

General Senate Meeting Minutes  
16 October 2012

**I. Informational Items**

- a. The Senate Executive Committee is proposing a change to Appendix H of the RTP Policy (Periodic Evaluation Faculty Activity Report).

Brevity emphasized; this is not a substantive change. (See attachment)

Comment: This change may not be fair for candidates, who may simply add material to previous WPAF for interim evaluation.

Chair: This is an attempt to reduce the burden for candidates in the off year.

Comments: Two pre-tenure faculty noted that these requirements are an improvement.

Chair: This is a first step towards reducing WPAF size and the burden of proving one's work with excessive documentation.

- b. Voter registration

Sign-up sheet is going around for registration table volunteers.

- c. Please fill out short survey regarding experience with the Porthole.

**II. Discussion Items**

- d. Leadership Day: How did it go for you?

Comment: A student reported that mandatory nature of event was demotivating. There was an over-emphasis on demerit punishment for not attending.

Comment: Students didn't see relationship between topic and leadership.

Comment: Students are not mature/experienced enough to apply the lessons of the day.

Comment: Students in one group tackled the exercises with great maturity.

Comment: Selecting topic/speaker should be a more collaborative process to get more traction among faculty.

Concern expressed that this event's topic should be revisited. A bridge can be built between personal development and leadership.

Comment: Students didn't appreciate the talk but they did enjoy talking to each other about the topic.

Comment: Students believed talk was too long.

Comment: Some students expressed resentment that they couldn't do the schoolwork they needed to do on Leadership Development Day.

Comment: Who is target audience? Does it need to be all classes?

Suggestion: Pick another date not so close to WPAF due date.

Comment: Materials came two days before so regardless of other obligations, there wasn't much time to prepare.

Comment: Does it need to be all day? License track classes that meet once a week were cancelled and students resented it.

Comment: This semester's adjusted calendar added days so there were no days of instruction lost due to this Leadership event, compared to previous semesters.

Comment: I wish they would get over "making students" do this. Give students the option to come if they believe the topic is interesting.

Chair: Did anyone feel obligated to participate?

Some said that they felt pressured to participate. One faculty member commented that he chose to participate in order to provide meaningful input.

Leadership Development in the past was done during Captain's Hour and on weekends.

Comment: I have not met a student yet who thought event was worthwhile.

#### e. SUMMAs

Cynthia Trevisan has compiled a summary of the shortcomings of SUMMAs and a proposal to vote on whether to replace the SUMMAs with another instrument (see attachment). If majority of faculty vote to replace SUMMAs, the Executive Committee will form a committee to perform market research on evaluation options and make a recommendation for a new instrument.

Chair noted that a non-automated instrument would require a large amount of administrative work.

Comment: Online surveys tend to attract polarized opinions and garner low response rates overall.

Comment: Statewide Senate has studied this issue extensively – new committee should mine their work.

Comment: All faculty want to continue to improve their teaching. I am in favor of each department creating its own survey, using a Scantron form.

Comment: there are other institutions like us. What are they doing? Market research should look at these institutions, taking into account administrative.

Caution that we not throw away potential to measure ourselves against external benchmarks.

What is purpose of student evaluations? Student satisfaction survey or instrument to improve teaching? Committee could help clarify the aim of these efforts.

Senate Secretary will set up an election regarding replacement of SUMMAs.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michele Van Hoeck

APPENDIX H

PERIODIC EVALUATION FACULTY ACTIVITY REPORT (FORM)

Using the following outline, please list information regarding your activities during the period since your last performance review (do not include information documented in the WPAF during any prior review). Please keep your responses as brief as possible, bearing in mind that this is an interim evaluation, not a formal performance review.

1. Effectiveness in Teaching
  - a. Teaching Load: (courses, sections, enrollments)
  - b. Student Evaluations: (summary of evaluations since your last review)
  - c. Pedagogical Growth and Development Efforts:
  - d. Other:
2. Service to Students and the Academy
  - a. Service to Students
  - b. Service to the Department
  - c. Service to the Academy
  - d. Service to the Profession
3. Scholarly, Creative & Professional Achievement
  - a. Scholarly Activities
  - b. Creative Activities
  - c. Professional Activities
  - d. Other

At the bottom of your report, include the following language with your signature:

I attest that the above is accurate and true, to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMA Discussion Update**  
**October 16, 2012**  
**Student Evaluation of Teaching**  
**Cynthia Trevisan, Point Person**

Current standing: The new Collective Bargaining Agreement establishes that we **MUST** have students evaluate all sections of all courses taught (with some leeway given to the President).

Student evaluations of teaching are also used for RTP purposes as an important measure to evaluate teaching effectiveness. Mike Kazek pointed out in the comments sent to the Academic Senate Executive Committee last semester (available on Moodle) that SUMMAs are not useful as feedback for improving teaching, both due to timing and to the nature of the questions. Mike pointed out a need for two different instruments, one to be used for RTP purposes and one for the instructor to use to obtain student feedback. The latter instrument (to improve teaching) should not be mandatory but is in the instructor's best interest to use - it is always beneficial to show teaching effectiveness by several means and not rely on any one instrument.

SUMMAs are not a fair instrument to compare faculty for RTP purposes either - shortcomings include comparison of instructors who are teaching entirely different disciplines (e.g. mandatory GE courses vs. courses in a student's major) and disparate class sizes, among others. Questions are ill worded. The credibility and reliability of the SUMMAs are also doubtful for all the reasons that Mike addresses in his comments.

Donna expressed concern about having the new instrument impact the instructors who are currently getting good evaluations from students using SUMMAs. Because the student evaluations of teaching are inevitably associated with the RTP process of all faculty members, I suggest that, as our first step, we conduct a vote (using Moodle) on whether we choose to explore and possibly adopt a new instrument of evaluation or continue using SUMMAs.

Given that it is mandatory that we use student evaluations of teaching for RTP purposes, if the outcome of the vote indicates that we are to change our current instrument of evaluation, what should we use instead of SUMMAs? We need to explore the market. One possibility is to explore IDEA, the instrument used by CSU Stanislaus introduced by Dean Aly during the All Faculty Meeting in Napa. Other schools (e. g. U. C. Davis) have instruments that are created and used exclusively for each Department.

Some points to think about when analyzing which instrument to adopt:

- What do other schools use (both within and beyond the CSU system) including other maritime academies and how do they use them?
- How does the instrument compare the performance of instructors across different disciplines and within disciplines?
- How does it weigh in the number of students in each class and the type of class?

- How does it weigh class year and repeat students?
- Do we want a unified instrument for the entire school or do we want Department or discipline specific instruments?
- How easy is it to extract the information from the new instrument? Who will do it? What will the costs be?

Proposal:

1. Have the entire Faculty body vote on whether or not we want to adopt a new instrument for student evaluation of teaching. Setup election on Moodle.
2. If the results of the election favor adopting a new instrument, send out an invitation to all faculty members to form a committee (three to five people) to do a market research on options for student evaluations of teaching that can be used in higher education and to establish the evaluation criteria amenable to faculty and the administration. Individual faculty members can make recommendations to committee members for review (I volunteer to chair the committee, other faculty are welcome to chair it as well).
3. Have the Academic Senate Executive Committee select “Student Evaluations of Teaching” committee members.
4. Establish a timeline by which the Student Evaluations of Teaching Committee makes a recommendation of a new instrument to adopt. Present a list of finalists at a General Senate meeting. Review pros and cons.
5. Vote of all faculty on a recommendation for a new instrument to adopt.
6. Consider establishing an evaluation period of the newly adopted instrument, as well as a timeline to periodically re-assess if the new instrument continues to meet our needs.