



The Florida State University
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AGENDA
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
DODD HALL AUDITORIUM
January 14, 1998
3:35 p.m.

- I. Approval of the minutes of the December 10, 1997 meeting
- II. Approval of the agenda for the January 14, 1998 meeting
- III. Report of the Steering Committee, J. Macmillan
- IV. Special Order:
 Commendation for Chancellor Charles B. Reed
- IV. Reports of Standing Committees
 - a. Curriculum Committee, K. Anderson-Lazier
- V. Unfinished Business
- VI. New Business
- VII. University Welfare
- VIII. Announcements of Deans and other administrative officers
 - a. Beverly Spencer, Vice President for University Relations
 - a. Cynthia Tunnicut, Chair of the Alumni Board
 - b. Dave Hart, Athletic Director
- IX. Announcements of Provost L. Abele
- IX. Announcements of the President of the University

THE NEXT SENATE MEETING WILL BE FEBRUARY
11 IN DODD HALL AUDITORIUM



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Boal

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
January 14, 1998
Dodd Hall Auditorium
3:35. p.m.

I. Regular Session

The regular session of the 1997-1998 Faculty Senate met on Wednesday, January 14, 1998, at 3:35 p.m., in Dodd Hall Auditorium. Senate President Marie Cowart presided.

The following members were absent. Alternates are listed in parenthesis. J. Beckham, G. Blakely, S. Blessing, M. Bonn, D. Boroto, B. Colombo, L. Dehaven-Smith, K. Ferguson, A. Gometz, W. Heard, D. Kopriva, D. Kuhn, K. Laughlin, G. Leahy, R. J. Livingston, C. Lynch-Brown, CJB Macmillan (Victoria MacDonald), S. Macmara, T. Matherly, W. Moore, C. Piazza (V. Fueyo), V. Ping, M. Pohl, P. Ray, V. Richard, A. Rowe, J. Sampson, M. Seidenfeld, B. Shellahamer, P. Simmonds (T. Hult), F. Standley, J. Standley, F. Vickory, E. Walker.

II. Approval of the minutes

The minutes of December 10 will be approved at the February meeting.

III. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved as distributed.

IV. Report of the Steering Committee, R. Light for J. Macmillan

Since the last meeting of the Senate the Steering Committee met with the President, Provost and the Dean of the Faculties.

With the Dean of the Faculties, the Steering Committee discussed the processes for developing policies and procedures related to Promotion and Tenure, Sustained Performance Review, and course note takers.

The Steering Committee submitted faculty names to the Provost to serve on the Search Committee for the newly created position of Assistant Vice President for Technology Integration.

The Steering Committee endorsed the 1998 Community Capital Campaign which is scheduled to begin in February. Former Dean of the Faculties Daisy Flory has agreed to serve as the Campaign Chair.

The Steering Committee responded to a request from Vice President Carnaghi about the organization and responsibilities of the parking services offices. The resignation of Parking Services Director, Gene Hall, precipitated this request. You may forward your recommendations about the overall organization of parking services and general parking policies at FSU to Senate President Marie Cowart.

We received a report from the Secretary to the Faculty Janis Sass on the President's Seminars for first time in college freshmen to be taught by full professors. Up to 33 seminars will be funded. While these seminars are to receive a letter grade, and must include a substantial writing requirement, they are not designated as meeting either the liberal studies or the Gordon Rule requirement.

The Steering Committee accepted the report on "A Definition of Effective Teaching" (addendum 1) from the Evaluation Committee. The Committee membership is to be commended for their hard work and diligence in responding to the need for evaluation of faculty teaching.

**V. Special Order: Commendation for Chancellor
Charles B. Reed**

The following commendation for outgoing Chancellor Charles B. Reed was unanimously adopted by the Faculty Senate.

Whereas Chancellor Charles B. Reed has given strong, effective and continuous leadership to the State University System of Florida, and

Whereas this leadership has resulted in expanded opportunities for many college students, and

Whereas Chancellor Reed has been the single most stabilizing influence on higher education in the State of Florida during the years that he has been Chancellor, and

Whereas Chancellor Reed has been especially attentive and supportive of The Florida State University in its programs and activities,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate at The Florida State University recognizes this extraordinary leadership and offers its appreciation and commendation.

