

COMMITTEE ON TEACHING
Annual Report, 2001-02

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Teaching (COT) met approximately two times each month to deal with an extensive agenda related to its charge of fostering and promoting teaching throughout the campus. A summary of its work and accomplishments are detailed below.

Budget and Planning Initiatives

The committee submitted a Long-Range Planning Initiative to the CPEVC Simpson's office. COT's requests fell into three categories: augmentation of funds for the award of Instructional Improvement grants; augmentation of funds for Excellence in Teaching Awards; and augmentation of funds for Instructional Technology.

Requests Related to Instructional Improvement Grants

COT had previously requested (2000-01) that its annual budget of \$120,000 for the Instructional Improvement Program (IIP) be augmented by \$100,000 permanently, bringing the IIP budget up to \$220,000. In addition, COT had requested that this baseline budget be increased by \$10,000 per year for the next 10 years, bringing the budget to \$320,000 by the end of the period. The point of the latter request was simply to maintain the quality of teaching support at its current level as the university adds 600 new faculty (including 300 new FTE). The purpose of the \$100,000 augmentation was specifically to allow COT to better address Instructional Improvement proposals in the area of instructional technology.

Cognizant of the fiscal difficulties facing the state and university, COT did not renew this request for the current academic year but outlined a growth path in the eventuality that the state returned to fiscal health and that the campus resumed its growth path in 2004-05. For that year it envisioned an augmentation of the IIP program by \$100,000 and subsequently by \$15,000 per year for the following seven years. At the end of this period this would bring the funding for the IIP to \$325,000.

This was refined over the course of the year into a more specific request for 2002-03. More precisely, COT requested a \$10,000 increase in the IIP budget in line with increases in costs, e.g. for course buyout for course development fellowships, equipment, student assistance and increase in numbers of faculty applying.

The Instructional Improvement Program (IIP), which dates back some thirty years in the University of California, provides seed money to encourage experimentation with new ideas in teaching and learning at the undergraduate level. UCSC receives an annual Instructional Improvement allocation from the Office of the President, a portion of which (\$120K) is earmarked for individual grants to UCSC faculty and staff. Grants currently available include Course Development Fellowships, New Technologies in Teaching Grants, Major Grants, and Mini-Grants. The IIP represents a successful collaboration among the faculty, academic divisions, administration, and staff on this campus.

COT also requested an immediate augmentation of \$60,000 dedicated to Instructional Technology, specifically to name five Instructional Technology (IT) Fellows, one for each division. This would fund a course buyout (average cost \$7,000) and also provide each IT

Fellow with a budget of \$5,000. The IT Fellows would, in addition to working on their own projects, have responsibility for demonstrating to colleagues the potential use of instructional technology to meeting higher order learning goals in the classroom.

In making this proposal, COT duly recognizes that the primary source of funding for technology-related improvements at the level of the department is the division, and that is appropriate. What COT proposed is a permanent source of grant monies to complement the divisional funds. The essential point is that divisions are not set up to monitor and assess the instructional benefits of technology. There is considerable promise of both efficiencies and higher-level learning made possible by the implementation of instructional technology but there is no certainty. At the division level the strategy has been "build it and they will come" by which is meant, give faculty the technology and they will use it wisely. That may or may not be so but, with a few exceptions, there have not been many imaginative innovations and no attention to assessment. Supported by CTE, COT could both monitor and assess these developments while supporting faculty peers working collaboratively or individually on projects to enhance teaching and learning. By making these grants competitive, COT can require specificity of objectives and therefore the means to adequately evaluate whether the outcomes deliver on the efficiencies and improved learning claimed.

Finally, COT requested \$50,000 for one or two Departmental Instructional Technology Award(s). These awards would go to a departmental project to substantially revise a central lower division course or sequence of courses to achieve higher learning outcomes, possibly by incorporating the use of instructional technology though this is not required (though if IT is involved and success is demonstrated then such a project could be further funded through a University-wide Teaching Learning and Technology Collaborative Grant).

