

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON**  
**FACULTY COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH**

The Faculty Council on Educational Outreach met at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, **December 16, 2003**, in 36 Gerberding Hall. Chair William Erdly presided.

**Approval of minutes**

The minutes of the November 18, 2003 FCEO meeting were approved as written.

**Discussion: goals and objectives for the remainder of the FCEO 2003-2004 academic year**

Erdly said he would like to see the council identify specific goals for the remainder of the 2003-2004 academic year. He welcomed all suggestions from the council.

An overall goal, said Erdly, is to get faculty perspectives on educational outreach, and to develop a framework for the council's vision of educational outreach at the University of Washington over the next ten years. "Are there particular studies we want to do?" he asked the council. "I'm interested in *your* perspectives."

Warnick said it would be worthwhile to study the "question of the Libraries. Who has access? What are they doing and not doing? Students don't use the databases as much as they might (they want to go to the Web). These and other questions about the Libraries could be looked at." Wells said, "Part of it is the presence of colleges like Heritage. Some databases are restricted because of research necessities. And cost is a factor." Warnick said, "There is an ongoing cost: that which needs to be triaged in the Libraries as a result of budget cuts."

Erdly said, "We have to take the outreach perspective on these Libraries issues. And what about cost fees for individual courses? Then there's the issue of archiving." When it was mentioned that the Libraries is preparing for its Triennial Survey of all faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, and professional staff, Erdly suggested that the council could contribute questions to the survey. He will look into that possibility.

Warnick said the promotion and tenure process could be an issue for the council: What weight in the evaluation of a faculty member's P&T progress does his or her participation in educational outreach, or distance learning, have? Eberhardt said, "If we provided distance learning courses to community colleges who do not have *our* courses, and whose students want to transfer to the University, but cannot transfer into a major because they lack necessary prerequisites for the major, this might be of real service. Of course, the question would then arise: Whose course *is* it? And whose students? We would, of course, need guidelines, if such courses were indeed to be offered."

Berger said a question would be: How do you create an infrastructure for a course to be moved into Educational Outreach with a minimal number of issues. What would be the implementation path?" Eberhardt said, "I prepared a course, then my department said: Who will pay for this [innovative] course?" Berger said, "It seems whenever you want to offer a non-traditional course, many barriers are presented. Why can't you *do* it without going through so many hoops?"

Goldsmith said, "With all of the well-trained and organized administrators we have in this arena, there should be a system set up to facilitate the implementation of the financial component of distance learning courses, so that *we* could deal with the academic side of it." Eberhardt said, "I teach a unique course. I have thought of converting it to distance learning; then I'm reminded of the roadblocks we've been discussing just now. Another related issue is: How are instructors to be compensated, with, say, double

the size of the class, through its transformation into distance learning? Certain courses are required for admission to upper-division courses; we could have these available through distance learning, because the students *have* to have these prerequisites to be admitted. They need a major to be able to transfer, and need to have completed these courses – that they often cannot get into now – to be admitted to the major.”

Szatmary said, “We *do* have mechanisms for DL courses for non-matriculated students. Those students would pay fees; there are various uses that those fees are put to.” Goldsmith asked, “Why is it so hard to make the connection to these systems that *are* in place?” Eberhardt said, “There’s the start-up process, and the money necessary for the start-up.” Szatmary said, “We [in Educational Outreach] find the start-up money. But some courses may not need a structural format; other courses would. There’s no centralized state funding for DL courses. There is some help for tools that *can* be used for DL courses.”

Erdly said, “I did a study looking at distance learning issues. I asked nine questions of institutions of higher education (four-year colleges and community colleges) about difficulties they may have experienced in getting DL courses set up and implemented. In the study, a numbered grading system was used from one to seven, one meaning no barrier at all, and seven meaning the greatest barrier imaginable.

Six of the questions are in the following areas (the degree of difficulty is given after each question):

- 1) Start-up money for course conversion [5.36]
- 2) Availability of instructional designers [4.69]
- 3) Finding faculty to teach distance learning [4.51]
- 4) Availability of high-speed network connectivity (including getting to houses) [4.02]
- 5) Faculty acceptance of distance learning as a valid teaching approach [3.73]
- 6) Competition from other IT distance learning providers [3.60]

Other difficulties in moving toward distance learning education, Erdly said, include the perception that distance learning is not cost-effective, and the lack of perceived value of distance learning.

