

COMMITTEE ON TEACHING

Annual Report 2014-15

To: Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

The Committee on Teaching (COT) met every other week throughout the academic year to conduct business regarding 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. COT was particularly involved in discussions around the creation of a new Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT). The committee discussed the need for such a teaching center in its report to the Senate on November 7, 2014 *Reinvesting in Teaching at UCSC*, and spent the remainder of the year soliciting input about the priorities of such a center and developing a proposal that was submitted as a joint proposal with VPAA Lee to EVC Galloway in July. COT also held a panel discussion on teaching writing, where faculty members and instructors shared their experiences and ideas about teaching writing from various perspectives and at various points in the curriculum. Finally, a high point of the committee's work was selecting recipients for the Excellence in Teaching Awards. A brief overview of the committee's notable work in 2014-15 is provided below.

Creating the Foundation of a New Faculty Service Center Focused on Teaching

The Committee on Teaching has, for the last several years, been attempting to revitalize and re-establish a centralized service center to provide pedagogical support to the campus community. The 2013-14 Committee on Teaching, for example, drafted a plan to make a teaching center a key component of the Campaign for UC Santa Cruz. Although University Relations ultimately did not include a teaching center in its fundraising drive, the committee was able to use this proposal to continue building momentum for the establishment of a teaching center at UCSC. In lieu of support from the administration, the Academic Senate took the initiative to prioritize teaching support on campus. In 2014, the Senate and COT drafted a proposal for a Chancellor's Undergraduate Intern to help create a website and other materials that would serve as one facet of a teaching center and provided the funding for its share of the intern.

During the 2014-15 academic year, the committee was fortunate to have the assistance of Nadia Mufti as the Chancellor's Undergraduate Intern. Her efforts, in close coordination with COT, led to the creation of a website (available at <http://teaching.sites.ucsc.edu>) that contains interviews with faculty members about teaching and other resources related to pedagogy. Over the course of the year, Nadia recorded and edited these interviews, working closely with the committee and Senate staff to develop the design and content of this website. The webpage will continue to be updated and expanded, and serve as a major resource for the new teaching center. In 2015-16, the committee will continue work in establishing these online resources with next year's undergraduate intern, Leanna Parsons. In spring of 2015, the COT applied for, and received, a Chancellor's Graduate Internship. Education department doctoral student, Mecaila Smith, will be employed next academic year to develop the relevant theoretical and research base for effective faculty learning, as well as theoretically sound best practices and innovations in faculty teaching. The work of these interns will be instrumental in establishing the teaching center that is being proposed by the COT and the VPAA (see below).

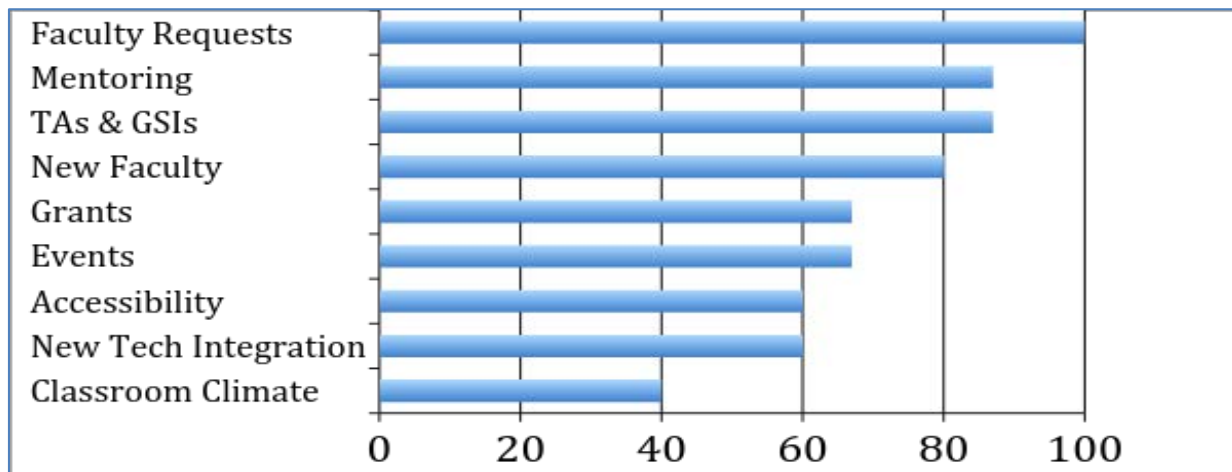
Reinvesting in Teaching at UCSC

COT presented a report to the Academic Senate on November 7, 2014 with the title *Reinvesting in Teaching at UCSC*. This report cited several respects in which support for teaching on campus has dwindled in recent years: the Excellence in Teaching Awards were eliminated, the Instructional Improvement Grants were eliminated, and the Center for Teaching and Learning (formerly the Center for Teaching Excellence) was defunded. The committee argued for the need to reinvest in teaching at a university that prides itself on having an “uncommon commitment to undergraduate education.” Immediately after the presentation of this report, the administration announced that the Excellence in Teaching Awards would resume and be managed by the Academic Senate. Senators responded overwhelmingly that teaching needs much greater support at UCSC, and that the re-establishment of a teaching center would be a central component of such reinvestment. Much of the committee’s work for the year was informed by this report and the response it garnered.

The Center for the Advancement of Teaching

After this report, the committee then spent the next several months gathering comments and recommendations from various interested parties on campus, including department and program chairs, deans of academic divisions, the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, the library, the Dean of the Graduate Division, graduate students, college provosts, the writing program, the Faculty Instructional Technology Center, and various faculty members. These groups on campus generously offered feedback, suggestions, and priorities for a new teaching center, and offered to share pedagogical resources that the new center could utilize.

