Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning (SCUTL)
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 9, 2022
2:30 – 4:00 pm
Zoom

Attendees: Kathleen Burke (Beedie), Susan Clements-Vivian (FCAT) – arrived at 2:35pm, Diana Cukierman (FAS) – arrived at 3:30pm, Nanda Dimitrov (CEE) – left at 3:50pm, Elizabeth Elle (Chair), Sheri Fabian (ISTLD), Scott Harrison (FENV), Sarah Johnson (FS), Kristiina Kumpulainen (EDUC), Mark Lechner (FHS), Donna McGee-Thompson (LIB), Mike Stanger (IT), John Stockie (FS), Amanda Watson (FASS)

Regrets: Erin Biddlecombe (VPSI), Tim Loblaw (CEE), I-Chant Chiang (CEE)

Absent: Judit Nagy (Undergraduate)

Recorder: Erin Babingao

1. Approval of agenda & previous minutes (January 2022)
There was a request to add AV teaching needs to the last item of the agenda in AOB. The previous minutes were approved.

2. Chairs Report and updates
SFU is currently celebrating its first Multilingual Week from February 7 to 11, 2022. The events are a collaboration between Student Services, Student Learning Commons, World Languages and Literature, Fraser International College, and initiated by the Centre for Educational Excellence (CEE), specifically Fiona Shaw, Associate Director of English as an Additional Language Initiatives. Events include panels, activities, and tables in the AQ to explore how multilingualism enriches our community, within our classrooms and beyond.

The updated Terms of Reference was sent to Senate and will be brought to the March 7, 2022 meeting.

Elizabeth spoke with Jeff Derksen, Dean and Associate Provost of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, about a potential representative from his unit. He expressed the current SCUTL members already represent graduate students well so there is no need for a specific rep from his unit.

Elizabeth will be part of a committee led by Tom Nault, University Registrar and Executive Director of Student Enrollment, with Arlette Stewart, Academic Integrity Coordinator and others, to review the academic integrity policy at the end of February. SCULT will be part of the consultation process.

CEE won the Team Staff Achievement Award this year due to their tireless dedication to helping instructors through multiple pivots throughout the pandemic. The awards event will be March 1st, 2022.
3. Excellence in teaching award
The Award for Excellence in Teaching policy A32.01 was sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Elizabeth shared a consultation timeline with the group with the new award system expected to be in place by next academic year. Elizabeth will promote the consultation with staff and faculty in the next Learning & Teaching newsletter.

SCUTL reviewed the proposed changes to date and its role in the consultation. The definition was developed by the Excellence in Teaching Awards Subcommittee of SCUTL. The following changes were reviewed: adding an additional set of awards for people at different stages of their career, the intention to increase monetary awards and make them available as grants. Because of previously discussed concerns with “awards culture” it was noted that there will be a new way of including award winners in professional development and networking events. Some awards will not be launched immediately as there is a need for further consultation first (e.g. with TAs and sessional).

The committee composition was discussed. The proposed committee composition was listed in policy item 4.3. Elizabeth noted the subcommittee did not reach consensus on the committee composition at the January 2022 meeting, but did note that some members were wondering if it was already a bit too large. It can be a burden for smaller Faculties to find a rep, and we sometimes have difficulty finding a student rep. In addition, the committee is charged with a significant task and some wondered if it is already difficult to ensure all voices are heard in what is a fairly unwieldy and time-consuming process. After some discussion, SCUTL was generally not supportive of increasing total committee size, nor was there a clear problem that would be fixed by reducing it.

Some in SCUTL suggested that past winners would be a positive addition to the committee. Elizabeth noted this normally happens in practice but will add “ideally, at least some committee members will be former award winners” to the document.

Nominations were also discussed. Some suggestions were to make the committee chair responsible for soliciting nominations to ensure good representation; this was added to the procedures. Representation can be considered to include different departments and Faculties, but also that there is representation by all genders and races. Looking into which Faculties the nominations came from over the last handful of years would also be valuable to assist with understanding whether the perception of a problem has evidence behind it. Enlisting the EDI council and others to promote the awards would be helpful.

It was discussed that when some students submit nominations they need more guidance and mentorship on how to strengthen their nomination. It was recognized that the letter of support does not need to be from a Dean or Chair but could include designates such as Associate Deans.

The conversation turned back to a discussion had at the previous meeting about the random 50 students who are surveyed for teaching evaluations and how more information is needed to get better feedback for all the different types of classes. It is known that instructors generally receive richer feedback from seminars as opposed to large classes. Elizabeth will talk to Wayne Sun, Intermediate Analyst, at IRP to determine if they pull the information at random or stratified random, with the latter preferred.
4. **Roundtable: T&L items for future meetings?**
The committee had several suggestions for future T&L topics.

1) **Pandemic teaching.** How can we re-imagine what we have experienced as opportunities for future teaching?
   a. Are we normalizing temporary concessions like streaming and recording? Not all classes can be recorded due to subject matter.
   b. Can we use what we’ve learned to innovate, such as *some* courses being hyflex? Some students want to have the option of flexible online classes for the foreseeable future. However, hyflex courses do not work for every discipline and instructor, and not all students have the ability to access them. Nanda shared a PDF on the Landscape of Merging Modalities. We would need to understand if instructors want to do this.
   c. How can we ensure quality education in the online and blended environment? This is also true for in-person classes (e.g. canvas shells). Do we have the right tools and how do we create a standard?

2) **How can we support students of today given their lack of preparation due to pandemic learning?** (for this one, we should invite relevant people from Student Services as a first step)
   a. Are there actionable items people can do in class to help students develop essential university skills?
   b. Should we offer summer bootcamps or other ways of catching up?

3) **How can SFU support faculty to be adaptable and resilient?** Better supported faculty allow them to better support students. There are opportunities to re-imagine and re-frame lessons learned through the pandemic.

4) **How can we improve peer assessment of teaching?** Brainstorming around instilling this culture at SFU to create more formative resources and to provide more support to departments to develop their own criteria to evaluate teaching.

5. **AOB – Technology in our classrooms**
There have been several issues raised by instructors around the challenges of teaching without the proper tech tools in their classrooms, such as the ability to record or having the right cables available. IT Services is working on setting standards to all classrooms. It was noted that some basics like making an effort to check systems in all classrooms during the term break would be much appreciated. Faculty were encouraged to submit tickets so ITS has a good idea of the scope of the problem.

Meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.

**ACTION ITEMS**

| Revise and add to the current teaching awards procedures. | E. Elle |
| Connect with Wayne Sun at IRP. |

**Next meeting:**
Wednesday, March 9, 2022
2:30pm-4pm, Zoom