

**University of Washington**  
**Faculty Council on Instructional Quality**  
February 15, 2005

**Synopsis:**

1. Student Diversity and Retention, Faculty Conversation proposal
2. ASUW Student Resolutions (Parks and Tobin)
3. Classroom Climate study and assessment tool
4. SOTL showcase progress

Chair Jan Carline called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The minutes were approved.

**Student Diversity and Retention – Proposed Faculty Conversations Project**

Susan Kemp presented the work of the Subcommittee on Student Diversity and Retention, who are recommending that FCIQ apply to the President's Diversity Appraisal Implementation Fund for a grant to support a series of Faculty Conversations on Classroom Diversity. Subcommittee members see diversity as a central element of teaching and learning, and believe that the proposed conversations will not only be useful in their own right, but will also reveal faculty needs and signal faculty investment in this area.

Kemp described the proposed Faculty Conversations as cross-unit and cross-discipline. Sponsors would include FCIQ, the Teaching Academy, and the Office of Undergraduate Affairs. It is envisioned that the Conversations will be developed in close collaboration with the Office of Minority Affairs (OMA), the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA), the Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP), and the Center for Instructional Development (CIDR). Kemp would like to involve the Special Committee on Minority Faculty Affairs as well.

There is often a disconnect between what faculty think they are doing and what students are feeling, Kemp commented. Faculty members have a responsibility to bridge this gap. The proposal this grant would support has a great symbolic weight, because it represents commitment on the part of the faculty. The program would be designed during the summertime and would require release time for a faculty member to conduct the sessions as well as a CIDR person who would be responsible for analysis. Carline hoped a CIDR person was going to be responsible for preliminary investigations into possible Human Subjects requirements and the issue of publications.

After further discussion, the Council passed a resolution to authorize the subcommittee to pursue the idea and bring a concrete proposal back to FCIQ, which would be submitted as long as a majority of members concurred. Since time is short, the proposal will be circulated via email and approved at the next FCIQ meeting on March 29.

ASUW Rep. Garrett Parks commented that he is involved with a Minority Think Tank at the Ethnic Cultural Center, one of whose concerns is the small number of faculty are involved with minority affairs. They would like to see more faculty involvement. President Emmert met with the Think Tank and pledged mandatory diversity training for incoming faculty. Students Parks has talked with would be very much in favor of the proposal.

**ASUW Student Resolutions (Overload Policy, English Proficiency verbal interviews for TAs)**

FCIQ heard two resolutions passed by the Student Senate, and was asked by student reps Garrett Parks and Zach Tobin to support both resolutions.

**Class Overload Policy:** ASUW passed a resolution to increase overload policy transparency. Overload policies vary widely across campus; some departments clearly state their overload policies, but many do

not. Students would like the overload policy for each scheduled class stated on the Website. Tom Lewis, ED Tech Development Group, said this is not trivial but could be done. Carline commented that the issues include how to do it and who will do it - departments may have to take responsibility for this, or it might be best handled in the Registrar's office, who could direct the undergraduate deans and the deans of major schools to have the overload policy added to each class schedule. Carline will ask Todd Mildon, the new Registrar, and Christine Ingebritsen, Associate Dean in Undergraduate Education, to come to the March 29 FCIQ meeting to discuss this.

**Council Response:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed to support the Student Senate's request for transparency and clear communication of the class overload policy. FCIQ will so advise the Senate Executive Committee so all faculty are made aware of the resolution.

**Policy on English proficiency, verbal interviews for TAs:** ASUW passed a resolution calling for verbal interviews between all departments and their Teaching Assistants to determine their level of English proficiency. Some students say that lack of proficiency in the English language by some professors and teaching assistants is adversely affecting their grades, since students cannot understand what is being said in lectures, or what is expected of them. At present, TAs have to take the TOEFL exam and have to pass one oral interview, but there are still said to be big communication gaps with many TAs. It's a sensitive subject that is now compounded by a labor contract with many complex issues. Karen Kasonic added that the testing is only done for international TAs. Non-native speakers who are U.S. residents and Research Assistants (who also teach) are not tested at all. TAs are evaluated by CIDR for only two quarters and are then left to the oversight and guidance of their departments. With new union rules, it is an eight month process to remove a TA even if he or she is deficient in language skills. ASUW feels that the initial oral interview process should be more rigorous, and should include classroom skills.

**Council Response:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed to support the Student Senate's request for better screening for English language skills for Teachings Assistants before they are hired.

#### **Classroom Climate study and assessment tool**

Nana Lowell reported that OEA has had several meetings on this issue and will have several more. They have been directed to conduct a full-scale classroom climate study on diversity. OEA is modifying the system to accommodate the questions discussed in FCIQ, and a supplemental questionnaire on classroom climate. They will do focus groups to shop the questions until the end of February, and will meet March 10 to review results. Questions include one question-set on self-descriptive values, another on the students experience in class, and a third specifically on the student. The supplement will be known as an Instructional Environment questionnaire – not about diversity, but about the atmosphere for learning.

Parks commented that the supplement, at 37 questions, was too long for good student response. Twenty would be better. Carline suggested Lowell also contact the Faculty Council on Academic Standards (FCAS) and the College of Arts and Sciences for input. Lowell will report back to FCIQ on progress after the March 10 meeting.

#### **SOTL Showcase progress**

Carline reported that there are about 20 applications in hand for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Showcase, and encouraged everyone to recruit colleagues for the event.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*

**Present:** Carline, Coe, Kasonic, Gillis-Bridges, Kemp, Parks, Lewis, Lowell, Holmes

**Absent:** Kim, Mai, Greenwald, Wenderoth, Jacobson, Brooks, Trudeau, Jeffords

**Guest:** Zach Tobin, ASUW