

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning

March 7, 2024

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Zoom

Meeting synopsis:

1. Call to order
 2. Consent agenda
 - a. Minutes from Feb 8, 2024
 3. Chair updates
 - a. provost working group on the future of teaching and learning
 4. Subcommittee updates
 - a. Student evaluation
 - b. AI
 - c. Materials for merit & promotion
 5. Good of the order
 6. Adjourn
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1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m.

2. Consent agenda

a. Minutes from Feb 8, 2023

A voting member started the meeting for Chair Self. They asked for any discussion of the consent agenda. There was no discussion. The consent agenda was approved.

3. Chair updates

i. Provost working group on the future of teaching and learning

Pen Moon (Center for Teaching and Learning, Director) provided an update on the provost group and timing for future Class A legislation. The Quality Instruction group drafted five criteria for quality teaching and met with a new advisory council to take all the feedback collected from the 700 faculty who attended listening sessions/online feedback forums and revise the criteria descriptions. Changes included new definitions for ‘aligned’ and ‘inclusion’. FCTL members shared their own feedback on those changes, particularly on the term ‘equity’ and its interpretations in current politics. Moon stated resources to assist faculty in learning more about the concepts within the criteria would be provided in the final stages.

4. Subcommittee updates

FCTL subcommittees provided updates to the full council.

Student/Peer evaluations: engaged in a pilot for student course evaluations with the following data: UW Seattle - 80 evaluations/4560 students, UW Bothell - 24/996, UW Tacoma - 7/185, Total: 111 evaluations/5741 students. The group had plans to survey instructors on the experience for feedback and recommended approaches to peer evaluations, particularly the framework and observable behavior.

Merit/Promotion Evaluation materials: Members of the working group joined the Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs to share their report for feedback (Exhibit 1). FCFA was supportive of the recommendations and noted Class A legislation moving forward could have implications for FCTL work. They made plans to draft a Class C resolution on the use of evaluations and reviewed different forms for evaluation.

AI communication pathways: The group invited speakers to discuss aspects of AI and teaching on campus, particularly faculty use of AI in assessing students. Members stated they were still in the learning phase to develop the scope of initial goals for services or support to provide the university. FCTL council members asked about the use of AI in grading and potential policies developed for faculty guidance. It was noted that the Faculty Council on Student Affairs was preparing a pilot survey to collect information on student use of AI. The University Libraries has also been looking for feedback from instructors on their uses of AI to scale back restrictive licenses. The provost commissioned an AI taskforce with considerations on literacy and fluency and plans to begin recruiting members. The Digital Learning Alliance would also draft an advocacy statement for the values with regards to AI institutionally. Moon mentioned policies on AI in pedagogy can be restrictive.

A representative from ASUWB shared that the student body has been supportive of a Common Hour on the Bothell campus. ASUWB did not finalize surveillance cameras on campuses, for installation in late summer.

5. Good of the Order

The following were updates provided by guests:

First Year Programs - <https://fyp.washington.edu/f4f>.

Open education awareness week - <https://pressbooks.com/news/open-education-week-at-pressbooks/> & <https://oeweek.oeglobal.org/>

Annual teaching and learning symposium <https://teaching.washington.edu/learn/teaching-and-learning-symposium/>

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Minutes by Alexandra Toyoda, faculty council analyst, xanport@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Fred Bookstein, Rania Hussein, Anne-Marie Gloster, Duong Than, Ranjini Grove, Leighann Chaffee, Stuart Reges, Laura McGarrity, Alison Crowe, Kimberly Ambrose, Nicole McNichols
Faculty Code Section 21-61 B: Brandy Lawence (PSO)
Faculty Code Section 21-61 C: LeAnne Jones Wiles
Guests: Pen Moon, Tina Miller, Sean Gehrke, Karin Roberts, Puneet Birk

Absent: **Faculty Code Section 21-61 A:** Sunita Iyer, Casey Self (chair)
Faculty Code Section 21-61 B: Lauren Ray (ALUW), Joey Rotondo (GPSS)

