

University Of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., January 10, 2013
26 Gerberding Hall

Agenda:

1. Call to Order
 2. Approval of minutes from November 1, 2012 meeting
 3. Announcements
 4. Discussion of On-Line course evaluations and evaluation of the flipped-classroom
 5. Discussion of MyPlan
 6. Demonstration of Canvas Network
 7. Review of earlier issues
 8. Adjourn
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1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jan Carline at 10:32 a.m.

2) Approval of minutes from November 1, 2012 meeting

Minutes from the November 1, 2012 meeting were approved as written.

3) Announcements

Three professional learning communities will be offered during the next week, and Linda Martin-Morris will be presenting. Additionally, a Symposium on Teaching and Learning will take place on Tuesday, April 16th in the HUB Lyceum. Carline's term on this Council will end this academic year. He requested for members who may be interested in chairing this Council to let him know.

4) Discussion of On-Line course evaluations and evaluation of the flipped-classroom

Director of the Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) Nana Lowell provided the Council with an update in the redeveloping of a course evaluation system. A handout was comparing current capabilities of the IAS (IASystem), and the revised IAS was provided to the Council. The existing system consists of paper forms. The primary motive for the redeveloped system is to allow online evaluations for online courses. OEA is not recommending a sudden shift to online evaluation of face-to-face courses but will work with departments that would like to implement a limited trial.

IASystem will be available at UW Seattle in fall 2013. The redeveloped system will permit future customization of evaluations forms, beyond the 14 different used for evaluations currently. Such forms will include applicable questions for online/hybrid courses. Additional benefits will be the integration of both online and paper evaluations in databases, ability to update faculty data, time schedules and class lists centrally. Pilots are being conducted on the online evaluation interface within the iSchool, Law School and Bothell. .

Costs of these evaluations will initially be the same for paper and online evaluations. Outside of UW Tacoma and Bothell, departments currently pay 20% of costs, which are subsidized by OEA's revenue generating activities, such as providing such surveys outside the UW.

The Council debated the downside of online evaluations, principally the low response rates for evaluations. Distance learning courses also have poor response rate. Current policy blocks any course activity that does not contribute to student learning, however improvement of teaching and future courses as a learning objective may allow for use of extra credit to incentivize responses.

Various suggestions to incentivize students to respond were made:

- Withholding students' access to grades until they complete evaluations
- Incentivizing students by rewards, such as prize giveaways
- Allowing early access to grades
- Emphasizing to students that faculty are judged by student evaluations
- Providing a faculty member's aggregate evaluations to those who complete evaluations
- Giving extra credit for students who complete evaluations
- Clarifying that it is OK to submit a blank form
- Providing monetary or other incentives to students, such as offsetting fees

Concerns were raised on the impact of low response rates for teaching evaluations in tenure and merit decisions, which may be detrimental towards faculty. One option which could address this would be to only allow online evaluations with greater than 50% response rates. Another challenge for holding grades to incentivize completing evaluations would be that grades are available as soon as published by the GradeBook tool. Through the NetID reference, students' names can be linked to evaluations, and concerns were raised on how students may feel about this.

The Council considered when would be the best timing for such evaluations, whether earlier or later. Earlier opportunities for student feedback exist, but are not taken into account within departmental tenure and promotion decisions. Other discussion followed on the potential application of social psychology in improving response rates, through awards/punishment, the comparison of results of such surveys at UW, and the quantity of surveys that students face.

Carline offered to investigate possibility of extra-credit to increase response rates with Virjean Edwards, the University Registrar. Individuals interested in collaborating with Lowell regarding incentive ideas should contact her. Departments interested in conducting online evaluations can contact OEA for best practices. The Council was demonstrated an example of the online course evaluation.

5) Discussion of MyPlan

Deborah Wiegand, Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, informed the Council of a soft-launch of MyPlan. This is a planning tool for students to plan their courses, over the years, and this addition will allow student to view pertinent section level information, such as frequency of which a course is offered. This new addition to the tool allows students to see if they meet course prerequisites, and run a degree audit within MyPlan.

Wiegand asked members what elements should be included within section-level information to students, and provided the Council with a potential list of items to include.

Discussion followed on this list. Online courses would such designated within the “Time and Location” section, but it was cautioned that course delivery mechanisms evolve, requiring constant updating. Sources for data within this tool will come from the Course Catalog and Time Schedule. Students will have visibility on when a course was last offered, should it not be presently taught. Though online access to faculty evaluation is available in the Course Evaluation Catalog, this is an old tool and only contains one year of data. The suggestion was made to include a mechanism for students to request for advisors to evaluate their plans, but concerns were expressed on the potential volume of these requests. The Council suggested investigation on how to protect access to past syllabi, and whether course websites exist indefinitely, noting risk of ownership or potential access to answer keys.

Potential items to include:

- Expanded instructor course descriptions
- UW student course evaluations
- Ability for students to recommend faculty members
- Flag variable credit courses
- Class size

Not to include:

- External teacher evaluation tools (i.e. Rate My Professor)

6) Demonstration of Canvas Network – Tom Lewis

Tom Lewis was ill and this item was postponed for a future meeting.

7) Review of earlier issues

The Online Undergraduate Degree Completion Initiative for a social sciences degree is postponed for around one year. A new degree for this initiative, Early Childhood and Education studies, has been instead proposed to be rolled out in Autumn 2013, and will be reviewed by FCAS.

Coursera is interested in offering credit for free courses. UW’s policy is to not do so, unless these are “extended versions.” Questions were asked regarding accreditation, and the documentation UW provides for completion of free courses. Discussion followed on peer institutional practice and potential FERPA issues. Carline will send members two recent articles on the New York Times regarding the Massive Open Online Courses.

Last meeting’s survey on topics for FCTL to address this year was inconclusive. Carline will contact members expressing interest in particular categories.

8) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Carline at 12:02 p.m.

Minutes by Jay Freistadt, Faculty Council Support Analyst. jayf@u.washington.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Carline (Chair), Turner, Zierler, Olavarria, Masuda, Nelson, Martin-Morris, Salehi-Esfahani

Ex-Officio Reps: Sugatan, Jankowski, Kutz, Randall

Guests: Nana Lowell, Deborah Wiegand, Szatmary

Absent: **Faculty:** Harrison, Wilkes , Yeh, Elkhafaifi (on leave), Kyes

President's Designee: Taylor

Ex-Officio Reps: Corbett