Committee on Teaching

Minutes

April 13, 2011

Members present: Subhash Bhatnagar, David Buckholdt, Jay Caulfield, Evelyn Donate-Bartfield, Dennis Garret (Chair), Heather Hathaway, Michael Havice, Sarah Hodges, Gary Meyer, Kira-Lynn Reeves, Susan Schneider, Heidi Schweizer, Leona VandeVusse

Call to order: The chair called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Reflection: Leona Vande Vusse gave the reflection.

Minutes: The minutes of the March 2, 2011 meeting were approved.

Announcements:

1. US Professor of the Year: The candidate’s materials have been completed as of this day. It was noted that he is an exceptional candidate.
2. Teaching Excellent Awards: Gary Meyer thanked the committee for their work on ranking the candidates. He noted that all candidates received votes, and that most committee members had highly ranked three (3) out of the four (4) top candidates.

Continuing Business:

MOCES Results—MUSG Presentation. Invited guests from student government were present to discuss what they would like to know about a class prior to their enrolling in it. In the order stated, the following information was requested:

- Syllabi online
- Teacher description of class
- Teaching philosophy
- Major projects for the course
- How the class is structured (lecture, group work, etc.)
- Eventually like to see students’ perceptions of the class (information could come from MOCES results)

The point was made that information should be easily accessible to students (could be made available on department websites).

Instructor evaluations. Alex Riley, Associate Director of Institutional Research, provided information in the form of a handout on practices followed by other Jesuit universities
regarding student access to course evaluation information. For those universities sharing information, it was presented in either in numerical or in graph format. In no cases were narrative comments shared with students. In one instance, faculty could decide whether or not they wished the information to be shared. It was noted that in those cases where course evaluations were low, enrollments tended to show a decline. Questions from two other universities were shared with the committee. The questions shared were similar to those already asked in MOCES. A recommendation was made to start incrementally by sharing information for core courses. Although the recommendation was discussed, no decision was made regarding it.

In line with the MUSG request, the committee’s first focus will be to place syllabi online. The committee asked Institutional Research to contact the same Jesuit universities to see if/how they post syllabi. **It was recommended and agreed upon that each committee member formally inform the committee what is collected and what is posted in their college specific to course information. The information should be sent to Gary Meyer by May 4.** The point was emphasized that the syllabus is considered a contract. Thus, we need to be sure that we inform students that the syllabi are sample syllabi and could be modified for future courses.

It was stated that eventually MUSG will want to have course evaluation information. Concern was expressed regarding the fairness of sharing course evaluation information. The point was made that in the past, course evaluation comments were shared with department chairs without faculty knowing it; as a result, several faculty were dissatisfied with their lack of involvement in the decision. If we now share course evaluation information with students, it is likely that faculty would want to be a part of this decision.

**New Business:**

The committee discussed the annual report. However, some members had not yet read the report. **Thus, it was requested that any revisions/additions be sent to the chair by Friday, April 15.** It was further recommended that the committee’s charge be added to the report.

Members requested information about the implementation process for Senate approved recommendations that the COT had made last year.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Caulfield

Recorder