University of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning
May 7th, 2015
10:30am - noon
Gerberding 142

Meeting Synopsis:

1) Call to order
2) Review of the minutes from April 2nd, 2015
3) Possibility of making CEC available to students but scraping-proof? (T. Lewis)
4) Learning Spaces/class scheduling - data on class scheduling vs. student learning (C. Sugatan)
5) Feedback from FCTL and discussion of draft Guide for Tenure and Promotion evaluations (B. Kalikoff)
6) Discussion and endorsement of FCAS report on DL courses (attachment) (JW)
7) ABB review committee: Summer quarter policy and liaison with PCE (JW)
8) Husky Experience Templates: How can FCTL engage in helping this initiative (or should we?) (JW)
9) Outline of FCTL annual report (JW)
10) Lifelong learning award (JW)
11) Adjourn
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1) Call to order

Wilkes called the meeting to order at 10: 35 a.m. He noted he plans to continue as chair of the council for the next academic year. The council thanked him for his leadership and his willingness to serve.

2) Review of the minutes from April 2nd, 2015

The minutes from April 2nd, 2015 were approved unanimously as written.

3) Possibility of making CEC available to students but scraping-proof? (T. Lewis)

In the last council meeting, the removal of the online Course Evaluation Catalogue (CEC) was a major subject of discussion. It was noted the online catalogue - which includes huge amounts of data pertaining to course evaluation results for specific UW courses and professors over a number of years - has encountered several obstacles recently in remaining online - including funding issues, and a major problem with third-party data "scrapers" inappropriately accessing the data to copy it and post it to other areas of the web without university consent. Tom Lewis (Director of Academic and Collaborative Applications, UW-IT) and Nana Lowell (Director, Office of Educational Assessment) were present to discuss options with the council for possibly retaining some online version of the CEC for faculty and staff use.

Lewis noted NETID logins and CAPTCHA protections are not ample enough safeguards to protect against data scrapers and bots. He noted the system is not designed for that, either. He explained his recommendation for allowing the data to stay available would be to put the CEC data into an enterprise data warehouse, and write a Tableau software dashboard for visualizing the data, thus keeping it

accessible. He explained this option also allows for queries to be run - one of the many advantages of using Tableau software for data analysis. He noted the main benefit to this method, however, is that it allows for the data to be secured to specific groups. A group could be composed of all university faculty and students, if desired. Lewis explained that Lowell might champion this effort, and forward the idea to the appropriate team in the Office of Educational Assessment.

Lowell noted this is a well-reasoned alternative for keeping the data accessible as well as thoroughly protected. She explained this avenue also makes the data more generally available to interested parties. Lowell noted the idea may be possible, but she would have to look into feasibility.

Wilkes commented that this seems like a very good idea, and suggested the council consider this approach for discussion in the next meeting; he also suggested that Lewis and Lowell identify and ask the council to help obtain any additional resources this effort may require.

Lowell noted she had recently held a conversation over the MyPlan alternative that the council had prescribed earlier over the course of this academic year. She explained that there were ongoing concerns associated with putting course evaluation data into MyPlan, as it turns out – and that this Tableau option may be more suitable for a number of reasons. Namely, she explained that the MyPlan option is not ideally suited to students who wish to have more than a superficial look at course evaluation results.

Lowell suggested, for the above reasons and others, that the council agree to no longer pursue the previously adopted MyPlan CEC alternative.

Wilkes explained that he wants to give the council a deliberation period for this topic, and it will be decided on in the next meeting. Wilkes added that he plans to bring cookies to that council meeting, to encourage attendance.

4) Learning Spaces/class scheduling - data on class scheduling vs. student learning (C. Sugatan)

Sugatan explained she was tasked earlier in the academic year to investigate any data she may be able to uncover which is related to the question of if class scheduling methods and practices affect student learning. She noted she has come to the council today with several articles related to the topic, which have been added to the group's Catalyst shared space, each of which with a different focus. She mentioned she had sent this information to Dan Turner (council member), who is involved in efforts to possibly revise the university's scheduling system, and utilization of learning spaces, to be more efficient.

She explained when it comes to the UW and other institutions, nearly every student enrolls with a pre-set schedule in mind. Each, also, will have varying needs, ranging from work-related constraints to family obligations. She explained if anyone on the council or otherwise is looking for information on this particular question, the data she has identified may provide a good starting point.

After question, Sugatan explained she has found that class scheduling is important to student success, though she would not place it "at the top of the list." She explained access to necessary resources, varying levels of technology, and high quality courses seem to be the most integral factors for success. She explained their class schedules act mostly as a tool for balancing their workloads, and other areas of their lives.

Lowell added that the SERU (Student Experience in the Research University) survey, which is currently gathering results, includes some questions related to class scheduling. She noted these results will be available in the near future and the council should consider taking a look.

Wilkes noted the skyrocketing cost of education is also affecting many students universally, and that this, paired with the statistic that only one in three students pursues academic advising, perpetuates a difficult environment for many undergraduates.

The council thanked Sugatan for her research.

