

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning
November 6, 2014
10:30am – noon
Gerberding 142

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Call to Order
 2. Review of the minutes from October 2, 2014
 3. Introductions
 4. Chair's report
 5. Review of MyPlan and the use of course evaluations
 6. CTL activities and plans
 7. Adjourn
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1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Wilkes at 10:30am.

2) Review of minutes from October 2, 2014

The minutes from October 2, 2014 were approved as written.

3) Introductions

Rovy Branon (Vice Provost for UW Educational Outreach) and Beth Kalikoff (Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning - CTL) were present to meet members of the council.

4) Chair's report

Wilkes reported on the new subcommittees that have been finalized along with participating members:

- Teaching Effectiveness
 - Ellen McGough
 - Jaime Olavarria
 - Nana Lowell
 - Brenda Zierler
 - Hailey Badger
 - Bruce Nelson
 - Rovy Branon
- UW-IT Activities
 - Tom Lewis
- Center for Teaching and Learning
 - Christene Sugatan
- Learning Spaces

- Daniel Turner
- Jerry Baldasty
- Inter-council Liaison
 - Jeffrey Wilkes
 - Jennifer Taggart

Wilkes reported that he has met with Patricia Kramer (Chair of the Faculty Council on Academic Standards) and discussed issues related to the use of Canvas, such as copywrite, ownership and intellectual property rights. Wilkes reported that Tom Lewis (Director for Academic & Collaborative Applications, UW-IT) has diffused the situation and will provide an FAQ to help clarify the ownership of content that is provided on Canvas. Discussion ensued about the use of Canvas. A question was raised asking about the status of the anti-plagiarism software Turnitin. Jankowski explained that UW Libraries hosted two workshops to educate faculty about how to use the program which was well attended. Wilkes stressed the importance of having FAQs and fact sheets that clarifies the massive amount of information required to understand new learning management tools. Discussion ensued about the role CTL plays in offering advice on best practices in using new technologies. Kalikoff mentioned that CTL has hosted sessions recently to educate faculty on the use of Turnitin which has received low turnout. Members discussed methods to increase awareness of CTL and the use of Turnitin.

Wilkes reported that he will meet shortly with Joe Janes (Chair of the Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs) to discuss issues that the councils can work together on.

5) Review of MyPlan and the use of course evaluations

Nana Lowell provided an update on including course evaluation results into MyPlan. CTL has been coordinating with UW-IT on how the results could be viewed and Lowell is interested in the council's feedback on several options. Lowell explained that results will be displayed for each course section based on specific course/instructor combination, and will not be displayed if the instructor has not previously taught the course. Lowell clarified that the results will not be displayed for the overall course, but for the individual section that is offered. The results are offered only for students at the time of registration and will not be used as a general look-up tool. A question was raised if faculty have the ability to check their rating. Lowell explained there is an interface that faculty can use to view their own results for courses in the past.

A question was raised asking if the Course Evaluation Catalogue (CEC) would be pulled down when evaluations become available for MyPlan. Lowell suggested that it should but is curious about the council's opinion. Discussion ensued about students scraping off data, the benefits of a standalone site, or other possible reporting systems. Lowell explained the evaluations will include the following results:

- Adjusted median of combined first four items:
 - The course as a whole
 - The course content
 - Instructor's contribution
 - Instructor's effectiveness
- Challenge and Engagement Index
- "Amount you learned in this course was..."

Lowell explained the results should provide the adjusted medians since course evaluations are influenced by many different factors, such as class size. Concern was raised that by measuring averages over a long period of time it would not allow an opportunity for an instructor to demonstrate improvement if their more recent scores are higher than several years ago. Members discussed several alternatives to showing results, such as shortening the time frame, weighted averages, or limiting the results to the last five ratings.

Discussion moved to how the ratings would appear. Members debated on whether numbers or pictures should appear as part of the ratings. Concern was raised that students might make choices about which classes to take based on a small change in ratings (3.1 vs. 3.3) rather than what fits best with their educational track. Lowell asked members whether the values should be reported on a relative or absolute scale, whether results should be presented in adjusted medians, and if individual ratings should be made in comparison with a department's average score. A comment was raised stating it depends on how the information would be used. Members debated the merits of each option and how they would impact teaching effectiveness. Lowell explained that her office will receive user feedback and present alternatives at the upcoming council meeting in December. Wilkes requested that Lowell generate a list of questions for the council's feedback so members can be prepared at the upcoming meeting.

A question was raised asking if full, detailed information would be available for departments to review. There is an administrative interface for chairs and deans in order to review individual reports. Members discussed how these ratings would be incorporated into a faculty member's teaching portfolio which will influence promotion and tenure decisions.

