

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The Faculty Council on Educational Outreach met at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, **December 5, 2000**. Chair Roger Simpson presided.

Approval of minutes

The minutes for October 10, 2000 were approved as corrected.

Report on the Task Force on Distance Learning – Roger Simpson

The minutes of the November 8, 2000 meeting of the Task Force on Distance Learning (as recorded by Maria Garrido) were distributed to the council. Simpson said there will be another meeting of the DL Task Force on December 7, 2000. A major goal of that meeting will be to set out and clarify the questions to be asked at the Distance Learning open hearings in January and February 2001.

Buck said the minutes from the Task Force meeting suggest a somewhat different thrust from the proposed changes in DL legislation brought to the council during the 1999-2000 academic year. He said he is more focused on those changes than on broader issues. Simpson said it is not clear yet what the precise focuses of the Task Force will be. The initial meeting's discussion was desultory. The second meeting will address specific issues. Intellectual property rights, a large and complicated long-term issue not at the center of the proposed changes in DL legislation, may be an issue the Task Force will need to look at closely. Buck said, however, that if the Task Force, at present, can focus primarily on issues requiring immediate attention, such as residency and coursework, it may be better for the work of the Task Force as a whole. Long-term issues such as intellectual property rights can be given greater attention afterwards.

It appears increasingly likely that representatives from the Bothell and Tacoma campuses will participate in the DL Task Force discussions. GPSS representative Chrysten Root recommended that the Task Force also invite ASUW and GPSS representatives to serve on the Task Force. She particularly stressed the importance of having an ASUW representative, as the debate on DL involvement in undergraduate programs is perhaps of greatest moment. Undergraduate students are primarily learning how to think, not what to think, she said. And a crucial part of that learning process is the face-to-face interaction of students with other students, and of students with faculty. It is this interaction, she stressed, that makes on-campus courses so dynamic. Simpson said, "The idea of interaction of students with each other and with their faculty comes up repeatedly in discussions of Distance Learning."

For older students this interactive component is perhaps less important, Root added. And as Szatmary observed, "Different people learn in different ways, just as different faculty teach in different ways." Kiyak said the crux still lies in the question: For whom is Distance Learning to be recommended? These are issues discussed at least year's FCEO meetings and still not resolved. There is still no evidence from the UW or elsewhere that a new UW student who has just arrived from high school is capable of a DL course. Furthermore, it is unfair to such students not to give them the benefit of in-class interactions with faculty and fellow students.

DeYoung observed that, with respect to DL technology, "We're defending a model that goes back a long ways. We need something flexible [as a model] that will allow us to deal with the technology that will become dominant later on."

As to reviews of DL programs, Buck said they should come from individual departments and the needs of each department. If the structure established for DL review is too broad, this process would be threatened.

Zoller said it is important to have representation from ASUW and GPSS on the Task Force, but it is essential to hear from the private customers who will be taking the DL courses, by far the greatest market for the programs. Jorgensen also suggested sending notice of the hearings to the “broadest possible base of customers.” DeYoung was encouraged to attend the Task Force meeting on December 7th, as was any other council member who wished to attend. The discussion, however, will be confined for the most part to members of the Task Force. Simpson said the Task Force was set up to put together a single policy to bring back to the Faculty Senate.

Szatmary said that a recent NEA Report showed that most university faculty believe online education should be actively pursued. The problem area, he emphasized, is not faculty motivation but intellectual property rights.

Simpson said the DL Task Force needs questions to present at the open hearings. He shared with the council questions that FCAS adopted for the Task Force at its meeting on December 1st:

- 1) What if it were decided that Distance Learning courses could count as regular credit courses at UW – with grades being included in the student’s GPA – only if part of each course is interactive, and only if such courses can be shown to be “equivalent” to regular on-campus courses?
- 2) *Can* online courses contain content equivalent to that of regular courses?
- 3) Should entire Distance Learning degrees be granted at UW?
- 4) What guidelines are there at UW for Distance Learning courses?
- 5) What is the definition of “residence” at UW?
- 6) Who should have oversight of DL courses at UW?
- 7) Who should be giving Distance Learning instruction?
- 8) What name should be given to online courses?
- 9) Should online courses (courses offered primarily online) be distinguished from regular, on-campus, face-to-face courses (courses offered primarily face-to-face)?
- 10) Do we want to assure that if one gets a UW baccalaureate degree, it is our own faculty that determine the tenor of the academic philosophy of the courses taken towards that degree?

