

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Instructional Quality Annual Report 2008-2009
Mary Pat Wenderoth, Chair

During 2008-09, FCIQ addressed the following issues:

1. Student photos with class lists

Class C resolution endorsing the Registrars efforts to make student photos available with class lists passed SEC and Faculty Senate. Student photos became available for use by all instructors starting in Spring 2009.

2. Revisions to MyUW teaching tab

FCIQ worked with Fang Lin, MyUW software engineer, and Janice Granberg, Technology Manager, UW Technology to revise the content and lay-out of MyUW Teaching Tab to be more useful for teaching faculty.

3. Ad-hoc committee on Academic Rigor.

Don Janssen gave a presentation on the “Final Report FCAS-FCIQ Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Quality and Rigor.” He noted that the summary of datasets that will be provided as appendices to the report must first have names redacted from them. The work group looked at the level of quality and rigor in three types of classes: regular, special topics (ST), and independent study (IS) courses. They also examined the Challenge and Engagement Index (CEI), a UW tool added as an item to student course evaluations several years ago. Janssen explained that a survey of 53 departments showed a departmental mean range from 3.7 to 5.3, with many scores falling between 4 and 5 on index. The subcommittee identified “outlier” courses if their CEI score was 1.5 deviations below the department mean or greater. The subcommittee recommended that department chairs and deans should receive assessment materials for the outlier courses along with the quarterly teaching assessment information. It was pointed out that with the exception of attendance-based seminars (1-2 credit courses), the CEI index seems to be measuring the perceived challenge and rigor of courses.

While the subcommittee saw the value in ST and IS courses it also found evidence of their overuse. The subcommittee’s recommendations include having a course syllabus for each ST course reviewed and approved by department faculty, converting a ST course offered multiple times into a regular course, and limiting the number of ST courses students can apply toward their degree.

Janssen reported that there is less control with IS course credit. A red flag for the subcommittee finding students with excessive amounts of IS credits (one with 45 credits) and faculty members who were supervising large numbers of IS students. A suggested action item was to have deans and chairs made aware of the high number of IS courses, taking note of an IS course with more than 12 students, limiting students to the number of IS credits that can be used toward the degree, and having students sign a contract when taking IS courses.

4. Identification of resources to support instructional units on campus.

Amanda Hornby, Undergraduate Instruction Coordinator, UW Libraries. Hornby introduced herself and described her new position. She handed out to council members a one page description of some of her goals in undergraduate instruction and some of the resources available to teaching and research assistants.

Dyane Haynes, Director, Disability Resources for Students (DRS). Haynes briefly described the history of DRS and core services DRS offers disabled UW students, the process by which students come to the DRS office, and the necessary documentation that disabled students must present in order to receive DRS services. A discussion began about how to educate faculty about disabilities.

Cara Lane, Research Scientist, Learning & Scholarly Technologies (L &ST), gave a power point presentation on the 2008 Faculty, TA, and Student Surveys. Wenderoth noted the importance of technology in helping us through the tough times and that its use is where we are headed. Lane explained her position in L & ST and that she would present highlights and data trends in the data from the 2008 surveys done. A complete report is available online.

5. Activities to support and enhance excellence in teaching and learning at the University of Washington.

Revisions to FROG- Faculty Resources on Grading. Nana Lowell asked council members for input on the Faculty Resources on Grading (FROG) website that was created a few years ago. The website grew out of FCIQ and provides information on campus grading policies. She explained that the website is antiquated and needs updating. Lowell noted that she would like to revisit FROG's purpose because she frequently gets questions from faculty on grading. Over the course of the year, FCIQ provided suggestions for improvements to FROG.

Let's Talk Teaching at UW Club-new teaching event. This program began in January or 2009 and is sponsored by the UW Teaching and Learning Consortium which is an informal group consisting of the heads of various units on campus that deal with teaching and learning issues, such as Undergraduate Academic Affairs (UAA), Center for Instructional Development, and Catalyst. The informal lunch meetings are held at the UW Club the first Wednesday and Thursday of each month, from 12:00-1:30 p.m. At each meeting there will be two consortium members at a table in the UW Club, as an available resource for faculty

UW- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Symposium

The 5th annual UW – SOTL symposium was held April 21, 2009 in the HUB ballroom. The keynote address was given by Wenderoth, approximately 50 posters were presented and 150 were in attendance.

Documenting best teaching practices.

Eugene Edgar and Mary Pat Wenderoth offered a course in Spring 2009 entitled, You Tube goes to College. In this course, 14 students developed and produced individual 10 minute videos on the topic of what is best teaching and best learning at the UW. These videos are posted on You Tube.

5. Textbook ethics issue

Special guests Carroll Niccolls, Special Counsel to the President, and Jack Johnson, Division Chief, Attorney General's Office sought advice from FCIQ about the fact that the State Ethics Board recently approved a statute that prohibits faculty members from making a profit on the sale of any textbook to students in their classes. Niccolls explained that they are hoping to work with FCIQ to find a proposal that would enable faculty to continue using their textbooks but avoid profiting from them. Niccolls noted that ethics charges and penalties are leveled against individuals, not institutions, and that they would like to prevent any UW faculty from exposure to this new ruling.

FCIQ gathered information on issue and discussed possible solutions but no final decision was addressed.

FUTURE WORK

1. Address concerns of how to maintain instructional quality in the face of large budget cut
2. Work with the Curriculum Committee to determine if the new course application form is improving incorporation of learning goals and objectives into proposed courses.
3. Continue review of 10 Year Review process- link to student assessment and Learning Outcomes work.
4. Review tuition and salary issues associated with Summer Quarter.
5. Address issues of instructional oversight of on-line distance courses and courses offered through UW Educational Outreach.