Annual Report 2011-2012
The Committee on Excellence in Teaching

Committee Members: Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. (Chair), Wendy Binder, Monica Cabrera, Anna Harrison, Ani Shabazian, Beth Serlin, Sijun Wang, Damon Willick

The committee focused on activities that promote excellence in teaching, encourage professional development related to LMU’s teaching mission and support the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). This academic year also featured further revision of the Committee’s bylaws. The committee met at least once a month both semesters. The following items highlight and summarize the important work done by the Committee during the 2011-2012 academic year:

1. The Committee worked with new CTE Director Dorothea Herreiner in her inaugural year to facilitate her vision for the Center for Teaching Excellence. In the Fall, under her guidance, we amended and revised the CTE goals and mission statement to better reflect actual CTE practice.

2. In November 2011 the Committee worked with Director Herreiner to update the Walsh grant application materials. Amendments were made in the requirements for dissemination and full time clinical faculty are now eligible to apply.

3. Four applications for the R. Patricia Walsh Grant in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning were reviewed, and two were funded after much deliberation and discussion.

4. The CTE Travel Grants were made available to the faculty in the fall this year. Six applications were received and four were funded: Dewar (Mathematics), Jaroszewicz (Animation), Ramos (Education), and Heiland (Dance). The committee still struggles with the issue of pedagogical content versus discipline content and the issue of how to evaluate applications from the School of Education as their content is pedagogy.

5. At the beginning of Spring 2012 the committee revised its bylaws in order to reflect current practice and university administrative structures, bring them into alignment with other faculty senate committee bylaws, and to facilitate the work of the committee. The revisions passed unanimously and were approved by President Burcham on February 24, 2012. The committee has subsequently followed the new bylaws.
6. At the end of Spring 2012 the committee revised the requirements for Walsh Grant reporting and dissemination on the advice of Dr. Herreiner. We also began to plan for the integration of our new responsibilities for the Fritz Burns Teaching Award next year, as well as exploring the relationship between the CET and the CCET, which will now be a subcommittee of the CET.

Two challenges faced by the committee this year were the difficulty in finding times when the entire committee could meet together and the loss of a member for Spring with no replacement. More than once a scheduled meeting did not have a quorum or had to be rescheduled as competing demands on faculty time made organizing meetings challenging. This situation was further compounded by the fact that one committee member went on sabbatical in Spring 2012 and was never replaced despite the best efforts of the CET chair, the CFA dean and the COC chair.

We recognize that the Faculty Senate and Committee on Committees is working to restructure committee work, and that next year we will face new challenges as the Fritz B. Burns Teaching Award is folded into our responsibilities (which might also require yet another revision of our bylaws) and the Faculty Senate ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Evaluation of Teaching will be incorporated into the CET. Outgoing CET Chair (and CCET co-chair) Wetmore will work with incoming CET chair Wendy Binder to coordinate the integration of the CCET into the CET and ensure continuation of the fine work of both committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. Chair,
Committee on Excellence in Teaching
on behalf of CET members: Wendy Binder, Monica Cabrera, Anna Harrison, Ani Shabazian, Beth Serlin, Sijun Wang, Damon Willick and Kevin Wetmore