Exhibits

Exhibit 1 – to.fctl.2.21.24

edited to condense the report with a focus only on the FCTL item discussion.

to.fctl.2.21.24.fcfa

Wed Feb 21 13:10:30 2024

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Wednesday 2/21/24

Dear FCTL colleagues,

At this point the FCFA had about 12 minutes left for the agenda item brought over from FCTL. I spoke first, then Sunita, to summarize our report to all of you from late January. We hit the same four points as the bullets of that memo, plus a new emphasis, that students need to be made aware of how their comments are actually to be used, along with the strong suggestion from Sean G. that the numbers are worth using for promotion/tenure decisions only when based on evaluations in at least five courses. Even though our target is a Class C text, a "recommendation" rather than legislation, the FCFA dug in with several questions. (I'm guessing that this owes to FCFA's general sensitivity to certain specific p/t cases where a candidate has been justifiably unhappy with the ambiguity or imprecision of certain customs or their incompatibility with the legally binding Code.) From some units, only numbers go up to the Provost's office; from others, comments as well. This startled some of the FCFA members and supported our subcommittee recommendation that there be some university-wide standard. (I noted in response to a query that we're not saying you have to have five evaluations to be considered for p/t, only that according to Sean the numbers become reliable and hence relevant only when that's the case.)

The committee very much agreed with our suggestion that

students be told how their comments would be used, as these rules differ very widely across units and campuses. (And candidates would find these student-directed instructions useful, too, when responding to comments, the way a judge's instructions to a jury are part of the materials that go upward to an appeal.) Somebody noted that when "external referees" are summoned to comment on a candidate's record, those external refs are given access to the full text of the student evaluations, including the comments fields. (I didn't know that.) Likewise, everybody all the way up the decision ladder with access to the evaluations needs access also to the course characteristics, the student instructions, and the candidate's responses to the comments and to recommendations at all levels of review, from the unit right up through the Provost.

A FCFA member confusingly also named Fred reminded us that "holistic review" already looks at the sort of documentation a candidate rebuttal might incorporate, including syllabi, types of assignments, and role in the curriculum. "Reviewers appreciate that stuff." It was also suggested that student comments that are responded to somehow be flagged and paired with any responses in the materials that go up the chain of levels of review.

There was no particular resonance within FCFA for our suggestion that both numbers and comments be aligned with the Big 5 Criteria of Excellence, and likewise no attention to our fourth bullet, on explaining to the students the difference between tracks in criteria of evaluation.

(Sean, the FCFA chair praised the draft she'd seen of the statistical study you presented at the last FCTL. She was very happy that it found so little evidence of bias.)

The FCFA meeting ended abruptly at two minutes overtime before the chair could offer any summary of the interaction between our two committees' central concerns. But I left with one very clear implication that I had not adequately appreciated before. Inasmuch as the student evaluations are part of any subsequent formal university procedure (yesterday's concern was promotion/tenure, but it might as well have been merit raises), they must be treated as relevant documentary evidence; but that means that their authors (the students) must be apprised in advance of the uses to which these comments might be put and the standards for interpreting their meaning and their relevance in that context. This aligns with Sean's purposes in calibrating the reliability of the numbers, but also the procedural role of the comments (which I continue to believe should be guaranteed available at all levels of review, along with the instructor's responses/rebuttals). _The uses the institution makes of these ratings, and of these comments, must be transparent to the student, to the instructor, and to all subsequent reviewers._ Students need to be informed and reminded, over and over, that their ratings are relevant to merit raises and to promotion in rank and that comments (especially the negative ones), while public to higher levels of review, are subject to rebuttal by the instructor. Any student comment, anonymized of course, may end up transcribed and forwarded all the way up to the provostial level; instructor responses are likewise be part of the public record at all those levels. I hope it is our Class C view that the rules about this should be uniform across the institution, subject to justified exceptions. Whatever they are, the students need to know them before they fill out the evaluations, and the instructors need to know them before responding, and reviewers before recommending.

Anyway, that's my view of how the Subcommittee 1C concerns were received by the FCFA yesterday.

Fred B.