

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
Senate Educational Policies Committee
January 28, 2013
Meeting Minutes

Present: Amy Aggelou, Bonnie Falcione, Tom Jabro, Kathleen Kelly, Juan Manfredi, Michael Neft, Tom Platt, Jay Rajgopal, Alberta Sbragia,
Cynthia Golden (Guest), Laurie Kirsch (Guest), Robin Leaf (Guest), Nancy Reilly (Guest)

Excused: Debbie Miller, Laurel Roberts, Cynthia Tananis

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. The minutes from the November meeting were approved.

New Business:
None brought to committee.

Old Business:
The discussion continued with respect to the topic of students being able to access information from teaching evaluations. Guests were present to discuss (1) the 'technical' aspects of generating reports [Nancy Reilly] and (2) the experience of those who have a practice of making the OMET results public to the students [Laurie Kirsch (Katz) and Robin Leaf (GSPH)].

The committee was informed that the program is called 'Class Climate' and that it is a stand-alone program. Currently, there are 62 versions of the OMET evaluations as each School/ Unit has their own template and only 1 question is common among the various versions. The Schools that already make their results public have done so by having parts of the report sent to them for posting. Both the Katz School and GSPH only post the quantitative scores, they keep the results for a 2 year period, and neither has an opt-out option as all faculty are required to have their courses evaluated and the results made available to students.

The committee deliberated on several issues but did not arrive at a unanimous decision yet to move forward with the recommendation to implement this across campus. There were concerns about the OMET survey being able to capture constructs the students were interested in (*e.g. the work load; difficulty compared to other courses; # of exams; how students are evaluated*) while at the same time being a valid measure of teaching effectiveness. There were also concerns about the recent transition to online OMET surveys and how it will affect response rate over time. This was most urgent for junior faculty who will be going up for Promotion & Tenure.

The committee will continue this discussion.

Vice Provost update:

The University Office of the Provost held its first **Assessment Conference** on January 18th. The keynote address was given by Dr. Heather Kelly (Univ of Delaware) and there were 3 break-out sessions that focused on issues related to assessing: general education requirements, the University's professional schools, and a liberal-arts program, in this case, history. The conference wrapped up with an overview of the resources at Pitt.

The proceedings from the meeting will be published at some future date. Plans are to have this become an annual event.

The University recently subscribed to 'The Versatile PhD'—a resource for humanities, social science and more recently STEM graduates, to be able to network and share information about non-faculty careers in and out of academia.

Peter Kracht has been named Director of the **University of Pittsburgh Press**. The University Press has enjoyed the recent publicity and book sales after the announcement that a poet published by the University of Pittsburgh Press had been selected as the Inaugural Poet (Richard Blanco).

A reception was held to recognize the Fulbright Scholars at the University.

ACIE Liaison update:

The ACIE "Innovations in Education" awards are due January 31st, and will be reviewed in March. The RFP emphasizes and encourages proposals that focus on large classrooms.

Dr. Manfredi has replaced Dr. Blair on the committee.

Upcoming CIDDE Workshops will be announced soon.

Miscellaneous:

The Senate Plenary session is planned for Thursday, April 18th on the topic of "***Oncoming Cyber Revolution in Higher Education***". The SEPC is one of several Senate committees that have been asked to assist with sponsoring this program. The group was encouraged to provide input to Cynthia Golden as the planning committee is just getting started on the details for the session.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Next meeting is slated to be held on February 18th at 3:00 in CL 826.