5) **Feedback from FCTL and discussion of draft Guide for Tenure and Promotion evaluations (B. Kalikoff)**

In the last council meeting, Beth Kalikoff (Director, Center for Teaching and Learning) presented a rough draft of a Guide [to be used] for Tenure and Promotion Evaluations. She has joined the council again today to gather feedback on this document. Kalikoff explained that the intent of this document is not to survey and discuss everything that has ever been written on the subject, but instead, she is hoping the guide may be used to support tenure and promotion committees, in giving them a succinct understanding of known best practices for assessing teaching.

Kalikoff explained that one goal of the project was to remind faculty of the value of peer review and self-assessment. She thanked Lowell and her team for their aid in the creation of this draft.

Kalikoff noted faculty members find peer review uncomfortable, challenging - and it generally makes them uneasy. Mainly, she explained, because they do not know what they are being assessed on. She clarified that without a template or a rubric, peer review can be a confusing task. She mentioned she had personally seen two very different assessments of a professor's instructorship, though both assessors sat in on the same course. She noted she desires to provide departments a way of talking about assessment that is not individual-based, and to bolster the same reliance on evidence that is utilized in so many other areas of research.

Kalikoff then explained various aspects of the guide to the council. She noted during her presentation that the ability to "track teaching" is important as one of the main take away points of the document overall.

Kalikoff stated that the stakes are so high for teaching because the results are often expected to be "nothing short of miraculous," and that if there was a culture surrounding the assessment of teaching, fear and doubt may dissipate more thoroughly. She noted peer review often occurs between senior and junior faculty.

She explained that in the document's drafting, the student section was the easiest to write, as data on the subject is virtually infinite. She explained the guide places special focus on the importance of understanding which kinds of student evaluation data are reliable tools which can be utilized for faculty review. She explained it is apparent that students are experts in evaluating their own experience as learners, and that the main takeaway point of this section is that overutilization of student generated data - that has transcended a student's area of expertise - is not a good practice for review.

Council feedback

Spyridakis explained that if the intention is to showcase what tenure and promotion committees "ought to do," than this should be stated outright in the guide's introduction, title, and conclusion. She explained she fears that if T&P committees are not mentioned in the title, intro, or conclusion of the document, they will continue to simply use course evaluations.

Nelson suggested that every college council should also be exposed to the guide, as in some colleges, the councils make large hiring decisions. He urged the guide be sent to every chair of each college council. Wilkes agreed, and questioned if the document simply should be sent to every faculty member of the university. Kalikoff agreed both of these to be good ideas, and noted that if T&P committees are going to be using the guide, than everyone instructor on campus should have the right to see it.

Kalikoff noted she will present the guide to the board of deans, constituent groups at UW Tacoma and Bothell, in hopes that the document will be ready for implementation by next fall.

Spyridakis explained there should be special detail given to the fact that the university provost requested the creation of this guide, and that it is specifically to be used by university tenure and promotion committees. She urged these facts be inserted into the guide's title and throughout the document.

Lowell explained a document will be posted online by her office (OEA) explaining how to interpret course ratings. She noted the project will be worked on in the summer, and that she would send the document to Kalikoff when it is finished as it may be useful in her work.

Kalikoff explained to the council the best ways for providing her additional feedback, which can be accomplished through the use of Google Docs, by clicking the "suggestions" tab on the top right-hand side of the taskbar, or by sending a direct email to an address that Kalikoff will create specially for the FCTL.

Wilkes noted he is very impressed with the guide, and noted that members did a great job of compiling it.

Kalikoff thanked the council for their input and noted she would return with updates on the guide's progress.

6) Discussion and endorsement of FCAS report on DL courses (attachment) (JW)

Wilkes explained that the Faculty Council on Academic Affairs (FCAS), after months of ongoing work and investigation, has finished their policy on Distance Learning (DL), and that the FCTL should consider an endorsement of that document. He noted by way of this document, there is now a clear definition of what a Dl course is at the University of Washington, and that it will be defined as: wherein a participating student almost never need step foot on campus to complete the course (does not require student's physical presence). He explained he has brought the document to the council today with the intention of making sure that all members agree with this definition.

Wilkes noted concerns still exist over DL-associated student fees, and those will continue to be investigated by FCAS.

After discussion, the council endorsed the FCAS Policy on Distance Learning.

7) ABB review committee: Summer quarter policy and liaison with PCE (JW)

Wilkes noted the Activity-Based Budgeting (ABB) review committee has charged the council to take up one of the issues associated with the utilization of the ABB model at the UW.

He explained the issue to be taken up concerns the summer learning quarter, and that this subject will not be taken on by the council until the next academic year (2015-2016). He noted a systematic plan will need to be devised for investigating the subject, and it is likely it will fall to one subcommittee to accomplish the bulk of the work. Wilkes noted he will develop proposals regarding subcommittees for the coming academic year over the summer, to be discussed at the first autumn meeting.