The committee created a draft of this proposal in consultation with the broader campus community. The priorities for the teaching center were partially informed by a survey of department and program chairs. This survey had a participation rate of 38%, and its findings are summarized below:



The proposal for a Center for the Advancement of Teaching was drafted, which would focus on face-to-face teaching support for instructors who request help or are referred by department chairs or deans. This help would be anonymous, confidential, and completely separate from any decisions related to a continuation of appointment, promotion or tenure. The teaching center would also provide mentoring and support for new faculty. The survey (as well as other conversations around campus) also identified an acute demand for support for graduate students.

Other initiatives for a teaching center, including teaching grants, events, and responding to issues of classroom climate were also seen as issues that a teaching center could address. On April 7, 2015 the committee presented a draft of its proposal for a Center for the Advancement of Teaching during a consultation with CP/EVC Galloway.

On May 29, 2015 the committee gave a presentation to the Academic Senate titled *Report on the Center for the Advancement of Teaching*. This presentation summarized the efforts of the committee to this point, and included the priorities for a teaching center identified by the committee as well as a possible organizational structure. The committee contrasted such a structure with one that was being considered by the administration, which would lack a faculty director and report to the VPAA. The committee noted that a teaching center formed under Academic Affairs may be problematic, as faculty members may be hesitant to make use of a teaching center whose staff report to the officers who are in charge of assessment for promotion and tenure.

The committee is determined to continue to build on this momentum to establish a teaching center on campus. The chair of the committee met over the summer with the VPAA to develop a joint proposal for a teaching center that addresses the priorities identified by the COT as well as the priorities from the office of the VPAA. In July, we negotiated a joint proposal that was signed by both parties and submitted to EVC Galloway. We are hopeful that this proposal will be funded in 2015-16 [see attached].

Panel Discussion on Teaching Writing

Typically, the Committee on Teaching holds an annual event related to the instructional interests of the campus community. The committee decided to hold this year's event on the topic of writing pedagogy in response to several comments from faculty members about the state of writing instruction at the Senate meeting in November. On May 6, 2015, faculty, staff, and students gathered at the Merrill Cultural Center for "A Panel Discussion on Teaching Writing." This event included presentations from Heather Shearer (Writing), Lindsay Knisely (Oakes College and Writing), Christina Ravelo (Ocean Sciences), Susan Gillman (Literature), and Barbara Rogoff (Psychology). The presentations included information about facilitating successful writing, determining elements of successful writing, and recognizing and measuring writing improvement. COT member Phillip Hammack, who led a discussion with the participants and audience after the presentation, moderated the event. A video of the event is available at https://drive.google.com/a/ucsc.edu/file/d/0B6u-za0lQbjI5MDQ/view?usp=sharing_eid&ts=5605889c.

Excellence in Teaching Awards

At the beginning of the academic year, the fate of the Excellence in Teaching Awards was in doubt. These awards had, in prior years, been administered by the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education, with the Committee on Teaching selecting the winners. At the beginning of the year, however, the funding for the awards was scheduled to be eliminated by the VPDUE, who wished to transfer administrative ownership of the awards to the Senate with a one-time amount of \$2,507. After the committee raised this issue at November 7, 2014 Senate meeting, the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor announced that the awards would be funded centrally. In subsequent meetings, the COT was able to secure a commitment of \$3500

each year, which will be spent on these awards, in addition to a luncheon funded by the Chancellor. The Senate now has administrative oversight of the awards, and the Committee on Teaching has established its own procedure for soliciting nominations and administering these awards.

The Committee on Teaching solicited and received approximately 200 student nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Awards. The committee read these nominations and drew up a shortlist; from this list, the committee solicited letters of support from department chairs and college provosts, as well as statements of teaching philosophy from the nominees. After much deliberation, the committee selected Grace Peña Delgado, Cormac Flanagan, Craig Haney, Christine Hong, Irene Lusztig, Mark Massoud, Ralph Quinn, and Adriane Steinacker.

Beginning with the 2015-16 Excellence in Teaching Awards, the committee will be soliciting nominations at the end of each quarter. This practice will result in a greater number of nominations that do not unfairly favor faculty and instructors who teach in the spring quarter. The call for nominations in the spring quarter has already resulted in 183 nominations.

Advising the Campus Community

The committee on teaching provided feedback on various issues to the Academic Senate and other groups on campus, including:

- The Senate Executive Committee's Guiding Principles of Graduate Growth (2014)
- UCSC's Accessible Technology Plan
- The Classroom Subcommittee's proposed survey of classroom space
- The Registrar's practice of scheduling lab sections for lecture classes
- Report from the Black Experience Team
- The Senate Executive Committee's Framework for International Engagement (2015)

COT's Proactive Agenda for 2015-16

At the end of 2014-15, the committee developed a list of recommended issues to take up next year. Most importantly, the new Center for Innovations in Teaching and Learning (CITL, formerly known as the CAT) will need a strong push to get off the ground. We recommend that this should be the top priority for the year. In addition, we plan to hold another faculty event, to coordinate with the Academic Senate Committee on Career Advising to mentor new faculty, and to work with CAAD on climate issues in the classroom. Continuing business includes working to improve online course evaluations, and working with the Committee on Information Technology to explore options for a new learning management system as well as a new online course evaluation tool.

Respectfully Submitted;
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August 31, 2015

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