**VI. Reports of Standing Committees
a. Curriculum Committee, K. Anderson-Lazier**

Over the last calendar year, the Curriculum Committee has reviewed over 500 new courses and course changes (we simply quit counting!). We applaud academic units who have gone through the efforts to update and revise courses and whole curriculum. However, at least a third of the courses, which might have otherwise been forwarded to the state office or registrar's office, had to be returned for corrections

or clarifications. We urge all academic units and committees at the department, area, and/or college level to carefully do their paperwork. We would also like to call attention to the following common problems:

- 1) The Curriculum Committee requires that the syllabus of the OLD version of a course be attached to the NEW version for changes.
- 2) A syllabus for the undergraduate level of a course must accompany a request for a graduate version of the same course and vice versa.
- 3) Syllabi are often vague or missing evaluation standards: These need to be in the form the students will see. However, we appreciate the fact that the number of tests and therefore the weight of each test may vary from semester to semester (e.g. - 4 exams @25% each). We encourage a translation of % averages or points into the letter grade. Some professors use a 95-100% for an A, while others use 90-100%. Again, we appreciate that different professors teaching the same course may have different scales. Our intent is to fulfill the requirement to "explain evaluation standards clearly at the beginning of each semester." Some professors even go on to remind students the quality points for A, A- etc., since most students have the misconception that a B+ is a 3.5.

For courses which have an attendance policy, the policy must be stated completely. The syllabus must state the penalty for non-attendance/tardiness rather than a vague statement such as absences "will affect your grade".

- 4) The Committee requires some statement for accommodations under ADA on the syllabus. Although the University requires only that the statement be made, which means it could be given orally, the Committee requires a written statement.
- 5) If a course could cross into the disciplines taught in another department, that request WILL BE sent to that department for their review. You may approach that department BEFORE, and if there is no problem, then a memo from the DEPARTMENT CHAIR (not the professor teaching such a course!) can accompany your request and we will not need to delay approval.

Lastly 3 points of information:

- 1) There are some word processing versions of our forms available.
- 2) We are using the BOR's codes for mode of instruction (a set of letters vs the old set of numbers)
- 3) Course descriptions are copied from the Bulletin into CLUE and are now available to the world via that connection to the FSU homepage. Think about it!

VII. Unfinished Business

There were no items of unfinished business for today's meeting.

VIII. New Business

There were no items of new business for today's meeting.

IX. University Welfare

There were no items of university welfare.

X. Announcements of Deans and other administrative officers

Dave Hart, Athletic Director, spoke of the success of the Student Development Lifeskills Program. This program goes beyond training and academics. It exposes students to real problems they will face in our media driven society. Our students are progressing academically and this year FSU had more students on the ACC Honor Roll than ever before. In particular, Mr. Hart cited the many academic honors received by Darryl Bush, Golden Torch Awards, GTE Academic All American and Burger King Award, just to name a few.

Beverly Spencer, Vice President for University Relations, cited a few of the many accomplishments of the Alumni Association and introduced Cynthia Tunncliff, Chair of the Alumni Board. Ms. Tunncliff, graduate of FSU, spoke of the Alumni Association in its role as one of three Direct Support Organizations. FSU has over 100,000 alumni contributing to the many areas of interests.

XI. Announcements of the Provost

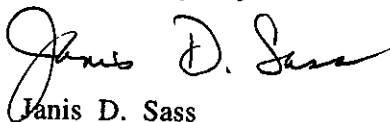
Provost Abele gave a very brief report on the Governor's budget recommendations. The BOR will now make modifications and send their budget back to the legislature by March 1.

XII. Announcements of the President

President D'Alemberte reinforced the many positive issues the Alumni Association addresses each year. He also reminded everyone that the weekly meetings on the Commission on the Future is aired on Thursday nights, 7:30 on channel 47.

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.



Janis D. Sass
Secretary to the Faculty

A DEFINITION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Introduction

It is widely held that "Teaching is scholarship's natural manifestation..." (Braun, 1994). Improved teaching is a goal of all institutions of higher education especially in this information age where knowledge is growing exponentially. In order to improve teaching, it is first necessary to define effective teaching so that some evaluation of the process can begin.

