

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning

December 7th, 2017
10:30am – 12:00pm
Mary Gates Hall 206

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Call to Order
 2. Review of the Minutes from November 2nd, 2017
 3. Announcements / events
 4. Discussion item
 5. Goals & Subcommittees Work: identifying/articulating (initial) goals for the year
 6. Good of the order
 7. Adjourn
-

1) Call to Order

Halverson called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2) Review of the Minutes from November 2nd, 2017

The minutes from November 2nd, 2017 were approved as written.

3) Announcements / events

Sugatan announced the date of the annual UW Teaching and Learning Symposium; the event will be held on April 17, 2018 (2:00 – 4:30 p.m.) in the UW Seattle HUB Ballroom.

4) Discussion item

Halverson explained former FCTL chair, Mary Pat Wenderoth, has requested the council consider and discuss several issues/questions relating to teaching and learning at the UW (Exhibit 1). The topics were read aloud and discussed by members and guests.

#1 – “Starting Autumn Quarter on a Monday, rather than a Wednesday, and making Thanksgiving week a break week” (See Exhibit 1 for full question).

Halverson asked members to consider barriers in their units relating to implementing a beginning to autumn quarter on a Monday rather than on a Wednesday (latter is the current policy). There was some discussion of units utilizing the Monday and Tuesday (preceding the Wednesday start) for other purposes, including preparation work and events for the coming quarter. It was noted international students have their own constraints concerning a Monday autumn quarter start that would have to be evaluated and considered separately. A member noted alternatively that classes in her unit held on Tuesdays routinely miss their first week’s sessions in autumn quarter under the current start day, and

thus she would support the change. There was some discussion of the Dawg Daze campus event, which takes place on the Monday and Tuesday preceding the start of the quarter and would have to be rescheduled under a Monday start.

A student member commented that many students use the Monday and Tuesday to prepare for the quarter and buy materials, as those days provide a valuable buffer period between traveling to the university and beginning courses. It was clarified UW Bothell and Tacoma also begin autumn quarter on the same Wednesday. Several members commented on orientation programs held for new students in their units on the Monday and Tuesday preceding autumn quarter start. It was noted exploration seminars for UW study abroad also use the existing schedule in a meaningful way, thus a change would represent a considerable shift in the UW Study Abroad office. A conclusion was drawn that a great deal of infrastructure has been built around the Wednesday autumn quarter start, and a change would be a difficult and costly endeavor. A member noted the benefits of the adjustment have to be weighed against the difficulty in reverting back to a Monday start. It was noted though the current schedule may have been proven to be an issue for STEM programs, it does not necessarily justify a change university-wide. A member noted the Wednesday quarter start date was implemented as a change to the Washington Administrative Code in 2012-2013.

Members remarked the Thanksgiving break week idea would allow many students to travel home for the holiday who normally would not have time to do so. Halverson recommended the Thanksgiving break week idea be considered separately from the issue surrounding when autumn quarter begins.

#2 – Rotating the Exam schedule by the academic year not by the quarter

Halverson explained rotating UW's final exam schedule is a more technical question that requires critical analysis. A member explained an algorithm could likely be used to model the change. Another member noted a university-wide course scheduling revision is ongoing, and thus certain resources may already be in place to consider the change. It was noted one of Wenderoth's main issues with the current system is units choosing class times that ensure finals do not fall on Thursdays or Fridays, which seems a counterintuitive way to schedule. A member noted some UW units already use Saturdays before finals week to conduct finals – especially for exams distributed online – to avert the issue entirely. It was noted many UW instructors often conduct final exams during dead week in order to avoid the issue surrounding finals week and wanting to begin the break (between quarters) early. It was clear based on discussion that there are already varying methods used around the university to avoid holding final exam during finals week/under a strict predefined schedule.

Halverson noted he would like to present the issue to Phil Reid (Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs) and garner a response, and then summarize the feedback from FCTL as well, and forward back to Wenderoth.

5) Goals & Subcommittees Work: identifying/articulating (initial) goals for the year *Subcommittee break-out*

Halverson asked subcommittees to meet together for a few minutes and discuss several questions designed to steer groups towards defining their goals and activities during 2017-2018 (Exhibit 1). He

noted members could give reports following discussion. Subcommittees split up in their membership to discuss topics.

Following the break-out session, members noted after a question that including time for subcommittees to meet within FCTL meetings has been a useful exercise. Subcommittees provided reports of their discussions.

Best Practices in Online/Hybrid Teaching and Learning Environments

Zontine confirmed the subcommittee title is listed correctly and had not been changed. The main question to be considered by the subcommittee was how do get people to use UW-supported tools that already exist. The group would also like to discover if hybrid learning environments are preferred/appreciated by students.

It was noted UW Bothell has effectively fostered hybrid learning. A member noted it is likely there are more faculty at UW Bothell using the hybrid model to teach than at the UW (ratio to total faculty). It was noted space constraints on the campus paired with its commuter nature add to a culture that propagates hybrid learning. It was noted about 20% of Bothell faculty use hybrid learning, while only 30% of faculty at UW Seattle even use Canvas (compared to roughly 80% of faculty at UW Bothell who use Canvas). There was some brief discussion. The group was thanked for presenting.

