

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The Faculty Council on Educational Outreach met at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, **December 5, 2002**. Chair Steve Buck presided.

Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the November 7, 2002 FCEO meeting were approved.

Review of what has happened since the last FCEO meeting – Steve Buck

Buck said he and FCAS chair Carolyn Plumb will speak to the University Curriculum Committee next week. He'll report to the council on that meeting at the first FCEO meeting in Winter Quarter.

Buck said Tim Washburn, Executive Director, Admissions and Records, is taking the policy issues behind the approval process of DL courses seriously. He is very interested in the standards governing these courses, and the kind of information disseminated – about what the courses involve – that students will be able to access, so that they will know before they sign up for the courses exactly what will be expected of them. He would like to see these courses vetted, and to see clarified the issues surrounding the ways these courses are set up.

Buck said he spoke with Washburn about mixed-mode courses: specifically, they asked, how should these courses be treated? Should their particular identity show up on the transcript? How closely should the review of the course available to students fit the actual instruction mode? Should the undergraduate and graduate approval processes be treated similarly? (This is not resolved under current legislation.)

Warnick said, "It's hard to say what the systemic policy ought to be, with respect to these courses." Buck said, "The dissemination of information to students on what courses will entail is an important issue."

Berger said, "There's only one knife-edge: whether you teach synchronously or asynchronously. Everything else is roughly similar. There's an almost imperceptible difference between students reading a lecture of mine on the Internet or listening to it in class." Buck said, "Yes, that knife-edge – that divide – is important. Many of the courses coming up are asynchronous."

Berger said, "It's an issue of quality control." Warnick said, "Students need to know what to expect, regarding the delivery mode of courses. Some students do better with a particular delivery mode." Szatmary said, "We're waiting for Washburn's revised form. That should address some of these issues."

Goldsmith asked, "What's the objective of all of this? Does it simply have to do with revenue? Or is it something so sophisticated that we're missing part of it?" Buck said, "There's no overall trend toward an increase in asynchronous courses."

Goldsmith asked, "What's the primary target? Is it the student body as it exists? Or is it the increasing number of students outside our normal student base?" Warnick suggested, "It's both. Sometimes, a student is trying to finish a particular program, and Distance Learning is the best and most practical way to do it." Szatmary said, "There's a huge demand, and that demand drives our Distance Learning programs."

Buck said, "David Szatmary and I talked to the Curriculum Policy Committee of the College of Engineering. They're wrestling with the status of their DL courses: mostly for post-baccalaureate

students. They also have ‘turf’ issues: They would like to have input into courses being offered elsewhere on campus, an input they do not now have.”

Discussion of possible faculty council reorganization re educational outreach issues

Buck, who is co-chairing the newly appointed committee following up on the work of the Rose Committee, reiterated that the Senate Executive Committee is looking at the issue of the possible reorganization of the faculty councils into “university councils.”

“This would be a fundamental change in the structure of the councils,” said Buck. He gave as a primary reason for the proposal the sense, on the part of many faculty councils, that they were not being taken seriously by the administration, and that they did not like the “parallel structure” in which many administrative committees had essentially the same focus as a faculty council or special committee or had foci that overlapped those of particular faculty councils, without any communication occurring between the two groups. “With the proposed change,” said Buck, “these common issues could be referred to one body, instead of a plethora of special committees, and the like.”

Buck said a major concern of the faculty councils, with the proposed reorganization, is “the loss of faculty autonomy.” He said the “statutory functions of the faculty (as designated in the Faculty Code) may be lost in the proposed university councils.”

Buck asked the council, “What is *our* interest? How will *our* interests be represented in the new structure?” Buck said that, because of modes of delivery, “we have a significant technical interest, and we have an interest in both policy and implementation. Also, we have general policy issues. How should DL courses be approved and treated, and fit into programs? So, we have both a policy side and a technical side; as we have both an undergraduate and a graduate side.”

Buck noted that most Distance Learning courses offered at the UW are for post-baccalaureate students. Szatmary corroborated Buck: “90% of Distance Learning development during the past several years has been at the post-baccalaureate level.”

Buck said there is an “eagerness on the part of some groups, both administrative committees and faculty councils, to experiment with the new structure. The Faculty Council on Research has expressed an interest, and may be part of a university council experiment early in 2003. Other councils, such as the Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs, and Adjudications, may decide that they want to remain Faculty Senate councils only.”

