

Teaching Academy Executive Council Minutes

February 26, 2021

Members Present:

Angela Lumpkin, Bob McDonald, Courtney Meyers, Mitzi Lauderdale, Suzanne Tapp, Susan Tomlinson, Brie Sherwin, Dominick Casadonte, Tara Stevens

Members Not Present:

Carla Lacerda, Patrick Hughes, Ali Duffy

Approval of Minutes:

Dom moved to approve the minutes from January 22nd; Courtney seconded. The minutes were approved.

Discussion:

Advancing Teaching & Learning Conference

Suzanne reminded the council of the ATLC next week and is looking forward to hearing from Dr. Ginger Clark and Dr. Emily Miller.

Teaching Self-Reflection

Angela continued the discussion from the last meeting about self-reflection questions for faculty reports. She mentioned that her department adjusted the pre-existing questions on Digital Measures as needed and suggested that each unit have its own set of specific questions. She suggested talking with colleagues and sending department specific questions to Jennifer Hughes in OPA. She asked the Council to think about alternatives since faculty will not always be inclined to do self-reflection of their teaching. Susan mentioned that Honor's College might benefit from more generic questions. She also noted that some faculty do not naturally reflect on their teaching and is not sure how to encourage it. Courtney mentioned that her college now requires self-reflection of their teaching in annual reports. She met with her Department Chair to talk about the responses to self-reflection and is looking forward to seeing how this is implemented in other departments. She noted that if Department Chairs shared how the reflections would be used, it might encourage faculty and help them decide how to approach the questions. Susan mentioned that it could be helpful to have incentives and to show faculty how their teaching could improve with self-reflection. Dom emphasized the importance of showing faculty what good reflection looks like and would like to create a video of someone sharing how they reflect. Susan agreed and suggested having a panel discussion about this. She shared it would be helpful to show faculty how to be self-critical and honest. Tara suggested providing tools for faculty. She shared about a time when she asked her students to reflect on her class and encouraged them to be honest by not penalizing them for their answers. Their response helped her to shape her course for the next year. Something like this for faculty could be organized in Qualtrics to allow them to easily review the data. She also mentioned feedback tools in Blackboard. Dom considered pairing faculty self-reflection with student reflection of the faculty. This could help faculty start to think about why their teaching is or is not working well. In

response to Courtney, Angela shared that for the KSM conference presentation, she divided the faculty reflections into four categories and their panel talked about each area along with the faculty comments. This could be one good way to use the data from the reflections. Angela suggested that giving a workshop about self-reflection could be a requirement for the recipient of the Diamond Award. Bob mentioned that this could be a good balance for those who do not like to rely on only teaching evaluations on the annual report. Brie noted that to get faculty on board, they need to make it easy. She shared that when she first began teaching, she had a notebook for self-reflection. There was a page for each class with room to write a lesson plan, goals, and self-reflection. She kept this notebook full of reflections and used it the next year to plan her class. Having this written in one book made it simpler to look back. Angela thought this could be a great topic to discuss at New Faculty Orientation. Mitzi mentioned that Brianna Harris gave a session where she shared her experience with reflection. Mitzi would love to have her share more about this. Angela asked if each council member could go back to their colleges and departments and talk with faculty to gather ideas on how to make self-reflection work in their units. Angela also asked if Brie could share the reflection template she mentioned.

The Diamond Award

This new award was created by the TLPDC and Teaching Academy this year to recognize faculty used a variety of strategies and innovations to teach effectively online during the pandemic as they met the challenges of the past year. Nominations are due April 1st. Suzanne shared that she would like this award to continue even after the pandemic and noted that this would be a good place to allow for reflection.

Substitution for Standing Committee Member

A representative from the New Member Selection Committee passed away this year, and Angela asked the Council if someone from their college should serve as a substitution this year. The bylaws do not address this situation and guidance for this may need to be added. Charles Klein represented CASNR and Angela asked Courtney for a suggestion. Courtney suggested having an election in CASNR to find a substitute. Mitzi suggested that a Council member could serve as a proxy. Bob noted that the bylaws prevent a Council member from serving on a standing committee. Angela suggested adding language to the bylaws to allow for the Executive Council member from the college of the unrepresented unit to hold an election in their college to select an eligible Teaching Academy member to serve as a temporary substitute. Suzanne agreed and mentioned that they should partner with the Teaching Academy administrative support for help in this. Mitzi noted the need for inclusive language to allow a substitute to serve for any reason a representative might no longer be able to serve, not just limited to a death. Angela asked if the council agreed to let Courtney facilitate an election within CASNR to find a substitute. Angela also suggested that she would draft language for the bylaws to address this situation in the future. The council agreed to move forward with this.

