

COMMITTEE ON TEACHING Annual Report 2013-14

To: Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

The Committee on Teaching (COT) met every other week throughout the academic year to conduct business regarding an agenda related to their charge to foster and promote good teaching, to recommend and evaluate methods of assessing teaching performance, to oversee instructional support services on campus, and to advise the Academic Senate as requested.

At the start of the year, we set out to:

- Work with the administration and University Relations to fund the Center for Transformative Learning (CTL)
- Query faculty to learn more about what support for teaching is being offered by departments and/or divisions
- Sponsor quarterly campus-wide discussions on pedagogy
- Discuss Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and how UCSC might produce or consume them
- Provide guidance to faculty interested in “flipped” courses
- Review instructor evaluation forms
- Review learning management systems that might replace eCommons

Our actual accomplishments for the year in summary include:

- A proposal to fund the CTL as part of the comprehensive campaign was generated.
- Thanks to the efforts of Michael Tassio, in 2014-15 a student with CUIP will be working with COT on issues directly related to CTL. These are two small but tangible positive steps towards creating a CTL to replace the Center for Teaching Excellence that was a casualty of the budget cuts in recent years.
- There was a forum in the fall, jointly sponsored by COT and the Learning Technologies Committee where faculty could learn about recent upgrades and improvements to Learning Technologies Services, including eCommons, general assignment classrooms and labs, and webcasting.
- The forum, “So you think your lecture class is better than a MOOC,” originally planned for winter quarter, had to be postponed until spring quarter due to a number of last minute cancelations from presenters. The spring event was well attended and is available for viewing at <http://senate.ucsc.edu/senate-meetings/senate-forums/2014-april-23-forum.html>
- Selected eight winners for this year’s Excellence in Teaching Awards from a list of 154 faculty nominated by students in 249 separate nominations (see <http://news.ucsc.edu/2014/06/excellence-in-teaching.html> for more information).
- Examined response rates for On-line Course Evaluations, reviewed the research, and discussed possible next steps (see below).
- Initiated a pilot project to evaluate Canvas as a possible replacement for the Sakai based eCommons. (See below for the summary of a satisfaction survey regarding eCommons.)

COT was asked to review a variety of documents throughout the year. These included:

- UCSC International Recruitment Assessment Draft Report
- Council of Provosts proposal to improve response rates for on-line course evaluations (see more below)
- UCSC Affiliation with Punjab Technical University
- VPDUE Proposal for Support of International Enrollment Growth
- Campus Online Education Course Agreement
- Draft Presidential Policy on Copyright and Fair Use (see <http://copyright.universityofcalifornia.edu> for more information)
- WASC Accreditation Draft
- VPAA Draft Request for Proposals: UCSC Coursera Course
- VPAA Draft Request for Proposals: UCSC Cross-Campus Enrollment Online Courses

Online Course Evaluations

In a preliminary analysis of response rates for on line course evaluations at UCSC, we looked at the Fall 2013 data. The average response rate was about 42%. There are some departments with large classes that have much better than average response rates, most notably BIOE with a 60% response rate for 1300 students and SOCY with a 61% rate for 1500 students. In general the college core courses also had very good response rates (as high as 79%). There were also some departments with large enrollments that had very low response rates (e.g. 28% for 2400 enrollments). By the same measure there were small enrollment programs with both excellent response rates (as high as 88%) and low response rates (as low as 28%). It is our hope, that using these data, next year's committee will be able to approach some of these outliers (on both ends) to come up with best practices to raise the response rates for all programs.

There was an extensive study conducted at UCLA by their Office of Instructional Development. That study compared the numeric and written responses for one year of online evaluations and the prior 5 years of paper evaluations. As the title of the report suggests, the response rate dropped from 80% to 40%, however, neither the numeric scores nor the written evaluations changed in a significant way. Although not published, their findings are consistent with another report we found online from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, "Student Evaluation of Teaching Response Rates," (<http://teacheval.ubc.ca/files/2010/05/Student-Evaluations-of-Teaching-Report-Apr-15-2010.pdf>).

eCommons Satisfaction Survey

There were 181 faculty responses to the eCommons Satisfaction Survey sent out by ITS late spring. The responses to "How satisfied are you with the ease of using your eCommons site(s)?" were:

Totals (n = 181)	Number	% of 181
Satisfied	40	22%
Somewhat Satisfied	57	31%
Neutral	21	12%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	29	16%
Dissatisfied	19	10%
No Response	15	8%

The responses to “Please rate your overall satisfaction with eCommons were:

Totals (n = 181)	Number	% of 181
Satisfied	45	25%
Somewhat Satisfied	59	33%
Neutral	21	12%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	25	14%
Dissatisfied	16	9%
No Response	15	8%

And the responses to “If you are less than satisfied with eCommons, would you like to see the campus move to another system? Replacing a tool like eCommons takes significant effort and resources, how important is it to you for ITS and Learning Technologies to plan to replace eCommons with another tool?” were:

Totals (n = 181)	Number	% of 181
Very Important (replace it this year)	10	6%
Somewhat Important (replace it soon)	10	6%
Neutral	49	27%
Not that important (give us a couple years)	32	18%
Not at all important (we should stay with eCommons)	39	22%
No Response	41	23%

COT’s active agenda for 2014-15

The committee developed a list of issues to recommend next year’s committee take up, including: drafting a best practices summary for online course evaluations, doing an overview of learning support services on campus, working with CAAD on climate issues in the classroom, looking into increasing capacity by using video for students at remote locations, and continuing efforts to establish a Center for Transformative Learning.

Respectfully submitted;
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