Committee on Teaching
Minutes for May 3, 2017
Zilber Hall 474, 3:30 to 5:18 pm

Members Present: Daniel Meissner (Chair), Terence Ow, Jacob Carpenter, Evelyn Donate-Bartfield, Shaun Longstreet, Jane Sloan Peters, Susan Schneider, Laurieann Klockow, Cynthia Ellwood, Jim Pokrywczynski

Members Excused: Kristin Haglund

Invited Participants: Alix Riley, Crystal Lendved from OIRA

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 3:32 p.m.

Reflection
Evelyn Donate-Bartfield

I. Minutes
April 4, 2017 minutes approved without correction

II. Announcements and Information
• Meissner will give a review of the committee work at the academic senate meeting. The review will focus on the time and effort taken putting together the nine different teaching evaluation programs. Ellwood suggests Meissner sends along report to the committee.
• Su thanks committee for their work on the teaching awards.

III. Business
A. Election ballots for chair 2017-2018 were distributed, with candidates Cynthia Elwood and Laurieann Klockow listed. Cynthia Ellwood was elected chair to a one-year position.

B. IDEA follow-up: Longstreet set up a conference call with representatives from CampusLabs and IDEA to again provide a brief overview of the system and to answer specific questions from the committee.

IDEA was started at Kansas State University in the mid-1970s. Research-based set of learning objectives based on Bloom, C&G, as well as research-based set of teaching methods. Specific points about the questionnaire included: 1) asking students to rate own progress on learning objectives, and asking instructors to identify learning outcomes they intended. 2) the instrument is available on IDEA website (Longstreet confirms we’ve taken a look at this). 3) students also indicate their motivation to be in the course; this adjusted score factors in student responses to this question. 4) offers lateral application of course reviews to courses, disciples at other institutions. 5) intended to be a formative tool; every item on the instrument has a corresponding resource for teachers to improve teaching practices.
Schneider: Is it possible to produce longitudinal reports for individual faculty members? Data is available, but no longitudinal report, “on the drawing board” for this calendar year.

Ow: Can the column for institution be extended to two columns – one for the college or department, another for university? A segment comparison is built into the report, and the institution determines the segments. However, this is not a converted average score, just the raw responses/averages per question. So, use this feature with caution. Ow mentions that sometimes you have to use the raw score, because this is “how P&T looks at it.”

Ow: Is there a short form version of the survey? Yes, in addition to the comprehensive instrument, there are two shorter versions: 1) focuses on learning, targeted for lab course, practicum, instrument, 19 items. 2) focuses on teaching, 13 items.

Ellwood: So the 2016 diagnostic feedback is the principal form you use? Yes. Some documents refer to positive feelings about the field – that has fallen away? Doesn’t think that question is being asked in that form anymore; it is tricky to interpret.

Ellwood: Question of difficulty of the course and its relationship to teaching scores – IDEA seems to have a complex method in which you correlate the disciplinary difficulty (amount of reading and work, intellectual challenge), and whatever is left is what is difficult independent of the instructor. Ref. report, “Understanding the IDEA systems’ Extraneous Variables” (2003). Amount of readings, etc. are not reflected in ratings themselves, esp. in adjusted scores. This is a research-based question that asks how rigor impacts dating. IDEA Paper #58 (2016 or 2017) explains relationship between student perception of rigor and rating. But does adjustment take into account rigor? No. Adjusted score formula does not include rigor, major factors are student motivation and class size.

Schneider: Are reports available to general public? Yes.

Schneider: Where are IDEA papers available? Will send email after meeting with link. See website: “Research,” “IDEA papers series,” also sorted by subject matter.

What’s the relationship between IDEA and Campus Labs? Who do we work with on what? Who provides what?

Riley: Who solves problems, CampusLabs or IDEA? CampusLabs, unless some issue occurs with diagnostics, which would be handled by IDEA.

Schneider: Can CampusLabs create variable reports? A report can be created by CampusLabs but they would involve IDEA in the process to see how that could work with their materials. CampusLabs provides all technology and reports. Training and implementation comes through CL; Diagnostics through IDEA.
Ellwood: Would CL be able to answer technical questions about the tool? Yes. MU would be assigned a specified consultant to assist with implementation and conduct training. CL can provide training for those who want specific questions answered, and can also draw in representatives from IDEA to answer technical questions.

Schneider: How recent is the research on teaching tools on website? CampusLabs provides research grants to outside researchers to keep up with issues related to teaching assessment and formative references. Reports and data on the website is continually updated.

Meissner: How difficult is it to change from our current assessment tool, and to train faculty in the various components of IDEA? CampusLabs has helped hundreds of other institutions with this transition. Change management is part of our job. We have learned how to implement the program with as little disruption or problems as possible. IDEA’s mission is to improve student learning. The technical aspect of assessment is only one part. We see IDEA as a tool to help faculty and department better identify and achieve learning outcomes.

C. The call was ended, and Senior Vice-Provost Gary Meyer joined the conversation to answer questions about how Promotion and Tenure committee would view a change in the global questions asked under MOCES to those under IDEA. Dr. Meyer indicated that the decision to adopt a teaching assessment tool had nothing to do with P&T. If the CoT determines that a new program can better assess teaching and assist instructors in improving their teaching, then the committee should make that recommendation to the Academic Senate, where the proposed system would be fully vetted. P&T would determine how to incorporate the data provided by the new system in their deliberations and decisions.

D. Meissner queried the committee whether or not they wanted to present a motion to the Academic Senate to consider replacing MOCES with IDEA. Meissner argued that IDEA was clearly an improvement over MOCES and all other programs considered during the past year, but Ellwood and Donate-Bartfield voiced reservations about technical aspects of the program. The committee decided to table the matter until next fall.

IV. New Business

Members Jim Pokrywcynski and Jane Sloan Peters will not be returning next year; Jerrin Cherian will serve as graduate representative and Rose Rains will serve as undergraduate representative.

V. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:18.

Recorder

Jane Sloan Peters and Dan Meissner
Dear All,

Thank you all for your comments about proposing IDEA to the Senate.

After my "last words" email, Cynthia was the first to write back in support of presenting the prospect of adopting IDEA to the senate at today's meeting. As it turned out, 7 of the 10 voting members voiced their support for such a motion (Evie wanted to pursue discussions in the fall, Jake was a hesitant "yes," and Susan did not respond).

Based on the majority approval of the committee to move forward, Cheryl Moranto, John Su, Cynthia and I were able to put together via email a statement for the Senate that essentially engages both the CoT and the Senate to examine IDEA and CampusLabs more closely next year. The senate will charge CoT with the task of querying faculty and students about the switch, while Cynthia (and Shaun?) will set up a repeat of the IDEA/CampusLab conference call for the senate. I will work with Cynthia over the summer to hammer out a brief to explain (compare/contrast?) the benefits of IDEA over MOCES for the senate and focus groups. John will pursue funding options and query OIRA and other concerned parties on campus who will be affected by, or involved in, a switch in programs.

So, the issue is far from settled, but it has moved to the next level of discussion.

Best,

Dan

Daniel J. Meissner
Associate Professor of Chinese History
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