Charles Klein Conference Dedication

Considering the discussion, Suzanne shared that the Advancing Teaching & Learning Conference will be dedicated to Charles Klein. She mentioned his past work with Service

Learning and his teaching excellence and the TLPDC decided to honor him in this way. Courtney and Dom shared their experiences with Charles.

Updates:

Teaching Academy Commitment Initiatives

Ali Duffy could not attend, but Angela read her report about new faculty mentoring: There is a continuation of connectivity with new faculty and all the members of her group were asked to reconnect with new faculty and see if they wanted to keep meeting this semester. Angela heard back from one of her partners about meeting again.

Dom shared about his student mentoring group. They sent another welcome letter this week to connect with new students. Suzanne mentioned that there is a new outdoor area near the library with chairs and games to allow students to gather safely outside. Angela asked if Dom planned to do brown bag lunches again. Dom would like to set those up next week. Angela reminded everyone of the need to offer understanding and flexibility to students during this time of the pandemic and increased online learning.

Courtney shared about her peer evaluation group. The peer observation group will be giving a session at the ATLC on high impact practices in online and hybrid courses. This will be facilitated by Lisa Low. The group working on defining teaching excellence met recently and Courtney would like to have the two groups meet together again. Angela mentioned that Kay Millerick from this group found a resource from Penn State about honest self-evaluation and recommends this for online teaching.

Dom shared the idea of allowing students to share their experiences from the past year and maybe creating a video to encourage other students and record the history of this year. Angela noted that Glenys Young from the Office of Communications and Marketing would be a great person to lead this project. Angela asked Molly to contact Glenys to talk about this idea.

TeMPO

Suzanne shared that the TeMPO Program started again this semester. The fellows this year are piloting the peer review resources and tools used at the University of Southern California. These are the same resources that Ginger Clark will talk about at the ATLC next week.

Donuts and Diversity

Bob reminded the council that the Rawls is hosting another Donuts and Diversity session next Thursday. Lex Frieden will be talking about disability awareness.

Provost's Council Notes- February 17th

Senior Vice Provost Rob Stewart presented information about the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 60x30TX, an initiative of the former commissioner. This work is being refined with an emphasis on adult learners beyond 25-34-year-olds, leverage and accelerate innovation to drive research, commercialization, and economic development, prioritize high-value credentials to align with workforce needs, and ensure all Texans have equal access to tools and resources that promote educational attainment. The 60x30TX Strategic Plan for Texas higher

education for TTU seems mostly aligned with the goals of degree completion and marketable skills. Discussion followed about how TTU might contribute most to 60x30TX, such as through offering short courses, stackable courses, and certificates.

Amy Cook and Jake Keas shared a demonstration from the Office of Research and Innovation's new Research Metrics Dashboard. Power BI, a business analytics service provided to the university by Microsoft, provides interactive data visualizations. The Office of Research and Innovation's dashboard provides extensive data about sponsored projects including proposals, and awards for individual faculty, departments, and colleges. Deans, or their designees, can access these data for their colleges now, with departmental data available soon. Numerous queries (factors) can be made. Tailor-made data can be requested, and training can be provided.

Self-reflection on Teaching – Suzanne Tapp and Angela Lumpkin shared data about self-reflections on teaching by academic units at the end of the fall semester and continuing efforts to maintain the momentum of this initiative at the Advancing Teaching and Learning Conference on March 5. Deans were encouraged to develop college-specific questions on Digital Measures and incorporate these questions in future annual faculty reports and merit pay considerations.

Joe Heppert announced the upcoming Grant Writer's Workshop for early career faculty to be held on February 26. He emphasized the importance of this and subsequent workshops and seminars to strengthen grant writing expertise. His office is paying the consultants who will be presenting the February 26 workshop, and he asked the Deans to support the follow-up workshop with a smaller number of faculty.

Adjourn:

Angela adjourned the meeting.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Molly Jacobs.