

University Council on Teaching
Meeting of Tuesday December 6th, 2016
CTE Innovation Lab
1:30 PM – 2:45 PM
Meeting Minutes

Commenced: 1:45 PM

Potential Release Time for Curriculum Development and the UCT's role in the eyes of the Provost's Office

- Idea came out of introducing more courses for doctoral students because there is a deficit.
- Teachers do not have enough time to thoughtfully introduce new courses.
- Teachers would love to go to the CTE to do this but they have no time.
- How can we give teachers time to put together a thoughtful course and create a better repertoire of courses?
- Can we have a teaching sabbatical for creating courses at the CTE?
- There is a certain amount of resources available for a one course release.
- Course release is for complex problems and enduring questions courses.
- Other ways universities have reduced the constraints on new course exploration and experimentation:
 - Course release
 - Stipend
 - A course release to agree to sit in on another colleague's courses for an entire semester
 - An official policy that student evaluations for a particular course during a semester will not be figured into the official record.
- In the same way the faculty uses grades to communicate to students what is valuable; the university can use time and money to communicate to faculty what is valuable.
- The main concern is not so much money but time.
- There is a concrete and obvious return on time spent on research.
- On the other hand, often with new course development, there is not a concrete production from that new course.
- The UCT would support the release time for curriculum and course development.
- We welcome David Quigley, Provost.
- Within Arts and Sciences there have been sabbaticals granted and supported for considerable work focused on pedagogy.
- It may be a good idea to bring in some deans to have a conversation about what is working, what are some of the challenges and, how Faculty Fellowships have been used in this capacity.
- There are centers at universities which have Faculty Fellowship programs at the center, where, in exchange for spending a certain number of hours at the CTE, there is some type of course release.
- In the law school, the same people who are developing new courses are probably the best teachers and writers.
 - The most productive teachers are going to redo or develop new courses anyway

- As part of the deans' increments, there should be some type of increment recognition for those teachers who develop new courses.
- It is not about the money; it is about the recognition.
- The teachers you want to attract for this type of sabbatical program would find the time anyway.
- The sabbatical has to be a project discussed through the department chairs and deans.
 - This should be pursued.
- Does the CTE have the resources to allow for this type of program?
 - Yes, the CTE should be prepared for these types of tasks.
- Could a dean allocate a portion of adjunct lines for buyouts for pedagogical purposes?
- This type of project for creation of new courses should be packaged in a public way through the CTE where a Dean could signal powerfully to internal and external constituencies that teaching matters.
 - In this way, the deliverable comes quicker with greater local impact than most research projects.
- This would also encourage the university developing a vocabulary about what good teaching really is.
- Teaching awards for individual schools would help define what good teaching is.
- We should have future conversations with the deans about this.
- Most deans are probably not thinking along the lines of providing, for example, a one course release to allow for the innovation in new courses for their majors.
 - That would be a really good incentive.
- These types of decisions for improving the pedagogy in the various departments are made between the department chairs and deans.
- If there was really something significant that required something over and beyond the expected, we could go to the deans and they would hopefully provide support.
- What would help is doing some research on how grants like TAM and TAME and other programs geared towards improving pedagogy have performed over the last 3 or 5 years and whether some resource reallocation or allocation can be done from that pool of resources.
- Last year, the CTE decided to use half of the allocation of TAM and TAME programs to support their cohort program.
- Not a lot of people currently apply for the TAM and TAME grants.
- Can we reallocate these resources into a larger pool for something more innovative?
- The deans and department chairs would be more persuaded to support releasing faculty members' time to come up with these things.
- If we do something like this on a pilot level for a few cycles, we can start seeing the impact on campus
 - Then it is an easier argument to make.
- This pilot program is something we can aim for the next academic year.
- In some regard, the CTE has made some functions of the UCT obsolete
- Suggestion by the Provost of Roles of the CTE :
 - Engaging with the Deans on the teaching awards level. Member (s) should attend the Council of Deans Meeting at some point to share ideas and see what concerns the deans have.

- The UCT could be helpful in encouraging some more nuanced ways in which promotion committees think about teaching excellence, how we think of reading evaluations and, how we support peer visits to classrooms.
- Having a faculty group thinking about opportunities in using technology in the support of innovation.
- Imagining the possibilities in interdisciplinary programs which do not belong to any particular schools.
- Being a reminder of grade compression and inflation.
- Doing a review of the certificate program for graduate students who are training to be teachers/providing teaching support for graduate students.
- Exploring the possibilities in connecting mission with ministry in defining the calling of the teacher. We should reach out to Burt Howell. A relationship with the UCT would be welcomed.
- The writing retreat in Maine is a great potential outlet and/or role model for course creation.
 - A dedicated week (or a few days) could make a huge difference.
 - Alternatively (or in addition to), have a shorter retreat few to engage in teaching development using the model that Intersections used for student formation.
- Encourage earlier mentoring where nothing is at stake and a relationship is created between an inexperienced teacher and an experienced teacher would really go a long way.
- We should reach out to experienced teachers who are particularly good at that who could suggest what is working and how best practices can be shared.
- UCT Priorities suggestion by Provost's office:
 - Conversations with invited deans in February/March to talk about two or three topics such as awards and sabbatical fellowship releases, bringing a perspective of what other universities are doing.
- For next academic year, begin to address concerns of grade inflation. A starting point is to talk about the last UCT report on grade inflation.
- It is very important to see what our peers are doing in relation to the awards and sabbatical releases to bring to the Council of Deans meeting.
- Billy will send John a list of universities we compare ourselves to.
- CTE's graduate students can help us do that research.
- **Adjourned: 2:53 PM.**

Attendees: Jeff Cohen, Robert Bloom, Kristin Heyer, Kathy Bailey, Danielle Taghian, John Rakestraw, Billy Soo, David Quigley, Courtney Vigo