

## **Minutes of the University Council on Teaching (UCT)**

Friday, May 5, 2006, 11:00-12:00, Bourneuf House.

Present were: Chris Hepburn (chair), Eva Garrouette, Larry Ludlow, Sue Barrett, Mary Jo Hughes, Jim Gips (secretary of the day), Fred Yen, Bill Petrie, Rita Long, Danny Willis.

1. The minutes from the meeting of April 7, 2006 were approved.
2. The proposal for the University Testing Center was discussed briefly and approved by a unanimous vote.
3. The Council voted to approve a \$5,000 TAM grant from Michael Malec and Deborah Levenson-Estrada for “Social Justice in Central America: A Course Development Proposal.”
4. Most of the meeting was devoted to the ongoing discussion of the new online course evaluation system.

The student response rate was 30% as of the meeting.

The student-computer interface and faculty-computer interface will be reviewed.

Are all the course evaluations required to be online for the fall? Will there still be a paper option?

Problem issues discussed included (1) privacy and (2) risk of creating an atmosphere that could discourage the retention of racial minority faculty. (Addendum: following the meeting Eva Garrouette circulated a research report to the Committee on this topic entitled “Race and Gender Bias in Student Evaluations of Teaching” prepared at Seattle University).

The following statement was approved by a 7-2 vote of the Council: “We support the development of a proposal for the release of results of Part A to the B.C. community.”

(Editorial aside: the secretary of the day has posted his complete Spring 2006 course evaluation results—numerical and written, the good, the bad, and the ugly—on his website at <http://www.cs.bc.edu/~gips>)

It was pointed out that there are three potential purposes to the course evaluation system: 1) to develop better teachers, 2) administrative evaluation of faculty, 3) to help students decide what courses and instructors to take.