Concern was raised about the possible use of stars since it would create a popularity contest between instructors. A comment was also raised stressing that faculty should not be compared against "all instructors" within their department, just on an individual basis. A comment was raised that small deviations between scores (3.4 vs. 3.6) would be hard to reflect by using a star-system. A suggestion was raised that the rating system could incorporate past use and experience of the student, resulting in each student having a different weight when rating their courses. Concern was raised that a star-system would create a bias for incoming students before they walk into the classroom and encourage them to look for anything that will bring down the instructor's score. Concern was also raised that compared to CEC, instructor evaluations available on MyPlan would be viewed by all students, not just those who took the time to review the CEC.

6) CTL activities and plans

Christene Sugatan and Beth Kalikoff (Center for Teaching and Learning) were present to discuss CTL's recent activities and plans.

Kalikoff explained CTL has three focus areas:

- Evidence-based teaching, learning and mentoring
- Inclusive teaching, learning and mentoring
- Using technology to achieve learning goals

CTL offers several leading/collaborating programs including:

- Faculty fellows program

- TA/RA Conference
- Microteaching

The Faculty Fellows Program is coordinated alongside Undergraduate Academic Advising which offers an introductory program to faculty on all three campuses to learn about UW culture, practices and resources. The 4-day program was attended by 103 participants which also included a reunion program for faculty to meet back up and share their experiences.

The TA/RA Conference attracts between 625-725 graduate students each year. The conference covers issues to assist TA/RAs over the year such as leading lab sessions and group discussions.

CTL provides “microteaching” sessions where TAs from different departments film each other presenting short lectures and provide feedback. The sessions occurring mostly in the fall and CTL will offer the service to any department that requests it.

CTL also hosts learning communities that meet 4-5 times per quarter for faculty, TAs and staff educators. The sessions can either be topic or cohort-based and are facilitated by faculty, graduate students, staff educators and/or CTL staff.

In coordination with UW-IT CTL sponsored four workshop series to support learning goals which was well attended (total of 300 employees). Topics covered included peer review, lecture capture, and IT technologies. Additionally, CTL offers an annual teaching and learning symposiums and recently piloted a facilitated conversation series addressing how to effectively teach international and multilingual students. The pilot was conducted in a hybrid format and included 45 participants. CTL also conducted a large-class collegium which was a one-day session with 29 participants.

CTL hosted the Technology Teaching Fellows Institute designed for faculty transporting their courses using new and existing technologies. The program is offered in collaboration between the provost, CTL and UW-IT which provides a week-long immersive training program on using active-learning classrooms. CTL also provides interactive theater as pedagogy which allow faculty to practice intervention steps when dealing with issues such as racism, bias and sexism in the classroom. This is a fee-for-service offering and might someday be a free program for departments to use. CTL also offers 2-credit graduate courses for TA/RAs to improve their teaching skills.

Kalikoff explained that CTL is building a robust, interactive website where faculty can go to talk about teaching, learning and mentoring at UW.

CTL is very active in the university community and will go to departments to train and provide resources to improve teaching and learning skills. For example, CTL recently worked with faculty in the School of Law by offering a session on “soft skills”. CTL staff will also conduct class observations for faculty who want to receive feedback on opportunities for improvement.

Kalikoff explained that she would like to see FCTL as CTL’s advisory board to provide advice on topics for in-practice series, issues that concern faculty and TAs, and any suggestions on how to improve services. Sugatan noted that CTL is providing an important role for students by creating professional development opportunities when they lead sessions. Additionally, in order to expand the breadth of CTL and its services, and add to the resources available for trainings, faculty are encouraged to volunteer to lead training sessions for other faculty. Sugatan added that faculty are provided a stipend for these sessions.

Wilkes requested that Kalikoff send the council a list of questions on issues so members can provide feedback.

7) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Wilkes at 12:00pm.

Minutes by Grayson Court, council support analyst, gcourt@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Jeffrey Wilkes (chair), David Masuda, Ellen McGough, Jan Spyridakis, Jennifer Taggart, Daniel Turner
President's Designee: Ed Taylor
Ex-Officio Reps: Robert Corbett, Terry Ann Jankowski, Eli McMeen (for Hailey Badger)
Guests: Nana Lowell, Beth Kalihoff, Christene Sugatan, Rovy Brannon, Jerry Baldasty

Absent: **Faculty:** Bruce Nelson, Jaime Olavarria, Brenda Zierler
Ex-Officio Reps: n/a