Committee on Teaching  
Draft Meeting Minutes (May 7, 2014)

In attendance: Drs. A. Burkard, J. Carpenter, J. Caulfield, S. Longstreet, G. Meyer, J. Moyer, T. Ow, K. Ropella, Ms. K. Hazlett, Mr. J.R. O’Rouke

Meeting began at 3:30 pm

1. A reflection was provided by J. Caulfield.

2. The draft minutes of April 9, 2014, were approved unanimously.

3. The committee was asked about feedback from faculty regarding a proposal by the Library Archivists to automatically archive the D2L content for courses offered over six years ago. The proposal includes making the archives available to future researchers upon approval by a university governing body. Committee members commented on the lack of response by their faculty and the desire for more time to collect feedback. Those committee members who received feedback listed concerns that included, ownership and protection of copyrights and intellectual property, misuse and/or misinterpretation of preliminary research results posted to D2L, misinterpretation and misuse of commentary and lecture notes taken out of context when researched in the future, lack of faculty awareness about future archiving when D2L sites were created, lack of faculty time to review content of old D2L sites, and uncertainty about who would have access to the archives and who would give permission for use.

The following issues were raised by faculty in the School of Dentistry:

- Dental school teaching materials may contain sensitive information such as patient histories, medical dental histories, and identifiable photos. While patients have given permission to use their materials for teaching, they have likely not given permission for permanent storage in a library archive. Such storage could violate ethical and possibly, legal, standards.

- Material in power points may contain copyrighted materials that can be justifiably used in a classroom setting under fair use guidelines. Permanent archival of this material changes the nature of the material’s use and could possibly violate copyright law. Verbal attributions made in class would not accompany archival material, compounding this problem.

- A professional is responsible for the materials they make public, and how they are used. There is a professional obligation not to teach specialized techniques to individuals who are not competent to use them. Likewise, dated and obsolete material can be potentially harmful in health care settings. Although the archives would only be made
accessible via the supervision of the archivists, ethical codes generally do not allow delegation of these professional duties to others.

- Finally, faculty have an interest in their own materials and should give permission to have their material stored. Storing their work without consent may have the unintended consequence of discouraging posting of materials to D2L.

The Committee concluded that more time was needed for faculty discussion. The advantages and disadvantages as well as the benefits versus the risks of such an archive need to be addressed. At this point in time, the Committee suggested that at a minimum, the course syllabi might be archived given that these syllabi are already collected across campus.

4. Terence Ow was appointed the new Chair of the COT for 2014-2015.

5. The committee discussed revisions to the Teaching Enhancement Award Application. The revised criteria were outlined in appendices A and C of meeting materials. The goal for the revisions is to increase the quality of submitted proposals and more clearly outline expectations for proposal submission and evaluation. The committee was satisfied with the draft revisions. There was some discussion about use of budget for salary recovery and whether or not Deans should be expected to offer course buy-out as part of the proposal. No actions were taken.

6. Peer Evaluation discussion revolved around how to move the work of the Committee forward. One suggestion was to break into subcommittees and divide the work between reviewing the data collected this year and developing guidelines.

It was noted that preliminary data analysis confirmed the notion that there is little consistency across campus with regard to both the use us peer review and the methods employed.

Dr. Longstreet suggested four possible steps to move this work forward:

1) Seek mandate from Senate
   a. What could be done
   b. For who, by who, and when?

2) Prepare colleagues
   a. Sessions for Deans and Chairs
   b. Sessions for department-identified reviewers
   c. Department faculty meetings
3) Outline distribution of responsibilities
   a. Who reviews?
   b. Who mentors?
   c. Involvement of the Center for Teaching and Learning and other support facilities?

4) Maintain and monitor the process
   a. Establishing guidelines, schedules
   b. Systematizing formative and summative peer evaluation
   c. Process for revisiting

Committee members thought these steps were reasonable. Dr. Longstreet further identified 10 possible recommendations for Peer Evaluation of Teaching:

1) Peer evaluation of teaching should center on the improvement of course instruction as part of one’s life-long professional development, increasing the likelihood of academic promotion and greater student success.

2) Peer evaluation can be formative (for improvement) and can be summative (for personnel decisions), but both should be part of an established, transparent, scheduled process.

3) Peer evaluation should be intentional; that is, thought must be given to considering the reviewers’ experience with observing classrooms, providing constructive, formative feedback, to disciplinary differences, as well as to differing concepts around student learning and strategies for engaging classrooms.

4) The stress on peer evaluation should be to the benefit of the instructor and that it is informed by his or her teaching context. Materials related to formative peer evaluation are the property of the instructor.

5) Evidence for peer evaluation of teaching should include multiple types of evidence and multiple entry points for conversations over a period of time; peer review is only one of many different ways to evaluate teaching.

6) Peer evaluation should examine a range of teaching artifacts in addition to classroom visitation.

7) Peer review should involve a common, faculty-approved, worksheet; this worksheet should inform both the instructor and the reviewers. The assessment
of teaching artifacts is different from the assessment of classroom instruction.

8) Meetings before and after a classroom visit should occur in a timely manner; the instructor can outline his or her teaching goals and engage the reviewers’ observations.

9) Peer evaluation as formative assessment should not be conducted at the same time as for personnel decisions. The processes involved should be consistent, however.

10) A process for remedial action must be made available; improvement is considered a process and can take some time; however goals for improvement and benchmarks of success should be established by the instructor. These benchmarks can be in dialog with the department and/or college.

Drs. Longstreet and Burkard agreed to meet over the summer to prepare some materials for COT review in the fall. Dr. Ow offered his assistance as well.