

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY
October 22, 2008, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
36 Gerberding

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

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Faculty Resources on Grading (FROG) – Nana Lowell requested input from FCIQ on modifications
 2. Update on ad hoc committee on Academic Rigor
 3. Discussion of topics to consider this academic year
 4. Discussion of increasing and recruiting more members for FCIQ
 5. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Symposium steering committee
 6. Update on 10 year review process
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Chair Wenderoth welcomed back council members and introduced Phuong Nguyen, the new ASUW representative. She also introduced Christine Sugatan, Administrative Specialist, Undergraduate Academic Affairs, as an invited guest today.

Wenderoth called for a motion to approve the minutes from June 4, 2008. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

The Chair spoke about the fall schedule, noting the selected dates were the best she could find around everyone's availability. Council member Debbie Ward has left the university and Wenderoth asked members to discuss the idea of recruiting new members at their next meeting on November 19th.

1. Faculty Resources on Grading (FROG) – Nana Lowell requested input from FCIQ on modifications

Regular guest 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. There is no deadline on the update, nor is there anyone pushing for it to be done. Lowell explained how to reach FROG from the UW homepage, and described some of the grading information, such as conversion charts from traditional letter grades to the UW's 4.0 grading scale. She noted that the tech side of the webpage is maintained by the Office of Educational Assessment and that she has been in contact with Wayne Jacobsen from the Center for Instructional Development about the content. Lowell asked council members how they would like to be involved, if at all. Chair Wenderoth suggested that everyone should go to the FROG webpage. Council member Craig Allen noted that his department, Law, wouldn't probably use the webpage because of how often the grading system changes. A discussion began around grading policies in different departments. Lowell mentioned that the Faculty Council on Academic Standard (FCAS) is current investigating

departments that are setting grade-based graduation requirements and suggested that they speak to FCAS about FROG. Wenderoth gave council members the assignment to go to the FROG website and look at two components:

- How user friendly is it?
- What is its purpose and could it be clearer? What would you do to improve it?

Wenderoth noted that she will contact the chair of FCAS, John Schaufelberger, to discuss a joint meeting, or whether it is something that can be done with their subcommittee.

2. Update on ad hoc committee on Academic Rigor

Council member Don Janssen reported that the subcommittee on Academic Rigor will meet next Wednesday, the 29th. He noted that Lowell will be doing some data analysis and that the committee hopes to have a report ready by the end of autumn quarter that will identify problem areas and will provide some guidelines. Janssen said that they would have updates at future FCIQ meetings. Lowell noted the difficulty in finding data to analyze and said that they may have to collect data differently in order to monitor the problem better.

3. Discussion of topics to consider this academic year

Wenderoth opened the floor for ideas on topics to consider this academic year.

- General Education requirements

Janssen reported that the College of Engineering has dropped down its graduation requirements to the university's minimum, which he feels is too low. He suggested that they take another look at the G.E. requirements. Council member Doug Underwood remarked on the lack of common background in undergraduate students that reflects no apparent general education requirements. Presidential designee John Sahr (subbing for Ed Taylor) noted that the community college system is part of this issue and that graduation requirements are constrained by the direct transfer agreement between four year schools. He pointed to a problem he sees in mathematics where over half of the students with UW degrees take no math courses. The math requirements are part of admissions. Chair Wenderoth agreed to talk with Undergraduate Academic Affairs and coordinate an interest in finding the general education requirements at the university. A question was raised about how the issue fits within the council's purview. Wenderoth noted how the lack of clear general education requirements directly impacts the way faculty members teach their courses.

- Summer session

Wenderoth said that they have an opportunity to invite someone from UW Educational Outreach to address the economic situation with summer session.

- Inventory of best practices in teaching

It was suggested that the council inventory what really good teachers do by analyzing their teaching styles and best practices in the classroom. Wenderoth described the open door policy at the University of British Columbia in which the faculty is invited to visit other faculty on a drop-in or request basis. She said that all participants meet for coffee at the end of the month

which brings together diverse faculty who are talking about teaching. Underwood suggested that they consider how teaching can stay abreast of generational changes that are influenced by technology and culture.

- **Course approval**

Janssen suggested inquiring into the university's course approval form and whether instructor's course descriptions are ever updated. Sahr noted the common course transfer issue, in which a course such as English 101, transfers over from a community college with the same number but does not have the same content or course description. The question was raised, "what is the status on the Registrar's office making information on course approval forms available to faculty?" A suggestion was made to invite Registrar Todd Mildon to the council to address the issue.

- **New teaching challenges**

Allen introduced the topic of the interdisciplinary teaching environment as a new teaching challenge. He explained how the law school would like to learn more about how to bring in more students from outside its school. The idea of each discipline having its own habits in mind can be confusing to students. UW Bothell's Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences have faculty used to working across disciplines. A huge challenge is in how promotion and tenure is done within interdisciplinary disciplines.

Another aspect to teaching challenges is having students with disabilities in the classroom. Council members shared their experiences and challenges in working with students who had either hearing or visual impairment. The use of technology presents particular challenges that take a lot of time and requires greater resources than are available for disabled students.

Faculty who ban the use of laptops was a different technology issue raised. Council members discussed appropriate and inappropriate use of laptops, cell phones and other technology in classrooms. It was suggested that they query faculty on how to harness the use of computers in the classroom to promote learning. Regular council guest Tom Lewis offered the help of his staff.

4. Discussion of increasing and recruiting more members for FCIQ

This issue was not addressed.

5. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Symposium steering committee

Chair Wenderoth reported that the Symposium of Teaching and Learning event will be held April 21, 2009. She noted that Wayne Jacobson is sending out requests now to be on the steering committee. They would like to be a center for the region as they reach out to local colleges and four year schools.

6. Update on 10 year review process

The 10 year review has been undergoing major changes and both FCIQ and FCAS have minimal roles proposed that provide a lot of information.

7. Announcements

Wenderoth reported that the Center for Instructional Development and Research (CIDR) will be hosting Seattle University professor John Bean at their quarterly meeting on November 13th at 3:30 p.m. Professor Bean will address student assessment and learning.

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

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

Present: **Faculty:** Allen, Edgar, Janssen, Underwood, Wenderoth (Chair)
President's Designee: Sahr (for Ed Taylor)
Ex Officio Reps: Nguyen, Zarelli, Nkeze
Regularly Invited Guests: Lewis, Lowell

Absent: **Faculty:** Baldasty, Salehi-Esfahani
Ex Officio Reps: Raftus
Regularly Invited Guests: Jacobson