

Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Council Minutes

Oct. 22, 2007, 8:00-8:50 am, 107 LoM

Attending: Hendrich, Luecke, Braun, Wong, Thompson, Abelson

Guests: Brooke, Saunders (CELT)

Discussion of student course evaluations: Brooke described the work of the 2001 Task force on Student Evaluations of Teaching; J. Franklin (U AZ) developed a course eval. Form that was proposed for adoption but ISU faculty objected. Continuous feedback model was proposed; 2003 FS conference on scholarship looked at student course evaluation again in a working group. CELT Board is interested, as is UPC (Undergraduate Programs Council (Assoc. Deans for undergraduate programs and student affairs administrators)). UPC indicated that the colleges do various things; some colleges and depts. have norms (e.g., CoD does midterm and final student course evaluations standardized across the college, Vet Med is designing an online evaluation process). CELT Board intends to put on its website good practices in student course evaluations, and derive a set of principles of effective practice, using subgroups of the Board. Sets of questions focused on student learning, and that give useful feedback to instructors will also be made available. Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering has developed a very useful but possibly cumbersome rubric for student feedback on courses; other effective practices will be made available. CELT intends to complete their work this semester. CELT's proposed guidelines for use of student evaluations will involve how to provide accurate and useful results, what is needed technologically (e.g., what scales might be best to be used, best time of semester (second to last class meeting or not during "dead week")), analysis and reporting best practices. Raul Arreola published 15 misconceptions about student course evaluations that may be helpful as well. When student course evaluations have been studied, varied and contradictory data emerges. Pick-a-prof and "rate my professor" are external sites that students can use. Pairing summative with formative student course feedback seems to be more useful. KSU has an online and in-class system; online has a much smaller participation rate (60%) than in-class. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, Univ. Indiana—ISU freshmen and seniors (~2500 of each class) surveyed each spring) data is being used as a performance indicator to the Board of Regents from ISU. Students want to be engaged. CELT is working with a cohort of 15 large class LAS instructors, meeting every week throughout the year, sharing practices; people need a lot of support. The logistics of engaging students more in large classes are very challenging. Technology in classrooms is a major development that may facilitate engagement.

2005-2010 ISU Strategic Plan measures of progress include items from NSSE. Questions were raised as to how faculty are involved in using these data, and how these data might help to improve student learning.

The discussion will continue Nov 26. Sport and Culture minor was introduced; participating faculty will be invited to next meeting, and proposal will be voted on.

Adjourned at 8:59 am.