Effective teaching is most often measured by student evaluation of faculty (SEF). While it began as a method of providing informational feedback to keep faculty aware of student needs, SEF is increasingly used by universities in making faculty salary, tenure and promotion decisions (Seldin, 1993; Crumbley, 1995). This can create a pressure to comply with student demands which can result in grade inflation (Crumbley & Fliedner, 1995), dismissal of faculty (Magner, 1995), undue influences on curriculum (Goldman, 1993), and could ultimately lead to an infringement upon academic freedom itself (Dershowitz, 1994; Stone, 1995). Viewed most critically, SEF is a method of anonymous evaluation by untrained observers using "face in-valid" (Scriven, 1995) instruments with little reliability which are often falsely interpreted by those unaware of the inherent limitations in the original ratings. Releasing the results of SEF to the public can damage a faculty member's reputation and result in grievances filed by affected faculty (Blum, 1990). One contemporary view is that SEF may fuel the flames of the movement to abolish tenure (Haskell, 1997; Weeks, 1996). Given the gravity of SEF, it is critical that the concept of teaching effectiveness be examined closely by faculty who will be directly affected by it.

A review of the extensive evaluation research on SEF reveals surprising consensus on one central issue: there is no agreed upon definition of effective teaching at present (Cashin, 1988; Barr, 1961; Cook & Neville, 1971; Doyle, 1983;) and consequently there is no currently accepted, empirically proven method of measuring it (Centra & Bonesteel, 1990; Scriven, 1988, 1993). Without an agreed upon definition it is impossible to proceed with the fair, objective, valid and reliable evaluation of faculty teaching effectiveness.

As faculty with responsibilities in teaching, research and service, we should be held accountable (for these responsibilities). The State of Florida, should expect accountability. Since we are therefore, responsible for providing evidence of effective teaching, we must

take major responsibility for the development of a definition of effective teaching and its subsequent measurement. Without such a definition, and *valid* means for assessment, there is no possibility for effective accountability to be implemented. The absence of a definition, and special criteria by which it can be measured, has prompted the BOR to submit the SUSSAI as one measure, without the necessary prerequisite definition or validation. The SIRS has likewise been regarded by some as a measure of effective teaching. It too was spawned without a definition against which it could be validated. Putting together student perception items, as in the case of the SIRS and SUSSAI, while hoping that a definition of effective teaching will emerge, dooms us to a type of "circularity" which prohibits validation against **previously established** criteria.

What is proposed herein is a definition or construct of effective teaching which can be generally measured and validated for its intended **campus-wide** use. Instruments for assessment relative to this definition will include **some student** perceptions, but not of the same nature or extent as presently utilized at FSU. It is **not** proposed as the definition of effective teaching, but rather as one which is broad enough to encompass any appropriate academic activity¹ at this university.

¹ "appropriate academic activity" means any activity conducted by authorized, competent personnel, addressing approved teaching content according to the FSU Handbook and the State University System rules and regulations.

A PREMISE FOR DEFINING EFFECTIVE TEACHING

The definition which is being proposed for effective teaching depends logically on the following three-part premise or assumption.

Part 1

The purpose of a student's association with FSU is to learn, i.e., to acquire knowledge, comprehension, and skills like critical thinking and integration of knowledge.

Part 2

Students who wish to learn will do so to varying degrees. (This does not include incidental or accidental learning through association with a university community, family influence, etc.).

Part 3

The students' desire to learn and subsequent learning are voluntary. The teacher can only exercise influence on this desire and on the learning which follows.

A DEFINITION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Given the above premise, *effective teaching* is the creation by a teacher, of an environment conducive to learning in which students: (1) are positively influenced to want to learn, (2) are provided adequate opportunities for learning to occur and (3) utilize these opportunities to learn.

Note that this definition applies to the desire to learn, the provision of learning opportunities and actual learning which are due to the teacher's effort, not to other sources.

Examples of Effective Teaching under this Definition

The following are contexts in which effective teaching could be actualized. Each of the situations illustrates only a “snapshot” of behaviors in effective teacher/student interactions. Similarly, each illustrates a positive impact on student(s) desire to learn and subsequent action demonstrating that opportunities for learning were present and learning occurred. The expectation for an effective teacher would be that of a consistency or sustained pattern of engaging in such behavior or combination of behaviors. In essence, there must be more to effective teaching than a single “shining moment” whatever its impact.

