

Minutes

March 19, 2020, 12:30-2:00pm
Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Ellen Ansell, Roxanna Bendixen, Ally Bove, Brenda Cassidy, Cindy Danford, Paula Davis, Goeran Fiedler, Gosia Fort, Susan Jones, Claude Mauk, Tom McWhorter, Katie Pope, Chris Schunn, Helenmary Sheridan, Zuzana Swigonova

Regrets: Natasha Tokowicz

1. The meeting was called to order at 12:32 pm by Ally Bove.
2. Approval of prior minutes – The February 2020 meeting minutes were approved (motion: C. Danford, 2nd: C. Mauk, all in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.)
3. Faculty Assembly Update – March 2020 meeting
 - a. Changes to tenure/promotion process approved by Faculty Assembly:
 - i. Schools can petition to extend their tenure clocks to a maximum of 10 years.
 - ii. A university-wide promotion/tenure committee will be created. This will take the place of the Provost's level of review.
 - b. COVID-19 updates (which are now out-of-date, given that this meeting was more than 2 weeks ago)
4. Special Presentation: Chris Schunn, Dept of Psychology, "Empirical Tests of an Alternative to OMETs"
 - a. Main points of presentation:
 - i. Student evaluations of teaching are not predictive of learning, cause grade inflation, and are biased according to the gender and ethnicity of the faculty member
 - ii. OMETs at Pitt tend to have low response rates, and items on the questionnaire are highly correlated to each other
 - iii. Students are unable to know the work that the faculty put into a course; they can only rate their own experience and attitudes regarding the course
 - iv. Committee designed a new survey with 14 questions and piloted it in large lecture-style undergraduate classes. Focused on lecture quality, inclusive teaching, content understanding, and safety/sense of belonging.
 - v. After adjusting for baseline characteristics, the new survey was predictive of course grades (which is not true for OMETs)
 - vi. Need to look at whether new questionnaire is less subject to bias based on faculty demographic characteristics
 - b. Post-presentation discussion points:
 - i. Future research will look at this in smaller class sizes; previously tested in larger lecture-style classes
 - ii. Not yet tested in graduate level courses, but most of the questions should probably translate well to graduate-level education

- iii. Would like to see the university set normals/goals for where we want people to be
- iv. Important to push for both formative and summative assessments. OMETs only provide summative assessments at the end of a semester, but for promotion/tenure we should care about whether faculty receive feedback and then implement appropriate changes to improve in lower-performing areas. The university should want to invest in people who commit to growth.
- v. Important to view a faculty member's TRAJECTORY, not just whether they can cross a minimum threshold
- vi. Bio department has a steering committee for new faculty, and they receive peer observation annually. But once promoted to mid-career levels, there are no more of these resources
- vii. Some other universities have rubrics for evaluating teaching, using many ways of assessing teaching quality. Pitt's Center for Teaching and Learning is working on this.
- viii. What should EIADAC do next?
 - 1. Gather information that may be worth taking to Faculty Assembly; be able to articulate the problems and what our recommendations would be
 - 2. Look at specific items on Chris Schunn's group's survey and understand evidence supporting whether it would be less biased than current OMETs
 - 3. Gather information re: what changes to OMETs have already been made (for example, some programs/schools no longer ask for a rating of overall teaching effectiveness)
 - 4. Gather information re: what other teaching evaluations are being done. Which schools/programs are doing peer assessments or observations from Center for Teaching and Learning, etc.

5. Ongoing Business

- a. Non-discrimination policy updates
 - i. Policy consideration is on hold until Pitt resumes normal operations.
- b. Work groups – brief reports on progress/goals for spring semester (note: we did not have time to address these during the meeting. The notes below reflect e-mail updates that were sent via the EIADAC group e-mail the day after the meeting.)
 - i. GRE use – Natasha, Brenda, Ellen, Sharon, Ally, Goeran, Cindy
 - 1. Learning more about holistic admissions processes and will come up with a plan for how to provide education to departments/schools who want it
 - ii. OMET bias issues – Roxanna, Sharon, Zuzana
 - 1. (see above re: special presentation)
 - iii. LGBTQIA issues on campus – Claude, Eric, Tom, Brenda
 - 1. Scheduling a meeting shortly
 - iv. Faculty gender gaps – Ally, Zuzana, Katie
 - 1. April EIADAC meeting will feature Amanda Brodish speaking on this
 - v. EIADAC membership – Paula, Sharon
 - 1. Continue to let Paula/Sharon/Ally/Zuzana know if you have a suggestion for someone to join EIADAC as a pro tempore member

6. Next meeting: April 16 at 12:30pm via Zoom