

Minutes of the University Council on Teaching
Monday, October 15, 2018
12:00-1:15, CTE Seminar Room

Attendees: Kathleen Bailey, Shaylonda Barton, Jessica Black, Billy Soo, Jeff Cohen, Clare Dunsford, Silvia Sellers-Garcia, Kristin Heyer, Michael Martin Gaurie Pandey, John Rakestraw, Patricia Tabloski

The agenda of the October 15 meeting was the state of academic integrity, the UCT web site, nominees for the Committee on Course Evaluations.

The responsibility for academic integrity issues for MCAS is held by Associate Deans Clare Dunsford (formerly) and Michael Martin (currently). In her presentation, Clare informed the committee that in MCAS about 40-42 cases of cheating are handled a year by the Academic Integrity Committee, which meets three times a year, and keeps a database of the cases it hears.

The cases come from almost all MCAS departments and are spread fairly evenly across disciplines. Plagiarism on papers is the most common offense, followed by copying from a classmate on in-class exams. Most cases involve underclassmen and taper off by senior year.

The most common reasons students give for academic dishonesty are not being prepared for the rigors of college, and not understanding the rules of citation in a paper or rules governing an exam.

As Associate Dean, Clare gave presentations on academic integrity to various groups such as new faculty, Learning Resources for Student Athletes, and MCAS departments on request.

An academic integrity tutorial for all schools across the university was instituted in 2009. First year students are required to take it or they cannot register for second semester courses. However, there has been no reduction in the number of cases of cheating in MCAS.

All faculty have access to the tutorial through Canvas. Some departments provide their own quizzes based on material from the discipline, such as Political Science: <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/political-science/undergraduate/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-quiz.html>

When brought before the Committee on Academic Integrity, students tend to dissociate themselves from the act of cheating (this is not who I am), and try to disconnect themselves from the act of cheating.

Faculty are often unaware of the various ways students find to cheat, especially with new technology. Some faculty are reluctant to report cheating because they think the process of bringing a student before the Committee on Academic Integrity involves a lot of time and effort. In fact, after the initial report, the process is taken over by the associate deans, who, after due

process, will offer recommendations to the faculty member. Some instructors prefer to take care of cases of academic dishonesty themselves, but this is unfair to the student, who doesn't receive due process, to other students who do get reported and to the class as a whole. In cases where students are found to have violated the academic integrity code, a warning is issued, which is not reported to graduate schools and potential employers. However, after three violations, the student is expelled.

Future Initiatives

- Expand the online tutorial to graduate students and international students
- Tie academic integrity to student formation
- Enlist students to educate their peers—honor code similar to Georgetown, University of San Diego
- Require additional, more in-depth seminars for violators
- More resources are needed to handle academic integrity
- Faculty must be aware of the need to do their best to create cheat proof exams

UCT Web Site Ideas

1. Mission statement/purpose/description from the Faculty Handbook needs to be expanded
2. Meeting schedule-- dates of upcoming meetings will be posted so that UCT members can be contacted by anyone who would like to raise an issue for consideration, ask a question.
3. Meeting minutes will be posted as usual.
4. List of UCT members with links to their department profiles
5. Link to TAM, TAME, Teaching Retreat applications, Excellence in Teaching Day registration.
6. An area for news or updates, comments and suggestions, input on current projects.
7. Ideas for future topics for the UCT to take up.
8. A general comment section where people could leave their thoughts and ideas and others could see them and react, chat room style, like the Canvas feature that students use in a course.

Gaurie said all of these ideas could be accommodated except the last, which couldn't function as a chat space but could be done on Google Drive.

Committee on Course Evaluations

Names for committee members were submitted to the Provost's Office for consideration.

Next Meeting – Monday, November 26 in the CTE Seminar Room