The Committee on Comprehensive Evaluation of Teaching (CCET) was appointed in February 2010 and has met on five occasions (2-11-10, 3-4-10, 3-25-10, 4-8-10, and 4-22-10). Committee members are: Jennifer Pate (co-chair), Kevin Wetmore (co-chair), Adam Fingerhut, Suzanne Larson, Brian Leung, Maria Quijada. Resource persons are: Christine Chavez, Jackie Dewar, Nick Mattos.

CCET’s charge: "This committee has been created to investigate, document, and assist with the development of tools for evaluating teaching beyond student evaluations. The committee will analyze different options, develop appropriate guidelines, and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding more comprehensive methods of evaluating teaching at LMU."

Committee work to date: CCET reviewed a variety of documents on evaluation of teaching, both from the research literature (see bibliography) and from the LMU community (LMU Faculty Handbook, Committee on Excellence in Teaching Statement on Effective Teaching, Email communication with the chair of Rank and Tenure Committee). Access to departmental statements on teaching has not yet been provided to the CCET. The committee conducted its own survey of approximately 120 students regarding characteristics of effective/ineffective instruction/instructors. The results were reflective of the dimensions of teaching outlined by Feldman (2007). The committee discussed the challenges inherent in any attempt to change current practice, including the necessity to gain familiarity with and confidence in new measures and the additional time and effort required by both the faculty member being evaluated and the evaluators to utilize methods other than the end-of-semester course evaluation forms.

With the aforementioned research in mind, the committee has adopted two guiding principles for its work:

1. A comprehensive evaluation of teaching will require multiple measures, because effective teaching involves multiple dimensions and any particular instrument has definite limitations. Attempting to evaluate teaching ability with a single measure does a disservice both to the university and the faculty member.

2. The evaluation of teaching should take place for two purposes: (a) to provide information used to make decisions on retention and merit (i.e., for FSRs) and for applications for advancement to tenure or in rank (summative evaluation) and (b) to provide information that could be used to improve teaching at every stage of a faculty member’s career (formative evaluation).

Future committee work: The committee’s plan for academic year 2010-11 is to develop a Toolkit for evaluating teaching that would give individual faculty and departments options for evaluating teaching for both formative and summative purposes. The Toolkit will provide information about deciding among the options and the benefits and limitations of each option. Some of the options will be appropriate for both formative and
summative purposes, others for only one or the other. The Toolkit will offer advice on improving practice in the use of each option. The committee foresees including following in the Toolkit (CET, 2009):

- Guidelines for interpreting course evaluation data
- Peer observation protocols and checklists
- Suggestions for mid-semester evaluation by students
- Suggestions for methods of assessing course-level student learning outcomes
- Syllabi review instruments
- Teaching and/or Course portfolio frameworks
- Videotaping protocols
- Ways to document professional development related to teaching, or other activities related to scholarly or reflective teaching

The committee sees this as an opportunity to reaffirm the university’s commitment to excellence in teaching and to furthering the processes whereby teaching is improved.

References


