

Evaluation & Assessment Committee Minutes—May 3, 2019

Present: Jim Bisgard, Marty Blackson, Martin Kennedy, Greg Lyman, Cody Stoddard, Terry Wilson

Absent: None

Guests: None

Meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. Minutes of April 19, 2019 were approved as written.

Chair Updates

Jim did not present a summary of the summarized SEOI survey comments at the May 1 Faculty Senate meeting. Cody recommended holding off on getting a sense of the senate about the proposed SEOI policy language.

Jim received some comments from faculty regarding the administrator assessment surveys that went on April 29. Page numbers (# of #) should be included on future surveys to make it clear when someone is on the last page.

Election of 2019-20 EAC chair was postponed to the next meeting. The May 31 EAC meeting will be moved a week earlier to May 24, and will be the last meeting for the year.

SEOI Forms

Next year, EAC should put out reminders to Faculty Senate when the spreadsheets for selecting SEOI forms will be made available to departments. If the EAC chair communicates that information (either by email or in an announcement or report during a senate meeting), it will provide another avenue of information and an additional reminder.

SEOI Listening Sessions

One listening session will occur during the first hour of the May 17 EAC meeting. The second will be scheduled for 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. on May 21. At least one listening session will be available to west side faculty via WebEx.

Final Summary of Comments from SEOI Survey

(PC2: What tools other than SEOIS have you seen used to demonstrate effective teaching?)

The most common response was a variant of either “peer observation” or “peer evaluation”. Note that respondents were not asked to define these terms, so it is possible respondents intended the same thing. Evaluating faculty also mentioned self-reflection, unsolicited letters from students, awards, student accomplishments, or employer feedback.

(FAC 1: What tools other than SEOIS would you like to see used to demonstrate effective teaching?) Again, the most common response involved either “peer observation” or “peer evaluation”. Another repeated suggestions included evaluation of teaching materials (syllabi and/or assignments). One suggestion was to have students in sequenced courses complete

SEOs about the prior courses to get some information if the prior classes prepared them for the current class.

(PC10/FAC 8: **Pleas share any additional comments**) Many faculty mentioned low response rates and bias (including gender and racial) from students as current problems with SEOs. There were several links to recent research about biases in SEOs, as well as news articles about how some universities are moving away from using SEOs to make promotion or hiring decisions.

There were many requests to reduce the weight of SEOs in evaluations, and to increase the weight given to other aspects of teaching evaluation. Similarly, there were many requests to return to the paper SEOs.

Several faculty commented that the use of SEOs in making promotion or hiring decisions decreased their motivation to experiment with new and/or innovative teaching methods.

There were also comments that expressed concern about how student comments are used, particularly when students are unhappy about aspects of the class over which the faculty member has no control. For example, how are student comments about course content used? Some faculty ignore these (since in some situations, individual faculty don't determine the content), but there was some concern that such comments would be used against the faculty.

The following response is a good example of the overall feeling:

“Too much weight is placed on SEOs, leading faculty to feel pressured to reduce rigor to increase student satisfaction [sic] as to facilitate continued employment. This leads to academic inflation, which dilutes the value of CWU’s degrees. Response rates are bimodal – typically, only students who are pleased or displeased with a course respond. This does not reflect a majority of students’ experiences. SEOs should be viewed as only piece of the evaluation process with greater weight given to observations by others, etc.”

In essence, faculty are concerned at the manner in which SEOs are used. It was expressed that in some cases SEOs are not used to determine if faculty are deficient/effective/excellent, but are instead mined for evidence to bolster a decision that has been determined by unclear criteria.

Discussion of SEOI policy

Overall, EC was in favor of the policy language, but did have some questions about numeric thresholds and timelines. Most likely, the language will not be introduced to Faculty Senate until fall. Some parts of the policy will need accompanying procedure language. The policy and procedure language will need to be put into policy form, and should include a preamble statement, in addition to definitions of formative and summative.

EC suggested adding an item 8 to read: “Faculty are discouraged from offering extra credit for completion of SEOs.”

Preamble statement:

“SEOs are one factor in the evaluation of assessing faculty teaching effectiveness. This policy

establishes guidelines for their administration and use, to ensure that they are used appropriately and consistently.”

Definitions of formative and summative:

Formative assessment can inform and reform instruction to improve learning and teaching.

Summative assessment can show knowledge and skills demonstrated on tests after instruction.

Faculty Senate & EC Assessment Surveys

The annual surveys will be sent out on Monday, May 6, and will be available for two weeks. EC will review the questions before the surveys go out.

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Next meeting:

May 17, 2019

Grupe Center