

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee
September 11, 2006

PRESENT: Kris Bartanen, Sigrun Bodine, Doug Cannon, Julian Edgoose, Karl Fields, Grace Kirchner, George Tomlin

ORGANIZATION. Dean Bartanen convened the meeting at 3:05 p.m. After some discussion, it was agreed that Share should serve as chair for the fall semester and Kirchner should serve as chair for the spring semester upon Share's departure from the PSC (for the London ILACA program). The plan (in Share's absence) was approved by acclamation. Kirchner agreed to serve as chair for the day. Bartanen announced that Priti Joshi will serve as the Faculty Senate's liaison to the PSC.

MINUTES. Secretarial duties will rotate in alphabetical order among the members of the committee, excluding the chair and the dean. It was determined that duties should start with Fields, as the other veteran member of the committee. Kirchner noted the effort beginning last year to provide sufficiently detailed minutes (except in confidential matters) to permit faculty colleagues to understand the issues under discussion.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS. In response to a question about what the priorities of the PSC ought to be this year, Bartanen noted that the 2005-06 year-end report to the Faculty Senate offers a list of those items carried over from last year. Bartanen agreed to send copies of the report to committee members and Kirchner charged the committee to read the report and come prepared to discuss priorities for this year's PSC agenda. Kris also distributed to the committee folders containing several items that had been submitted over the summer for PSC consideration. The committee was likewise charged to review these items prior to next week's meeting.

ANNUAL MESSAGE ON ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT EVALUATIONS. It was determined that the most pressing matter before the committee was to review a draft of the message sent annually to faculty about guidelines for administering student evaluations. Bartanen distributed last year's version of this memo and the committee made several revisions to that version, highlighting the faculty member's responsibility to insure that evaluations are scheduled and administered with sufficient time for student response and the need for caution when scheduling evaluations on the last day of class.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karl Fields

September 11, 2006

To All Faculty:

The Professional Standards Committee would like to remind all faculty of approved guidelines for the administration of student evaluations using University evaluation forms. Please read the information below, keeping in mind the importance of common standards and procedures for the achievement of fairness in the evaluation process.

A memo that is sent to chairs and department secretaries each year emphasizes the following guidelines established by the Professional Standards Committee:

1. Instructor evaluations are to be administered and processed by professional staff and not by work-study students or faculty.
2. Instructor evaluations should normally be given no earlier than the tenth week of class.
3. Students must be allocated at least twenty minutes of class time to complete instructor evaluations.
4. It is the responsibility of faculty members being evaluated to ensure that evaluations are scheduled and administered with sufficient time for student response. Faculty members should therefore be cautious about scheduling evaluations on the last day of class.
5. The faculty member should absent himself or herself from the classroom during the entire period when evaluations are being completed. And the faculty member must allow a minimum of a full twenty minutes for students to complete the evaluation.
6. Students who do not attend the class session at which evaluations are administered may not complete an evaluation at any other time.

It is a matter of professional behavior for faculty members teaching a class in which student evaluations will be completed to respect these guidelines and to respect the role of the professional staff member administering the evaluation. The faculty member should treat any portion of the class period in which instruction precedes administration of the evaluations in the same way as other class periods.

Please remember that professional staff are responsible to the University for their conduct in administering the evaluations and in handling them once they have been collected. The Dean has asked professional staff not to begin an evaluation as scheduled unless a full twenty minutes is available for the process as required under these guidelines. Please remember as well that professional staff must process those forms on which students have requested that their comments be typed and must have a reasonable opportunity to do so. Staff are not to provide a copy of evaluations to the instructor, access to the forms, or access to the information they contain until after course grades have been submitted.

All evaluations using University forms must be conducted under these procedures.

2006-2007 Professional Standards Committee:

Kristine Bartanen
Sigrun Bodine
Douglas Cannon
Julian Edgoose

Karl Fields
Grace Kirchner
Don Share
George Tomlin