DeYoung said that, in formulating questions for the hearing, it would be important to know what the Task Force understood to be the meaning of Distance Learning. For instance, synchronous Distance Learning and asynchronous Distance Learning present different challenges and prompt different responses. Kiyak and DeYoung both noted that DL courses in which all students “are together at the same time” (synchronous, or “real time” DL) allow students to learn from each other, and learn more dynamically, in ways that are difficult to equal in asynchronous DL courses. But as Kiyak further noted, unless the system changes dramatically, DL methodologies will predominantly be asynchronous. Students in DL courses will continue to have a six-month block in which to complete their coursework, and be able to start a DL course at any time of the year during which the course is being offered. As Kiyak said, “I can have a new student in my DL course on any given day. This makes it difficult to develop synchronous interactions among students, and difficult for the faculty member, who is interacting with one student regarding assignment #1 while answering questions regarding the final exam from another student.”

Committee of Continuing Education Directors – David Szatmary

Szatmary said the Committee of Continuing Education Directors have suggested awards to UW faculty for distinguished contribution to lifelong learning. The provost has said that his office will offer \$1,000

to each of three faculty chosen to receive this reward. The council expressed enthusiastic support. DeYoung said most faculty receive recognition from their peers but little institutional recognition. DeYoung, Kiyak and Zoller volunteered to serve on the selection committee for the awards.

Pilot online undergraduate program for matriculated students – David Szatmary

Szatmary said a pilot online undergraduate program for matriculated students is being considered for Spring Quarter 2001. He suggested that 4 or 5 online courses be offered to matriculated students as a test to complement and add data to the discussions of the faculty about online learning. Students participating in the pilot program would not pay an extra enrollment fee (the fee normally required of DL students). They would be taking the course as a regular part of their credit load.

Szatmary said this test would enable the UW to discover how many students are interested in online learning, the retention/completion rate of the students (as has been frequently pointed out in discussions on DL, a 50% completion rate is normal for DL courses, on average), student grades and performance, etc. Faculty who teach the same courses onsite during the day would teach these online courses and could assess the quality of the online classes, the workload involved, etc.

The courses in the pilot program would be integrated into the student's GPA (departments would be asked to waive restrictions on these courses) and would be counted as part of the residency requirement.

Szatmary said all courses in the program would be UW courses, though they might not be taught as synchronous DL courses. These courses are currently online. Faculty teaching these courses would receive extra compensation for doing so. And again, these courses would only be for matriculated students. (There would be separate courses for non-matriculated students.)

There will be three parts to the program: the regular, ten-week online course; the equivalent regular, non-online course; and the six-month online course that students may enter at any time (students in DL courses are normally allowed up to six months to complete their coursework).

Seven departments have responded affirmatively that they would offer courses in this test program.

The council enthusiastically supported this test program, which would be used to gather data about online learning for further faculty discussions. However, because the Faculty Council on Academic Standards had raised questions about the project, Szatmary, Simpson and Douglas Wadden, chair of FCAS, will meet December 14 for an additional review of the plan.

Next meeting

The next FCEO meeting is set for Friday, January 12, 2001, at 9:30 a.m., either in 36 Gerberding Hall or in Bagley Hall (if the latter, council members will be informed of the room number in the emailed agenda for that meeting).

Brian Taylor, Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Simpson (Chair), Buck, DeYoung, Jorgensen, Kiyak and Zoller;
ex-officio members Huling, Rogers, Root and Szatmary.

ABSENT: *Professors* Daniali, Jenkins, Kieckhefer and Treser;
ex-officio member Marcovina