

Minutes of the University Council on Teaching
Thursday, May 20, 2010
Waul House

Present: Sue Barrett, Pat DeLeeuw, Colleen Griffith, Don Hafner, Chris Hepburn (Chair), Jackie Lerner, Paula Mathieu, Virginia Reinburg, Pete Wilson

Guest: Provost, Bert Garza

Provost Garza thanked the committee for their work in the past year.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved.

Advisor Evaluations

The UCT will return next semester to the proposal from students that BC develop an evaluation process for academic advisors.

Report on Interdisciplinary Teaching

The committee endorsed the report and thanked Chris for his efforts in writing it. There are still many challenges involved in making interdisciplinary teaching a regular part of the curriculum: many more courses need to be offered, the Core Committee needs to be encouraged to approve them for Core credit, and deans and chairs need to overcome logistical difficulties. Some courses under development currently seem ideal for the core, an interdisciplinary Economics/Political Science course, for example, and the linked courses sponsored by the Center for Student Formation.

The report will be sent to the Provost's Office.

Peer Teaching

The committee continued to discuss the peer teaching draft report. The report covers the need for peer review of teaching, what that should include, pre- and post-tenure considerations and resources that are or should be available for teaching assistance.

At present, many departments do very thorough jobs of reviewing and mentoring faculty. The very small departments sometimes have difficulty because of lack of faculty and might benefit from a buddy system whereby their faculty are paired with others from larger departments.

Departments are currently expected to review adjunct faculty, meaning full-time non-tenure track faculty, but this does not always happen. Part-time long term adjuncts also could benefit from the review process.

In the context of peer review of teaching, the committee discussed possible new faculty development initiatives:

a half-day orientation for new adjunct faculty. This would be an introduction to teaching at BC—specific policies, characteristics of the student body, resources for students and faculty, etc. Possibly a panel of experienced adjunct faculty could cover topics they think most valuable for their new colleagues. The adjunct faculty would be paid for their participation.

an archive of faculty development resources on campus. This could consist, at least in part, of videos and could be put together on a web site.

More publicity for existing faculty development resources.

The committee will continue this discussion, as well as work on the peer teaching review, in the fall.