Committee on Teaching Report

Committee Membership
Alan Burkard, College of Education (on Sabbatical in Spring 2015)
Jake Carpenter, Law School
Evelyn Donate-Bartfield, School of Dentistry
Cynthia Ellwood, College of Education (Spring 2015)
Kristin Haglund, College of Nursing
Kathleen Hazlett, Graduate Student Organization
John LaDisa, College of Engineering
Shaun Longstreet, Center for Teaching and Learning (non-voting), Ex-officio
Mary Meyer, Office of the Vice Provost (non-voting), Ex-officio
John (Jack) Moyer, Klingler College of Arts & Sciences
Maura Moyle, College of Health Sciences
Terence Ow (chair), College of Business Administration
James Pokrywczynski, Diederich College of Communication
Timothy McAuliff, Marquette University Student Government, (join us on Nov. 11 meeting)

Committee Meetings were held on the following dates
Sep. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 3, Jan. 14, Feb. 4, Mar. 4, Apr. 8 and May 6 (upcoming)

Senate Charges
There was no senate charge for the committee this year. However, we were asked to consider and review several issues. Please refer to the committee work for tasks completed during this academic year.

Committee Work
The two annual tasks that this committee is in charge of is to determine:
- Way Klinger Enhancement Award
- Teaching Excellence Award

The response for the Way Klinger Teaching Enhancement Award was significantly lower this year. We discussed on how to increase the number of applications and decided to promote the event and advertise the Enhancement Award in late spring to remind the faculty to plan and work on their proposals in summer. Other suggestions are to include abstracts of recent award winners and title in the RFP to better convey the range of projects.

We have many nominations for the Teaching Excellence Award and the committee did not have any difficulty deciding the awards based on the nominations of many outstanding candidates.
US Professor of the Year Award and Baylor University Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching.

We discussed that if one of our recent Teaching Excellence Awardees is recognized with a similar award within their field of study, it will then be an appropriate time to nominate the faculty for the two awards mentioned. The committee feels that the award is highly selective and winning multiple awards both inside and outside Marquette will be the standards in order for the nomination to be made. The committee also agree to perhaps create a sub-committee to share the workload in the nomination process.

Multiple Exams on Exam Week
MUSG brought up the issue of students taking more than three examinations in one day during final week. The committee discussed the following issues:
- 80 students have more than 3 exams in one day.
- Problem may be part of a result of fewer Friday classes
- Committee suggested that the algorithm for scheduling exam be modified so that students will be warned when they sign up for classes of the potential of three or more exams on the same day.
- Algorithm should also address the reasons why 28% of the exams falls on Tuesday.
- More data is needed e.g. are these 80 students from the same school of department?

Graduation Requirement and Bulletin
Due to a change in reduction of credits for graduations by some colleges, the committee shared their concerns and opinions whether or not students who are already in the course plan of their curriculum be allowed to choose which bulletin year they would like to use as the basis of their graduation requirements. This has to be very clearly explained to the students affected to avoid confusion.

Mid-semester Instructor Evaluation
We discussed the idea of a mid-semester evaluation instrument that might be made available to instructors on D2L. Terence collected information across department and colleges and for the most part found very few have a formal process with a standard instrument. Very few department and colleges have this process standardized or formalized while some only conduct this evaluation for new faculty. However, individual faculty have conducted a mid-semester evaluation on an ad-hoc basis. The Center for Teaching and Learning can provide resources for faculty who might want to conduct this evaluation.

Timely Feedback to Students
Data from the most recent report, 2014 Graduating Senior Survey Executive Summary indicated that only 23% of student respondents reported that instructors provided “timely feedback.” We discussed possible explanations ranging from heavy workload, better online tools and poor time management of student expectations for what constitutes as timely feedback. There is no consensus what is considered proper timely feedback. We did not discuss further any course of action. We will revisit this issue this year of what the appropriate timeline for feedback on exams, assignment, papers etc.
Course Evaluations
MUSG suggested that course evaluation be extended into the exam week and also one week earlier. Making the evaluation too early may also not provide inadequate evidence of teaching since there will still be several weeks before the semester ends. The committee have been asked in the past to look into extending the evaluation into finals week before and we felt there is no pressing need at this time to change the period for which course evaluations are conducted.

Development of peer review of teaching
The committee decided at the beginning of the academic year that we will focus on this issue. We are now in the process of completing the following document:

Cultivating Development of Teaching across the Career Span: The Non-evaluative Faculty Peer Feedback Process

This document will provide a set of guidelines or procedures that department and colleges can adopt that take into account the best practices for review and that would provide for the effective reviews and feedback. The desired outcome would be that this process will be widely accepted by the various colleges, deans and chair. The goal is to create a culture of great teachers with the help of peers and their keen observations without the pressure of being evaluated for tenure and merit. We believe that innovations in teaching carries some risks and this process of peer observation and feedback will help cultivate any new approaches in course delivery.

Committee recommendations for unfinished and future business
Moving forward, we will be using this document that the committee created to generate support from the rest of the faculty. We will be recommending that the next committee, using this documentation to work on the details:

- Work together with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide the resources
- Include templates for observations, pre and post consulting between the observed faculty and the observer.
- Promote a culture of learning teaching from each other by observation.
- Possibly include this as part of a line-item in the faculty activity database (FAD).
Executive Summary

The Committee of Teaching, is tasked every year with the role of determining the all-University Teaching Enhancement and Teaching Excellent Award. In addition, we examined and discussed issues brought up by MUSG specifically the following:
- the extension of the course evaluation period,
- students taking more than 3 exams in a day during exam week

In addition, the committee discussed and shared concerns on several issues brought up
- Graduation Requirement and Bulletin
- Mid-Semester Evaluation
- Timely Feedback to Students

In AY2014-2015, the previous COT completed its survey across campus of peer-evaluations of teaching. The committee is proud to take the next step and completed the following document that supports the development of a mutually informed, transparent, non-evaluative peer observation and formative feedback process for all Marquette faculty.

*Cultivating Development of Teaching across the Career Span: The Non-evaluative Faculty Peer Feedback Process*

The document lays out the principles and parameters of this peer observation process. The rationale behind creating this process “in support of a career-long, collegial, approach to our collective growth as teachers” as stated in the document:
- A common passion for excellent teaching is central to Marquette University’s identity and mission.
- Peers provide a unique lens on the complex and important practice of teaching.
- Non-evaluative peer feedback offers a safe and fertile context for the deep examination of one’s own practice.
- Developing as an educator is richly rewarding.

Moving forward, we will be recommending that the next committee, using this documentation to work on the details:
- Work together with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide resources that include documents and templates for observations, pre and post consulting between the observed faculty and the observer.
- Promote a culture of learning and teaching from each other by observation
- Possibly include this as part of a line-item in the faculty activity database (FAD)