Committee Report  
2013-2014

Name of Committee: The Committee on Excellence in Teaching

Committee Members: Wendy Binder (Chair), Marta Baltodano, Laurel Franzen, Anna Harrison, Vanessa Newell (Fall 2013 Parental leave replacement for B. Serlin), Beth Serlin (Spring 2014), and Dorothea Herreiner (Ex Officio)

The committee met once a month for both semesters (for 9 meetings), and we meet in person, though some of our work is done through email, such as reviewing grants.

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). The following items highlight and summarize the important work done by the Committee during the 2013-2014 academic year:

1. The Committee worked with CTE Director Dorothea Herreiner to facilitate her vision for the Center for Teaching Excellence.

2. Early in Fall 2012, the committee was tasked with revising the University Honor Code. In 2012-2013, we met a number of times to discuss it and began a formal revision process. We made a good deal of progress, but still had a lot of work to do to completely revise and update the code. Given extent of the effort needed to complete this task, and the already full calendar for the CET, the Faculty Senate decided that an ad hoc committee would be needed to focus on this issue. In Fall 2013, we gave the committee our current white paper and other documents which reflected the concerns and suggestions we had discussed. The Honor Code committee is still working on the document (a testament to how big a job this is), and we expect to review their revised Honor Code once completed. We will add our comments and revisions, and forward it to the Faculty Senate to continue the process of review and rewriting that will continue.

3. CTE Travel Grants were made available to the faculty in the Fall through Spring of this academic year. Two applications were received and one was funded (to Fernando Estrada). 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.

4. The CTE now offers three teaching-related grants, 1) the R. Patricia Walsh Grants in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 2) scholarly teaching grants, and 3) teaching innovation grants (please refer to http://www.lmu.edu/libraries_research/cte/Resources/Grants___Funding/Teaching_Grants.htm for more details). No applications were submitted for the Walsh grant this year. We received three applications for scholarly teaching grants and two were funded (to James Bunker and Angela James). We received one application for a teaching innovations grant and it was not funded.

5. In Spring 2013 the committee revised its bylaws in order to reflect current practice and university administrative structures and bring them into alignment with other faculty senate committee bylaws. We have been unable to pass them due to a voting issue, and we hope to get this resolved early next year.

6. The Committee is also in charge of the Fritz Burns Distinguished Teaching Award (Burns Award). We were able to review and update the Burns Award guidelines and related documents on time for the new guidelines to come into affect for this year’s award (attached to this report). The delay in this process also caused a delay in the announcement, which resulted in our accepting applicants several weeks after the usual deadline. The Burns Award committee was made up of a subset of the CET (all tenured voting members agreed to serve, Dorothea serves on the committee, but per the Burns Committee bylaws, she isn’t present meetings in which folders are reviewed nor for voting on applicants). We weren’t assigned a 5th or 6th member. The committee met twice and selected a well-deserved Burns Award winner, Ralph Quinones.

There has been discussion of a new University committee that will take over the work of all three faculty awards (Burns and both Rains Awards). We aren’t certain about this, as the CET wasn’t consulted about the creation of the committee. If this is the case, we hope the new committee will consider the revised rules and input we have about the Burns award.

7. The committee spent a good deal of time discussing our concerns about the effect of adjuncts upon the quality of teaching at LMU. We produced three documents as a part of this discussion. The first was a resolution on adjunct faculty teaching that was
approved and disseminated by the Faculty Senate. The second was a statement on adjunct faculty and student learning conditions. The third was a proposal for a biannual distinguished teaching award for adjunct faculty (similar to the Burns award for tenured faculty). All three were formally approved by the CET, and sent to the Faculty Senate and also to the Part-time faculty task force, and the draft of the award was also sent to the Provost.

8. The CET drafted a letter of review of the CTE Director and submitted it to the Provost.

Our action plan for the next academic year: pass the updated CET Committee bylaws, review and select travel grant and teaching grant applications (all 3 levels), review and select Burns Award winner, continue to review CET and CTE related events and concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Binder, Chair
Committee on Excellence in Teaching
on behalf of CET members: Marta Baltodano, Laurel Franzen, Anna Harrison, Vanessa Newell, Beth Serlin, and Dorothea Herreiner (Ex Officio)