In recent years the student population has increased and there has been a commensurate increase in the number of lower division courses taught in large lecture format and the size of these courses has also grown. While lower division lecture courses offer considerable efficiencies by teaching large numbers of students at a time the learning outcomes are uncertain and the quality of the student experience is also subject to question. An increase in the number and size of courses is inevitable as enrollments continue to grow. COT thinks that the campus should be facing this eventuality proactively and begin now to think how it will maintain quality as course sizes grow.

Increased Support for the Excellence in Teaching Awards Program

COT requested a permanent augmentation of \$7,000 in order to double the amount of the Excellence in Teaching Award, raising it from \$500 to \$1,000.

Instructional Improvement Program Grants

One of the regular charges of the committee is to adjudicate applications for Instructional Improvement Program (IIP) Grants. Adjudication of IIP grant proposals is a responsibility the Committee on Teaching takes seriously and on which it spends a great deal of time throughout the year. The major goal of the IIP is to motivate faculty to think seriously about how they teach and how the learning experience of undergraduates can be improved. Faculty who request grants must make clear in their applications exactly why and how the proposed innovations will benefit learning in the classroom, and that is the bottom-line consideration that governs the distribution of funds. The Instructional Improvement Program is specifically designed to encourage both

experimentation and assessment in the context of a funded project. This year two areas were given special emphasis as a consequence of consultation with the Deans of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies: Course Development Fellowships which emphasized writing in the discipline and courses which focus on training graduate students in teaching and pedagogy. Despite this no applicants were received on either of these themes.

The IIP grants fell into the following categories:

Mini-grants are available throughout the year when COT is in session. They support small-scale projects designed to improve undergraduate instruction. Mini-grants have a maximum budget of \$2,000. In the yearlong competition for Mini-grants, there were 30 submissions requesting approximately \$52,000. Of these, 15 were funded for a total of \$25,150.42

Course Development Fellowships have provided \$6,450 – \$8,100 (depending on division) to cover one course release for a fellowship recipient. Course Development Fellows use the course release to develop a new undergraduate course or program in their departments or to make significant revisions in an older course. Five faculty submitted applications for Course Development Fellowships, with a cumulative budget of \$35,800. Two were funded for at total of \$14, 531.

New Technologies in Teaching Grants offer up to \$15,000 for faculty who wish to experiment with incorporating new forms of technology into instruction. Projects might involve specialized computer software or hardware, course web sites, or technology more specific to a discipline. There were 13 applications within this category requesting slightly more than \$157,000. Eight requests were funded, for a total of \$75,528.94.

Major Grants are for major projects aimed at improving undergraduate education. These might involve the hiring of student assistants, the development of internships, among other possibilities. Of the six proposals received, COT funded 3, for a total of \$28,543.

As can be seen there are many more applications, many in the New Technologies category, which the COT is unable to fund for lack sufficient resources.

Various methods were used in order to make the availability of the grant funding known. The annual Call for Proposals was sent out early last Fall quarter; announcements were also made by electronic mail. The Chair of COT and the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence held an open forum early in the Winter quarter for faculty interested in the application process. The Center for Teaching Excellence also offered individual consultations to grant applicants all year long, as it has in the past.

Eighth Annual Convocation on Teaching

With the Center for Teaching Excellence, COT co-sponsored the Eighth Annual Convocation on Teaching, held on February 12, 2002. The theme was "**The Lecture – Why Lectures? What Makes a Great Lecture? Can a Lecture Reach All Students? Is the Lecture Passé?**" An excellent panel was assembled consisting of a representative from each division. These were: Jim Bierman from Arts, Charlie McDowell from the School of Engineering, Bettina Aptheker from Humanities, Gene Switkes from Natural Sciences and June Gordon from Social Sciences. John Dizkes gave a spirited response. Approximately 100 people attended the convocation.