- An undergraduate biology instructor in a large lecture hall presents a particularly cogent analogy to help students remember bacteria growth rates. This inspires a student to construct a mnemonic for remembering the analogy. The mnemonic is shared with other students and subsequent testing confirms that the analogy and mnemonic increased student understanding.
- Graduate Research Assistants in a professor’s lab are so impressed with the quality of his/her research that they dedicate themselves to achieving such standards and draft an implementation plan for all future labs. Other professors report that the plan increased the productivity of students in their labs.
- A professor in a small graduate seminar presents a controversial position which sparks a debate and subsequent critical reflection among the students. Evidence of their thinking is clearly reflected in future papers, some of which are accepted for publication in refereed journals.
- An engineering researcher designs a new bridge structure and presents a proposal for new construction standards. The quality of the proposal influences faculty to undertake a curriculum review to reflect the new standards. Outside reviewers report that the new standards improved the quality of graduates.
- A psychology professor [who would rather conduct research than teach] brings a cutting edge finding from her lab to her introductory psychology class. Her enthusiasm concerning her research inspires students to learn more about the relevant theory. The students’ learning is demonstrated in subsequent discussions and evaluations for this and future psychology courses.
- A major professor [who would score poorly on most items of the SIRS and SUSSAI forms] spends an hour with a doctoral student who comes away from their meeting inspired to pursue a new topic which becomes an award-winning dissertation. The evaluation committee notes a direct connection between the quality of the student’s work and the guidance provided by the professor.

- A statistician attempts to teach a difficult concept and uses every conceivable, pedagogically sound technique to get the concept across. While most of the students are motivated, many just do not "get it." A peer review confirms that adequate opportunities for students to understand the concept were provided by the teacher and that some learning took place.
- A service professor provides students with a unique insight into tort reform. The presentation kindles an interest in proposing a specific reform which is written and published by the students. Post graduation interviews confirm the professor's role in their performance.
- An inspiring lecturer [who produces little research] presents in class the most recent findings of a colleague. The connection to what is being taught stimulates students to question the existence of a more general result. The students develop a theory which is subsequently tested and published in a prestigious journal.
- A Nobel prize winner makes a guest appearance in a class and simply by reputation, stimulates the students' desire to excel. Several of the students voluntarily read a sample of the laureate's work and incorporate it into assigned papers which are judged to be distinct improvements on previous papers.
- A professor who is considered demanding by most students, uses her written exams as a learning tool for her students and an exercise in critical thought. The experience causes several teachers in the class to reflect on their philosophies and practices as teachers and to incorporate similar practices in their classes noting improvements in the quality of their students' learning.
- A doctoral candidate defends a dissertation on a new method for teaching reading. The clever use of qualitative techniques presented in the defense stimulates a professor to read more about the methods. Subsequent dissertations directed by this professor reflect a broader spectrum of such designs.
- A well-written publication appears in an esoteric journal and causes a reader to pursue some counter examples and analogies in seminars with his students. The publication is cited as seminal in future student publications.
- Some music majors observe their violin instructor playing in the Faculty Chamber Ensemble and vow to become recognized masters in their specialty. Their instructor subsequently notes a marked improvement in the students' skills.

- A well-established basic researcher explains her most recent theory of learning and initiates a discussion about applications with learning disabled children. Her students, intrigued by the prospects of a breakthrough, contact a special education teacher and begin testing new training methods.
- A physical education professor presents his new model of biomechanics in sports and his students, immediately seeing the relevance, propose several new ways to teach volleyball and basketball in middle schools. Accreditation agencies report improved performance and participation as a direct result of the model.

