Committee membership:
Subhash Bhatnagar, Health Sciences
Patricia Bradford, Law (co-chair, fall semester)
David Buckholdt, Center for Teaching and Learning (non-voting)
Jay Caulfield, Professional Studies
Evelyn Donate-Bartfield, Dentistry
Dennis Garrett, Business Administration (sabbatical during fall, co-chair during spring)
Felissa Lee, Business Administration (sabbatical replacement, fall semester)
Kristin Haglund, Nursing (fall semester)
Heather Hathaway, Arts and Sciences
Michael Havice, Communication
Sarah Hodges, MUSG student representative
Gary Meyer, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Teaching (co-chair; non-voting)
Kira-Lynn Reeves, graduate student representative (GSO)
Susan Schneider, Engineering
Heidi Schweizer, Education
Leona VandeVusse, Nursing (spring semester)

Committee Work and Accomplishments

The Committee on Teaching spent the majority of its 2010-11 time (1) discussing and updating procedures associated with teaching awards, (2) soliciting and reviewing application materials for these same awards, and (3) considering MUSG’s request for student access to student evaluations of faculty/class performance and experiences.

Way Klingler Teaching Enhancement Award

The Way Klingler Teaching Enhancement Award is designed to foster the development of effective and sustainable changes and innovations in teaching approaches within specific courses or clusters of courses. This award is given to a team of two or more faculty to develop, implement and evaluate a specific teaching project. First initiated in 2005, the award was again given in 2010 after a three-year hiatus. This year (2011), six applications were received from faculty teams across campus and were subsequently reviewed by committee members. The winning application “Transforming Undergraduate Education in Biology” was submitted by Drs. Thomas Eddinger, Michelle Mynlieff and Martin St. Maurice from the Biology Department in the Klingler College of Arts & Sciences.

U.S. Professor of the Year Award

The U.S. Professor of the Year Award was discussed at length with the following changes ensuing. First, the internal criteria were modified to include faculty who had been previously recognized for teaching excellence. In the past, previous candidates had to be winners of the MU Teaching Excellence Award and committee members thought this was too restrictive. They felt it was important that nominees were recognized in some fashion but no longer limited recognition to a single award. Second, committee members felt it was important to open up the nominating process to students as well as others on campus. Previous nominations came exclusively from deans. And finally, committee
members thought it important to promote the award more broadly and as such a quarter-page “ad” was placed in the Tribune.

The combination of these changes resulted in 16 nominations that included 10 individual faculty members and six eventual applications. The six applications were reviewed and discussed by committee members who ultimately selected Dr. John Pustejovsky to represent Marquette University in the state and national competition. Vice Provost Meyer worked closely with Dr. Pustejovsky during the application process.

Teaching Excellence Awards

Procedures surrounding the Teaching Excellence Awards were also discussed at length. One significant change resulting from those discussions modified the voting procedure to an online process. In sum, 186 nominations were received for 70 unique faculty members. The committee was pleased that these totals far exceeded the numbers obtained in previous years. The committee invited the 10 faculty members receiving the most votes to compile a dossier. The 10 dossiers were subsequently reviewed and independently ranked by all committee members. Rankings were submitted to Vice Provost Meyer for compilation. Four teaching excellence winners were announced at the annual Pere Marquette dinner.

MUSG Request for Student Access to Student Evaluations of Faculty/Class Performance

In the spring semester the committee revisited the request from 2009-2010 from MUSG to allow students to have access to results from student evaluations of faculty/class performance and experiences as collected currently through the MOCES instrument. At their request, Dennis Garrett met with two student representatives from MUSG in February 2011 who indicated that they would like to have a response from the University Teaching Committee regarding this request. Gary Meyer and Dennis Garrett met in March with three student representatives from MUSG to gain a better understanding of exactly what type of information the students would like to see.

At the request of the committee, Alix Riley from Institutional Research contacted a number of other universities to determine how they have handled this issue of providing student evaluative information of faculty and courses to students. She reported her findings to the committee at their April meeting. She sent queries to 28 AJCU schools and received responses from six schools. Of these six, 3 shared some results with their students, while the other 3 did not share any results with students. At this meeting in April, three MUSG representatives also attended and responded to questions from committee members regarding their request. Based on this discussion, the committee agreed first to explore the possibility of posting syllabi for courses online so that students could review these syllabi as they planned which courses to enroll in. After that, the committee next planned to also consider possibly adding some items to the MOCES instrument that would then be made available to students.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Garrett, Acting Chair, University Teaching Committee
April 20, 2011