Warnick said, “The justification for this proposed change in council structure has been inadequately expressed, to this point. We need to talk about whether we *want* to do this.” Buck said, “The Rose Report has a section on this, somewhat.” Warnick said, “Someone needs to write this up: to explain the motive for this change. The Faculty Senate will ask for this anyway. I for one can see disadvantages to this proposal.” Buck said, “I think there are issues in implementation for us that may lead us to *not* approve the changes. People’s enthusiasm will be determined by whether they feel their interests will be served. They’ll be interested in both the overall rationale and the implementation.”

Buck said, “Today, I’m interested in getting your feedback on how this proposed change will affect the interests of Educational Outreach.”

Deardorff asked, “How, practically, would the proposed University Council on Undergraduate Education work? With FCEO, Academic Standards, and Instructional Quality all implicated, would there be 60 people on the university council? Or an unusually large number of subcommittees? It’s hard to picture just how this structure will look.”

Buck said, “We don’t know the answer to that question. But this is the kind of question I need to take back to the committee studying this. If this seems to be going in the wrong direction, we need to know that.” Szatmary said, “Educational Outreach serves primarily non-matriculated students and would not fit in a council about undergraduate education.” Buck said, “There already is a Graduate Council. The Graduate Council would go on functioning as it does now, for the most part.”

Wells said, “Everything here is involved with ‘Education’; we need to get rid of graduate and undergraduate distinctions. We need to deal with the whole spectrum.” Warbington said, “This council could fall through the cracks [in the new structure]. We would want to see that the education outreach perspective is fully represented in the university council.”

Buck said, “We don’t exist in isolation. Some felt we should reduce the number of councils.” Warnick said, “Perhaps what is needed is to reorganize the faculty councils, but not to go so far as the Rose Report recommends. Also, staff should be represented on whatever council does exist.” Wells said, faculty, staff, and administration all need to be represented.

Goldsmith said, “We need a liaison between the communities that have a common focus. And would it be possible to conduct an information campaign with respect to existing faculty councils?” Buck said, “These ideas should be passed on to Lea Vaughn and to Faculty Senate chairs, no matter what is done with the Rose Report.”

Szatmary said, “Regarding decision making, different bodies will make decisions. This is more about communication. And about channels of communication.” Buck said, “I’m co-chairing the new committee with Ross Heath – succeeding the Rose Committee – and need your input, which will not be wasted. Certainly, the operation of the Undergraduate Education Council would be very complicated.”

Buck and the council listed various councils that would have something in common, and that have overlapping interests: Educational Outreach, Education Technology, Academic Standards, University Libraries, and Instructional Quality in one cluster; and the Graduate Council, International Education (there is no such council or committee at present), External Affairs, and Student Affairs in another cluster.

Buck said, “I can’t see how to separate educational outreach from educational technology issues. And we don’t need to separate them. Because we’re an integrated institution, everything becomes interrelated. But we need subdivisions: individual councils and committees, to address specific issues.”

Goldsmith said, “We would want to know where innovative proposals of educational outreach and educational technology would go: where they would come through.” Buck said, “We don’t review courses (Academic Standards reviews programs), but we would want to be involved in any assessment of an innovative program in educational outreach and technology.” Buck said he would like to see “some group at the forefront of innovative issues in educational outreach. I would *not* want to see a separation of undergraduate and graduate issues, where possible, in the new council. But the proposed University Council on Undergraduate Education could focus on all interrelated undergraduate issues. And we do need to cohere with Academic Standards (which does not look at graduate programs). The Handbook doesn’t say how we should be involved in the specific areas it says we’re concerned with.”

Szatmary said, “Our mission [in Educational Outreach] is about extending the resources of the University in various ways.” Buck said, “We could say that there needs to be a council on Educational Outreach that provides an input to the Graduate Council, to the Undergraduate Council, and perhaps to External Affairs. I don’t hear a desire to split up our broad focus into, say, graduate and undergraduate issues. The

question confronting us is: What structure would allow us to keep our present body, *and* have contact with these other groups that we also need?"

Berger said, "We should be a kind of 'Center of Best Practices,' not a gatekeeper." Goldsmith concurred with Berger. "I think that's exactly what we should be. We don't want departments worrying about what we would think of the content of their courses. We want them to feel as autonomous as possible."

Buck said, "Send me E-mail with your ideas on these issues. And please send them to the whole council."

Next meeting

The next FCEO meeting is set for Wednesday, January 8, 2002, at 9:00 a.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor, Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Buck (Chair), Berger, Goldsmith, Warnick and Wells;
Ex-officio members Deardorff, Szatmary and Warbington.

ABSENT: *Professors* DeYoung, Jenkins and Kim;
Ex-officio member Johnston