Features of this Definition of Teaching Effectiveness

1. It allows for assessment by students (present and former) who are qualified to judge whether they were influenced to want to learn and whether they were provided opportunities for learning to occur. By contrast, usual student perception instruments ask students to judge things they are not qualified to assess, e.g., "competency" (SIRS) and "concern for students" (SUSSAI).
2. It generally makes inappropriate such student perception instruments as SIRS and SUSSAI since they address mostly irrelevant issues under this definition. Such perceptions, however, could be of value particularly if used to improve teaching effectiveness.
3. It minimizes the thorny problem of teaching evaluation by providing criteria against which all instrumentation and validation is conducted.
4. It accommodates peer evaluations of teaching effectiveness during which the observer need only consider, for example, whether or not what is being said or done *promotes a personal desire to learn and whether adequate opportunities to learn were provided.* (All of our memories are good enough to recall who and what made a difference in our wanting to acquire knowledge and acquiring it in a particular academic setting.) Judging the ability of a published article to inspire further study and inform would, for example, also be the purview of a peer evaluator of teaching effectiveness. In some cases, peers might also be able to assess the level of learning due to a teacher.
5. It does not depend on the type of academic activity; be it large lecture, small seminars, advising, laboratories, discussant groups, research projects, faculty mentoring, distance learning, any faculty interaction, administration providing guidance, etc. (Where two or more people are gathered together, there is an opportunity for effective teaching.)
6. It applies to all types of students regardless of ability or classification—undergraduate, graduate, special students, lay persons, required courses, honors courses, optional courses, etc.
7. It is useful with all types of teachers at all ranks, including TA's, research associates, adjuncts, etc.

8. It allows the teacher greater opportunity to be viewed as an effective teacher due to the increased flexibility in methods, techniques, situations, personalities, etc., that can be used to foster the desire to learn and to provide opportunities for doing so.
9. It includes situations where students arrive with varying degrees of desire and ability to acquire knowledge and yet still allows the teacher to be effective. Even when starting with students who have a desire to learn, for example, the teacher can be effective by promoting and enhancing this desire and capitalizing on it by providing opportunities for learning to occur which results in learning to some degree.
10. It allows for the direct construction of indicators which could help faculty to improve the effectiveness of their teaching. Students, peers, administrators, mentors, staff, the Program in Instructional Excellence, and the Council on Teaching could all contribute to helping the teacher adopt techniques, approaches, attitudes, etc. which might foster a desire to learn as well as provide increased opportunities for learning to occur.

Degrees of Effective Teaching

Under this definition, it is clear that there are degrees or levels of effective teaching. Not all instructors will stimulate the desire to learn, enhance what desires are there, provide learning opportunities to the same degree or have students learn to the same extent. Any measure of effective teaching as suggested by the above definition, therefore, must be sensitive to this diversity and be reflected in any validation of proposed instrumentation. Note: Anything done, said, learned or produced by any person which is not shared with at least one other person is not "teaching", effective or otherwise, by this definition. [A faculty member who "hides his or her light under a bushel" is not engaging in teaching.]

All those instructional skills we employ as teachers: communicate clearly, help students shape study skills, provide good syllabi, grade fairly, prepare, illustrate, advise, question, direct, role model, challenge, etc.— are done solely to influence the students to want to learn, to provide opportunities for learning to occur, and to involve them in learning. The creation of an environment conducive to learning in these ways and that results in learning to some extent is the *raison d'être* of teaching and some teachers perform better than others.

Instrumentation, Validation, and Evaluation

It is apparent from the features and multiple contexts of this definition of effective teaching that measurement thereof will be a formidable task. Although conceptually simplified, it will involve the utilization of multiple sources, multiple data points, and refined reporting techniques to allow for the diversity of teaching/learning situations. No single or perfect measure of this construct of effective teaching exists and in some situations, there may be no way to provide a direct measure of effective teaching. Student, peer, and administrators' perceptions will all, of necessity, be a part of the assessment process. Since perceptions are all that one can ever get from these sources, every effort should be made to ensure that (1) the criteria by which such perceptions are elicited are clearly defined and (2) those whose perceptions are sought are both qualified and in a position to provide useful opinions. It is expected that any instrumentation will have a major faculty peer assessment component.

Bringing in outside measurement experts to assist with instrument development and validation, given this definition, is not unexpected, particularly with some of the more unusual teaching/learning contexts. Their contribution could be particularly helpful since they would not have to create a definition of effective teaching against which instruments would be validated.

CONCLUSION

Improved teaching is essential to maintain high standards of scholarship at Florida State University. At present, there is no agreed upon definition of effective teaching to be found in the evaluation research literature. Before we can proceed to develop a sound empirical base for effective teaching, it is essential that we agree upon a definition.

The definition proposed herein deals with a consistent pattern of behaviors and personal role modeling at the highest level of the art and science of teaching, research, and service. For a teacher to influence students, in whatever way he/she can, to develop or maintain a thirst for knowledge while helping to assuage that thirst, is to be a true master teacher. As teachers, we could have no greater goal or be more honored if we were judged to have achieved that end.

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