Committee on Teaching
Minutes
January 15, 2014
470 Zilber Hall (3:30 to 5:00 pm)

Members Present: Alan Burkard (Chair), Jay Caulfield, Evelyn Donate-Bartfield, Paul Gasser, Kristin Haglund, Gary Meyer, John (Jack) Moyer, James Pokrywczynski, Terence Ow, Kristina Ropella

Members Absent: Jacob Carpenter, Katie Hazlett, Sarah McClanahan, Maura Moyle

The meeting began at 3:30 with a reflection by Terence Ow.

The minutes of the December 04 meeting were approved unanimously.

Way-Klingler Teaching Enhancement Award. Dr. Meyer outlined his suggested method for selecting the winning proposal from among the four highest ranked proposals, which involved discussion of each of the top four proposals followed by each committee member voting on his/her top choice. There was a suggestion to simply select, without discussion, the proposal which received the highest number of votes in the original voting. It was agreed by all that some amount of discussion of the proposals was necessary to distinguish the proposals, and to help the committee to shape the nature of the award in future years.

Discussion of the proposals: Before the discussion of each proposal, committee members were given two minutes to look over their notes, etc. Then the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal were listed and discussed. After discussion of the individual proposals, there was a brief discussion of the importance of innovation as a review criterion. It was agreed that the projects should involve at least some degree of innovation. A final blind ballot vote was taken after this discussion, which resulted in clear choice for the award.

There was discussion of whether the committee-identified weaknesses would be communicated to the winning faculty. Dr. Meyer indicated that he would ask them to provide learning outcomes and an assessment plan.

There was discussion about whether last year’s winners had scheduled a presentation of the results of their award. Dr. Meyer will look into this. It was suggested that this year’s winning faculty should be encouraged to attend that presentation, and that the Committee members should also attend to support the goals of the award.

The winning team will be notified by early February.

There was a discussion about the overall quality of proposals, and an agreement to discuss the processes by which the award is administered, with an eye specifically to using it as a tool to improve pedagogy. There is a need to discuss our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the award. It was also mentioned that it seemed that many of the faculty are unfamiliar with how to write education-focused proposals, and that a grant-writing workshop focused on preparing teaching-focused grants, may be helpful to
proposers. It was mentioned that MANRESA used to run such a workshop. It was also pointed out that there has been a considerable amount of variability in the quality of the proposals over the past five years. Further discussion of the Teaching Enhancement Award will be on the agenda for the next meeting, including identification of what the committee were not happy with, and how the administration of the award could be changed.

In other business, the Chair reported that he has contacted all Department Chairs to request information about departmental policies regarding peer evaluation of teaching. There has been a roughly 50% response rate. A Research Assistant will be contacting Chairs who have not responded. The RA will prepare a summary of the information received at the end of this process.

The Chair will also contact Deans to solicit information about College-level policies concerning peer evaluation of teaching.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Gasser