

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
FACULTY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY  
WEDNESDAY, November 19, 2008  
221B Mary Gates Hall

Chair Mary Pat Wenderoth called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**Meeting Synopsis:**

1. Textbook ethics issue – 30 minutes
  2. Catalyst grade book and FROG – 30 minutes
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Chair Wenderoth asked for any corrections to the October 22, 2008 minutes and hearing none, called for a motion to approve them. The motion was made, and seconded. The minutes were approved with no comment.

**1. Textbook ethics issue**

Chair Wenderoth introduced special guests Carroll Niccolls, Special Counsel to the President, and Jack Johnson, Division Chief, Attorney General's Office. She explained that she was approached about this issue because it was felt there should be faculty input and FCIQ was a good place to start.

President's Counsel Carol Niccolls told the council that she was recently contacted by the UW's liaison to the State Ethics Board and was told that the 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. She 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. Niccolls described two possible solutions:

1. Figure out how to separate out a faculty member's textbook sales to their classes so that they can't profit from them.
2. Figure out how to shield faculty members from the decision making process of textbook selection when their textbooks are under consideration.

Niccolls acknowledged that there were no easy solutions. Special guest Jack Johnson underscored the meaning of the ethics law and the importance of getting faculty input in finding a solution. He noted that it was not likely they could argue the Ethics Board off the principle, nor get the law changed. Johnson offered a possible solution of pursuing the process of separating out the purchase of those textbooks by students whose teachers are also the author. Council members briefly discussed the possibility of tracking student textbook purchases.

Council guest John Sahr inquired about the scope of the problem and the amount of profit per book that faculty were actually earning. Niccolls and Johnson noted that they did not know the scope of the

problem but would like to have a strategy that they can bring back to the Ethics Board to get its approval.. The point was made that many UW faculty write these textbooks after many years of research, that they are intended for the best education, and that it would not be possible to keep faculty members out of the decision making for textbook selection. It was also noted that textbook publications based on research are most often the work of tenured faculty, and if they were left out of the decision making process, junior faculty members in departments would be the ones left to decide. It was felt that most departments are not large enough for this.

Wenderoth proposed that they begin by doing some fact-finding. She offered to contact a colleague whose textbooks are regularly used in his classes, and the UW Bookstore to get information about the process. Niccolls counseled against contacting the general faculty directly about the issue and raising any reactionary response. Wenderoth noted that they will need to speak to deans and departmental chairs. Council guest Wayne Jacobson suggested that they talk with publishing representatives to find out about the arrangements for textbook sales, and to get a range for profits made. Wenderoth agreed to contact the bookstore Director and asked council members to ask around for information. She then tabled the issue for further discussion.

## **2. Catalyst grade book and FROG**

Special guests William Washington, Interaction Design Lead, Catalyst, and Janice Fournier, Catalyst Research Scientist, gave a presentation on the online grading tool, Grade Book. Washington noted that approximately 900 faculty members are using the new online grading tool that become available this fall. He opened up the website and demonstrated key features of the grading software. Washington discussed accessibility, the FERPA requirements, and how to add administrators to the grade book. When asked if it was possible to limit the administrator by assignment, or category, he responded that the program currently only allows the user to limit access by class section. Washington demonstrated how to input grades and calculate scores, showing how the lowest score can be dropped. He also explained how students can check their grades and test scores. Washington noted that grades will be kept and that faculty will be able to find them under the file name. Council members suggested adding a few features such as making it so that Grade Book could talk to Web Q, and having an activity log that would track grade changes, such as a previous grade, especially if had been redone. A suggestion was also made to create for faculty, a grade book button easily accessible from the MyUW page. Washington and Fournier were complimented on the program and thanked for their presentation.

Council guest Nana Lowell asked members if they had any suggestions for the Faculty Resource on Grading (FROG). A discussion began about the value of keeping the online grading resource in light of the release of Grade Book. FROG was viewed as a useful resource for areas outside of teaching such as guidelines for ethics and people with disabilities. A suggestion was made to link FROG to a class resource page on the MyUW page. Jacobson noted that there is no central place for other kinds of academic questions, and FROG provides a good portal for that purpose.

Chair Wenderoth announced that she will continue to ask council member's for their winter quarter availability.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

*Minutes by Melissa Kane, Faculty Senate, mmkane@u.washington.edu*

**Present:**       **Faculty:**   Edgar, Janssen, Salehi-Esfahani, Wenderoth (Chair)

**President's Designee:**   Sahr (for Ed Taylor)

**Ex Officio Reps:**       Nguyen, Zarelli

**Regularly Invited Guests:**   Lowell, Jacobson, Sugatan

**Absent:**       **Faculty:**   Allen, Baldasty, Underwood

**Ex Officio Reps:**   Raftus

**Regularly Invited Guests:**   Lewis

**Special Guests:**   Janice Fournier, Research Scientist, Catalyst

                          Jack Johnson, Division Chief, Attorney General's Office

                          Carol Niccolls, Special Counsel to the President

                          William Washington, Interaction Design Lead, Catalyst