8) Husky Experience Templates: How can FCTL engage in helping this initiative (or should we?) (JW)

Wilkes noted there is an initiative underway for creating templates that will allow faculty members and/or departments to describe the ways in which their courses may augment a student's skill set beyond the specific scope of the course, called Husky Experience Templates. Wilkes explained this means looking at the tasks involved for completing the course, and evaluating what skills these tasks help to hone. This document will ultimately help instructors to think about and articulate to their students the skills they are learning, which will be useful when they have finished their undergraduate career.

Incoming Senate Chair Norm Beauchamp asked the council to consider how they may help in this initiative, specifically how to get the project to the active attention of the faculty. Wilkes also questioned what the council may do to aid in this effort. He explained the idea currently is to distribute the templates and have instructors fill them out. He noted the goal of the Husky Experience is to help undergraduates to understand that their time at the UW is a melded array of skills and experiences.

Spyridakis noted one possible approach is to send the template to department chairs and ask if they can make a presentation of these, and hand them out to their faculty. She noted it would seem that every department has at least one individual who would have an interest in presenting these to their students.

Wilkes noted that the idea at-large has been disseminated in the usual way (mostly electronically), without a great deal of response. He noted the council should consider alternate ways of ways of getting the initiative out to the attention of department chairs and individual faculty, who may likely adopt it as part of their individual course materials.

Alcantara noted it is a good idea to inform students why they are doing the things they do, and to put special emphasis that they are not just doing work for the sake of doing work. Wilkes noted he finds student motivation improves with this sort of information. Nelson noted there was an effort similar to this one a few years ago, which came from "top-down." He noted this past effort did never quite take off.

Beauchamp noted it would be useful to attempt to learn some lessons from the last time this sort of thing was attempted. Wilkes explained that simply requesting EFC chairs spend a few minutes in their meetings distributing the templates might have a large effect on overall participation. He also explained

the FCTL might draft a brief PowerPoint for these chairs to use, in guiding their descriptions of the various utilities of the templates. Wilkes explained if the council were to draft something like this, it is likely it will be used in the fall of next year.

Wilkes noted this is one of many topics where council members may spend some time over the summer thinking about ideas for how they might work, and drafting up some notes, for council deliberation in the fall of 2015.

9) Outline of FCTL annual report (JW)

Wilkes noted he is beginning the annual report of the FCTL. He requested that all council subcommittees draft up a few sentences summarizing their work over the academic year, and that he will compile the document.

10) Lifelong learning award (JW)

Wilkes explained that The Lifelong Learning Award Selection Committee (Rovy Branon, chair) needs new members. He noted that FCTL members would be great for the committee, and that volunteers are being sought currently; he mentioned that interested members should contact him. It was noted the award boasts $5000 dollars in the winner's pocket. Wilkes noted this is an excellent opportunity to honor someone who is in the trenches of continuing education.

11) Looking ahead to next year (JW)

Wilkes noted subcommittees are busy and some are not, depending on their charge and its relation to topics which have arisen over the course of the academic year. He discussed ideas for reorganizing subcommittees for next academic year. Wilkes stated he would like to explicitly address the PCE (Professional and Continuing Education) liaison, and advising to VP Branon on faculty input to PCE and PCE to faculty; he noted he would like to revise a subcommittee charge for this purpose. He suggests this be *in addition to* (possibly overlapping) the existing online earning subcommittee. He suggested that each 2014-15 subcommittee write themselves a new charge and discuss what they wish to accomplish in the next year. Wilkes explained another thing he wants to do, based on recent conversations which took place in the chair's luncheon – is to ask each *council* to look at its official charge, and possibly rewrite it, to see if anything can be changed that might be helpful in coordinating the councils work, and preventing overlaps and gaps. Wilkes explained would like to discuss some preliminary ideas about this at our next meeting, and hopes to get suggestions from council members.

After discussion, Lewis and Spyridakis both expressed interest in serving on a subcommittee which seeks to improve the information systems in place (information dissemination) for UW students and faculty. A member explained that information systems and their relation to community members is sometimes called the "User Experience for Stakeholders."

McGough noted the teaching effectiveness subcommittee originally planned to draft a white paper, and that though they have not finished, they would like to summarize where they have gotten, and send the summary to Wilkes. Wilkes explained he welcomes the report, and that it does not need to be specially formatted.

Wilkes noted he hopes the council may complete some of the tasks it set out to tackle this year.

12) Adjourn

Wilkes adjourned the meeting at noon.

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Minutes by Joey Burgess, jmbg@uw.edu, council support analyst

Present: **Faculty:** Jan Spyridakis, Jennifer Taggart, Jeffrey Wilkes (chair), Ellen McGough, Bruce Nelson
                       Ex-officio reps: Eldridge Alcantara, Robert Corbett
                       Guests: Rovy Brannon, Nana Lowell, Christine Sugatan, Tom Lewis, Norman Beauchamp

Absent: **Faculty:** David Masuda, Jaime Olavarria, Brenda Zierler, Dan Turner
                       Ex-officio reps: Hailey Badger, Terry Ann Jankowski
                       President's designee: Ed Taylor