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Online Education Committee
December 2, 2016
Minutes

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Recap of Promotion & Tenure Meeting

- They are in beginning phases of discussing online education. Will support us in whatever way we suggest. Don't want to overlap with us.
- Discussed recommendation that Quality Matters (QM) course certification be considered in Promotion & Tenure (P&T). University P&T Committee members should know what goes into QM course certification. Also discussed importance of having experienced online educators as part of P&T committees when online instructors are up for review. No one on their committee knew much about QM, and some resisted the idea saying it seemed a little "over the top."
  - In general, there is resistance to QM because it tends to focus on design rather than facilitation or content of the course.
  - Resistance could also be attributed to the time it takes, in addition to other faculty duties.
  - Finding external reviewers is difficult when online instructors are up for review.
    - Setting up a system, or support for it, could be very beneficial to instructors.
- Discussed the upcoming faculty survey from the Online Education Committee (OEC).
- Course design is considered part of "teaching" and no more value is attached to it than teaching an on-campus course, according to the committee.
- As far as the committee knows, online teaching is considered equal to on-campus teaching in terms of P&T (this is the policy, but attitudes toward online education may come into play, regardless of the policy).
  - When the online course is first being developed, there is more focus on course design.
  - There is a work imbalance between Ecampus and on-campus courses.
    - Materials need to be considered differently.
    - Prepping is different, as well.
- They don't know that the recommendations from 2007 ever got "officially" added to the P&T guidelines; they could not find them anywhere in the guidelines.
  - Who decided to add them in and who was responsible for adding them in?
- They found the language with #5 of the policy to be problematic.
  - What was the issue?
    - No details on what the exact problem was.
    - How do you define novel course development?
- The issue of course evaluations not addressing the online environment was discussed.
  - Apparently, the P&T Committee only looks at two questions from the SET: (1) Rate overall course quality and (2) Rate instructor overall (other questions are for instructor feedback only, but could be worked into the dossier in the narrative provided by the instructor).
  - ESET is, on average, a point lower for online than on campus (in Chemistry courses).
    - How can we make sure that instructors are not penalized for taking the chance to teach a hybrid of an Ecampus course?
  - They only look at the first two questions.
  - Could the OEC create a document that recommends some questions instructors can add to the SET's?
  - There are ways to look at ESETS for online and hybrid courses that don't compare to on-site courses.
    - They are different and should be evaluated differently.
    - May want to change some of the language to make it more specific.
    - Observation of the online courses; facilitation vs. course design.
      - It's more complicated than other people realize.
- Theo Dreher recommended we contact Ginny Lesser from Statistics to help with the survey.
- They supported the idea of creating a template for online peer reviews, and encouraged us to make sure the template goes out to departments, is easy to find and use and actually gets put to use.

Survey
- Goal of the survey

- o Reach out to Faculty and determine what the primary issues are with online education and determine what the committee should focus on.
- First thing to do
  - o Determine the broad dimensions of the survey:
    - Content delivery
    - Handling interactions
    - Feedback
      - How does this information help the committee?
        - o Determine what support faculty may need.
        - o Determine what are the more popular and effective means of delivery.
  - o Cast a broad net to get an idea of how faculty who don't teach online view the Ecampus process and its support services.
- Try to avoid open-ended questions
  - Give a list of options and leave a comment field.
    - o Identify issues that could prevent faculty from teaching online courses.
  - o Things that concern faculty in regard to Ecampus courses, or things they like about Ecampus courses.
    - Please describe three things that concern you about online education in your department or program, or about online education in general, and explain why they are a concern.
    - Slider bar to rate 15-30 aspects of Ecampus; text box – Is there anything you'd like to share? Any concerns you have and why they explain?
    - Add a definition of online/hybrid at the beginning of the survey to avoid any confusion on the faculty's part.
- Rewrite the opening paragraph of the survey to be more clear on the purpose of the survey and better explain why they are asking for feedback.
- Can we determine which departments do or do not use online or hybrid courses?
  - Questions:
    - o Trying to measure topics we should focus on or explore.
      - A scale can be used for each topic to determine what people think is most important:
        - o Intellectual Property Ownership
        - o QM Certification
          - Too specific
          - A lot of people won't know what it means
        - o Course Development Support
        - o Course Facilitation Training
          - There is a difference between developing a course and facilitating a course.
          - Are people even aware of this support?
            - Advertise it better
        - o Organization Support
        - o Additional Incentives/Support
        - o Academic Integrity
        - o External Accreditation
        - o Promotion & Tenure
        - o Academic Rigor
        - o Isolation
          - Faculty who prefer the face-to-face interaction with students and colleagues.
            - But what can we do to help faculty who would feel isolated, if it is a major problem?
              - o Emotional Support?
              - o Online teaching communities?
        - o Formal review of courses (PT)
    - Have teachers taken any training yet?
    - Why are we asking for gender?
      - Gender was brought up as an issue.
      - Is it inappropriate though?
        - Executive Committee suggested it.
        - Why is it needed? How does gender affect?
          - It could shut down some people.
          - *Action: Moved to remove gender question from survey, seconded, and passed.*

- Can any questions be cut from the survey draft to make it more concise?

Can we get this survey out before January?
- Determine how many questions we want and then base questions on that.
  - There are worries about quality if we block ourselves in with a number.
- Should we have another in-person meeting?
  - Have a small subcommittee meet to go over and revise draft to be presented to group for feedback.
    - Subcommittee will meet Wednesday, December 7.