Szatmary said, “We’re in a more difficult position [at the University of Washington] than most of the colleges included in your survey. *Our* greatest problem is faculty availability for instruction of DL courses. Faculty at the UW are exceptionally busy, with so many projects occupying them at the same time.” Warnick said, “Number three – finding faculty to teach distance learning courses – should be in our [FCEO] vision statement. There is a predisposition in Arts and Sciences *not* to look at DL as a promotion and tenure criterion.”

Goldsmith said that Doug Wadden [Professor in Design in the School of Art] has developed a distance learning course in Visual Communication, but that this is rare in the School of Art overall. [Goldsmith is a Professor of Fibers in the School of Art.] Erdly said, “We could look at barriers in departments within the University.” Goldsmith said, “The problem in the School of Art is that there are 1,200 art majors. If we *could* have an entry-level distance learning course, it would be a good thing.” Szatmary said, “The problem *can* be the development piece; that’s why we’re trying to do this on a fee basis.” Eberhardt said, “Having a checklist, as Arnie Berger suggested, is an excellent idea. That would *recognize* these barriers, and there *are* known ways to overcome these barriers.”

Berger said, “You have to accept the fact that you have to put in a lot of time, and get the requisite money up front, to do distance learning.” Erdly said, “And there are *many* barriers. So we need to be mindful of the systems in place to support the implementation of these courses.”

With respect to agenda items for the rest of the 2003-2004 academic year, Erdly said, “We have: 1) the Libraries, and access to data bases; and 2) Promotion and tenure issues, linked to numbers three and five (finding faculty to teach DL courses, and faculty acceptance of DL courses as a valid teaching approach).

Another issue we could discuss is: Where does the UW want to be in ten years regarding distance learning courses? And will they be mostly for training, or for more academic coursework?"

It was pointed out that it is difficult to plan too far ahead now, because the University's Strategic Plan shifts so much. Szatmary said, "FCEO could weigh in on what students at the UW might look like down the road. We're 1,700 students over [the state-supported limit on enrollment] now. Far more students want to get into the UW than the University can accommodate. Another question we might consider is: What kind of faculty should we have at the University?"

Szatmary said, "Twenty-five percent of DL students are matriculated. Seventy-five percent are non-matriculated. In spring 2004 we will have, for the first time, distance learning courses covered by regular tuition." Brock said, with respect to faculty acceptance of distance learning as a valid teaching approach, "What we're lacking is a checklist for validation. The idea of a university assuring validation is difficult. I'd like to see what can be done to assure the validity of these courses." Erdly said, "This is a core factor: insuring quality: a process to assure the validation of content and format as being 'appropriate to [this] department.' There is a body of literature out there, and distance learning instructors can be fully familiar with it. Also, it is certainly true that some students are more suited to distance learning than others are."

Erdly said he would put a draft together of a vision statement.

Warnick said, "*What* we do on each issue needs to be discussed more." Berger said, "Could we focus on number five? There are a number of issues associated with distance learning. Equivalence. Validity. These kinds of considerations." Erdly said, "We can develop a checklist as a framework for seeking solutions." Szatmary said, "There is a big proposal out of Olympia. They want to divert funding to develop what are primarily teaching institutions. It would be useful to get faculty input on this issue. How does the University of Washington want to respond? What about the research engine of the UW?"

Wells said, "In our department [Dental Public Health], by far the greater emphasis is on research, not on teaching." Erdly said, "If *we* can link the research component to what the University provides as part of outreach, that can be very significant. We would be more successful." Eberhardt said, "but what *we* say won't effect promotion and tenure committees." Goldsmith said, "The reality is: It doesn't matter what we say or believe; the impression exists that teaching isn't valued here. The impression of the University as a 'cash cow' is firmly etched. Could it be different? Will distance learning become plugged in as a way of doing business as budget cuts continue?"

Szatmary said, "If you look at Educational Outreach from a mega-level, business *is* brought into that factor: Distance learning can be helpful to business. We can leverage the fee-based factor by saying: 'Not all our distance learning programs can be fee-based,' etc." Erdly said, "Many of the new disciplines in the computer area require multi-disciplinary knowledge. And the University does *that* [kind of educating] very well. This council could help."

Szatmary said, "Legislators don't look at data. They are impressed by anecdotes. So, good anecdotes can help the council make headway." Erdly said, "I'll outline something for the next meeting."

### **Next meeting**

The next FCEO meeting is set for Wednesday, January 14, 2004, at 9:00 a.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall.  
Brian Taylor, Recorder

**PRESENT:** *Professors* Erdly (Chair), Berger, Brock, Eberhardt, Goldsmith, Warnick and Wells;  
*Ex-officio member* Szatmary.

**ABSENT:** *Professors* Collins, Kim and Wilkes;

*Ex-officio member* Deardorff, Johnston and Warbington