback of being non-inclusive. However, from a faculty perspective, sometimes there are segments of the class

who are "slower," and as an instructor, you have a responsibility to deliver the course content, and cannot slow the class down to accommodate the slower students. This, in turn, would lead those students to not feel "included."

One member also pointed out that "inclusiveness" has never been a mandate, so to suddenly start penalizing faculty for not having an "inclusive" classroom environment may not be fair to faculty.

Chair Selden will draft a response to VPAA Lee outlining our concerns, and discuss it with him at their next meeting and report back to the committee.

ITS External Review
Most of the report was not about educational issues. COT did not find much in the report that related directly to the charge of the Committee on Teaching. The budget problems seem to be a tad underplayed, which concerns COT because resources do not seem adequate to support advancements in teaching.

COT stands behind the assertion that IT services are critical to faculty teaching and pedagogy (particularly as a way to open up new pedagogical horizons), and would like to see it protected from further cuts.

Class Times Proposal
COT discussed the proposal to reduce Course Time-Slots. Jessica Fiske-Bailey provided some background on where the proposal came from (shortage of large classrooms, etc).

COT found a lot of problems with this proposal. Expecting all faculty to revamp their curriculum to accommodate new course time slots is a huge amount of work.

UCSC courses are supposed to be equivalent to a semester at UCB, which is why our students only take three courses per quarter. To reduce student contact time would require us to re-think our whole curriculum.

COT also has the suspicion that this is the first step in making faculty teach more.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

So Attests,

Daniel Selden, Chair
Committee on Teaching