Identifying Excellence in Teaching

Turner explained the subcommittee title was changed to "Identifying Excellence in Teaching." Questions were read aloud, and included:

- I. What best practices are UW campus units using to evaluate faculty contribution to the University's teaching mission?
- II. What best practices are UW campus units using to enculturate new faculty into an environment of teaching and learning excellence? As interventions when a course or instructor is not creating a compelling learning opportunity for students? To continuously improve the environment for well performing faculty?
- III. What evidence-based item(s) can be added to IAS to increase its validity as a tool for assessing learning (as opposed to something closer to student satisfaction)? What current IAS item(s) contribute the least to our understanding of teaching and learning excellence and thus might be considered for deletion.

It was noted the subcommittee had the idea to hold a public campus event on best practices UW units are using to assess teaching, with another portion of the event dedicated to discussing the UW Instructional Assessment System (IAS) (aka. course evaluations) and consider changes/improvements. The idea would be for the subcommittee to take something actionable away from the event. It was noted the event would likely be held on a Friday, and likely at the Foster School of Business. The group was thanked for presenting.

Goals and Principles of Learning Analytics at the University of Washington

The title of the subcommittee was changed to “Goals and Principles of Learning Analytics at the University of Washington.” Lewis explained the subcommittee has responsibility over goals related to using UW learning analytics. A document will be produced by the Subcommittee to this end, and is planned to be vetted and approved by the Provost. Lewis explained UW goals in the use of learning analytics as they exist thus far have been largely based on similar documents from other universities, many of which are in the UK, as well as from feedback from the FCTL and other faculty groups.

Diversity and Equity-Informed Pedagogies & Teaching Effectiveness

The title of the subcommittee was confirmed to be correct/unchanged. Goldstein introduced himself as it was his first meeting. Initial questions developed by the group were read aloud:

- I. What diversity- & equity-informed pedagogy are UW instructors already doing?
- II. How are UW instructors defining the issue of race and equity as it affects teaching and learning?
- III. What is the student learning experience with regard to diversity- & equity-informed pedagogy?

A member noted he is interested in the outputs of the subcommittee following exploration of those questions. A member questioned how one could evaluate the effectiveness of the UW diversity requirement (i.e. if it makes a difference in students’ lives down the line). Another member noted the FCTL might consider developing a system that attempts to do this. It was noted the School of Nursing employs a Vice Dean for Diversity who might be able to help with these questions.

Faculty 2050

The subcommittee title was noted to be correct. The group’s primary focus was noted to be the ways in which incoming UW faculty are being prepared for their changing roles.

Halverson noted there does not seem to be a lot of data surrounding how various elements (i.e. the work force, changes in society, the economy) affect the higher education landscape. A member noted the FCTL could poll graduate students who plan to go into academia to garner their perspectives on the changing landscape. It was noted the Elected Faculty Council in the School of Nursing has conducted extensive work towards redefining roles of faculty, especially in relation to research versus teaching. A member noted her unit hires into different titles in order to delineate faculty roles, but the culture of valuing research over teaching remains unchanged.

6) Good of the order

Nothing was stated.

7) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Minutes by Joey Burgess, jmbg@uw.edu, council support analyst

Present: **Faculty:** Dan Turner, Amy Howells, Mark Zachry, Thomas Halverson (chair), David Goldstein
Ex-officio reps: Navid Azodi, Maria Zontine, Judith Howard
President's designee: LeAnne Jones Wiles
Guests: Jason Johnson, Tom Lewis, Christine Sugatan

Absent: **Faculty:** David Masuda, Ellen McGough, Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges, Timea Tihanyi, Kathleen Peterson, Fred Bookstein,
Ex-officio reps: Meixi Ng, Amanda Hornby

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – fctl_meetingactivities_120717.doc

Good Morning,

Just a couple of quick announcements/reminders for tomorrow...

A.) I'd like to have a discussion tomorrow in regards to Mary Pat Wenderoth's two requests/questions (see below).

Mary Pat's issues/questions for discussion

1. Starting Autumn Quarter on a Monday rather than a Wednesday and making Thanksgiving week a break week.

In STEM courses, many of our courses have labs associated with them. As our classes are large, lab sections are distributed across the week (T, W, Th, F). Because of this distribution of lab sections, we can NOT hold lab during week 1 as class starts on a Wed. and we can not have labs Thanksgiving week as Th and F are holidays. This means that students in Autumn **miss 2 labs** that students in Winter and Spring get. This impacts almost all STEM courses which are the largest courses on campus.

To keep the number of days in a quarter fairly constant, the full Thanksgiving week is off. Many students do this anyway.

Also it is important to note that one year, in the not to distant past, Autumn quarter did start on Monday vs Wed to avoid a religious holiday. So it can be done.

2. Rotate the Exam schedule. If you look at the exam schedule you will see that it has not changed in decades. That is to say that if a class is taught M-W-F at 10:30 - the final is set for Monday at 8:30. Given that the University is trying to spread out courses throughout the day to **maximize classroom use**, one of the major drives of course time is the exam schedule. No one wants finals on Th or F so they avoid those class times. I suggest to rotate exam schedule by the academic year NOT by the quarter. I realize the current schedule has been set up to minimize the number of finals a student has on any one day. Therefore, the rotation would have to be done by row not column, i. e. 10:30 classes would swap with 11:30 classes.

B.) I would like each subcommittee to identify and articulate a few (2-3) questions/goals they plan to pursue over the course of the year. What are the central concerns/issues/questions you'd like to pursue/answer within your subcommittee this academic year. We will have about 15 minutes of group time tomorrow for each subcommittee to "check-in", so please bring your individual ideas and hopefully each group can arrive at 2-3 group goals that Joey and I can collect and record. Please know, I fully appreciate that these explorations are dynamic and may take some twists and turns over the course of the year, but... I think it's important for us to have some "North Stars" to stay tethered to while we wander.