Subsequent to the panel presentations there was a spirited period of questions and answers and discussion.

Excellence in Teaching Awards

As in past years, in selecting recipients for this award, COT considered nomination letters from students, endorsement letters from department chairs, and statements on teaching from the nominees themselves. Nominees who had already received an Excellence in Teaching Award within the last 5 years were excluded from consideration. Following past practice, COT also took into account information provided by the Registrar's Office about outstanding narrative evaluations. Nominees with missing evaluations were given an opportunity to explain or correct the Registrar's report. Only those who were up to date on their narratives were considered for an award.

COT selected 13 faculty for Excellence in Teaching Awards. The awards were presented by the Chancellor and the COT Chair at a University House reception on May 24. The recipients were: Kathy Anderson of Education, Robert Boltje of Mathematics, John Patrick Lynch of Literature, James McCloskey of Linguistics, Glenn L. Millhauser of Chemistry, Ingrid M. Parker of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Donald Rothman of Writing, Wendy Rothwell of Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology, Paul Skenazy of Literature, Bruce Thompson of History, Anthony J. Tromba of Mathematics, Brent "Brando" Wexler of Languages, Adrienne L. Zihlman of Anthropology.

In addition, COT gave honorable mentions to the following faculty: Ellen Hart of the Writing Program; Kevin Karplus of Computer Engineering; Lawrence Quill of History; and Anne Shepler of Mathematics.

Miscellaneous

COT continued to have a representative (Chair Cooperstein) on the Information Technology Committee (ITC) chaired by Larry Merkley, which is developing policies for all aspects of computer usage and services for the campus. An outgrowth of this participation was the creation of an Instructional Technology Task Group (ITG), which was given the following charge:

- *Identify and assess the set of technology-based services presently offered to instructors.*
- *Identify problems encountered by faculty, and assess instructional needs for technology support.*
- *Examine best practices at other institutions.*
- *Include consideration of classroom and lab requirements as part of an overall plan.*
- *Propose a plan that includes organizational structure, funding, and guiding principles that will allow UCSC to achieve the vision, and to implement a working faculty support model.*

COT Chair Cooperstein chaired the ITG, and CTE Director Eileen Tanner was also a member.

COT Chair Cooperstein continued to serve on the University-wide committee which adjudicates the Teaching, Learning and Technology Collaborative Grants which fund intercampus implementation projects with up to \$75,000 a year for up to three years. Two UCSC proposals were funded among five in the previous year which were among four chosen for continued funding. One UCSC project was among three chosen for new funding in 2002-03.

The COT and CTE chose Professor Charlie McDowell as its nominee for US Professor of the Year Award, which is administered jointly by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

After careful consideration COT made revisions to the Call for Proposals for the Instructional Improvement Program in an attempt to get applicants to think more deeply about pedagogy, their learning objectives and assessment. In addition, the Call for Nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Awards was revised in order to elicit more specific information about faculty teaching (influence on student cognition) and not just affective elements of the nominees performance.

Campus Provost John Simpson and CAP Chair Leta Miller attended one of the COT meetings to share with the group their views on the role that the evaluation of faculty teaching plays in the personnel process. Both expressed the view that the quality of teaching is considered important and taken seriously. On the issue of the treatment of the scholarship of teaching and learning as a creative activity the Provost expressed the view that it would be treated with the same conditions as other potential research: counted if it appeared in traditional venues such as a peer reviewed journal.

Judging from the number of times students nominated faculty for the ETA remark on their being available during office hours this might lead one to think there is an epidemic of faculty who are not reliably holding office hours. This might be something for a next year's committee to investigate.

Acknowledgments

The Committee is grateful for the continuing indispensable contributions of Eileen Tanner, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, as well as staff Jennifer Swanson and Conal Ho of CTE. We would also like to thank Henry Burnett, Director of Media Services, for his valuable contributions. The COT was also well staffed by Jan Carmichael from the Academic Senate Office.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON TEACHING

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