

**ANNUAL REPORT
SLA TEACHING AND ADVISING COMMITTEE
2007-2008**

The SLA Teaching and Advising Committee completed several important projects during the 2007-2008 year. The committee consisted of Liz Monroe, Larbi Oukada (spring only), Ian Sheeler, Scott Weeden (Agenda Council representative), with Linda Haas and Shah Towfighi co-chairing the committee, and Rick Ward (Dean's Office representative). The committee met four times during the academic year (September, October, January, April). The following is a summary of the work of the Teaching and Advising Committee, by specific issue.

On-line course evaluations – Faculty were permitted to use on-line course evaluations for the spring 2007 semester, and our committee looked into this pilot. We discovered very few students took advantage of the opportunity to review the course and the instructor in this new format, so we recommended unanimously that the school continue to mandate hard-copy evaluations. Rick Ward drafted the following note to this effect to Deans White and Wokeck:

The Teaching and Advising Committee has discussed the advantages and disadvantages associated with “on-line” or electronic student teaching evaluations. The Committee recognizes that there may be considerable cost savings, both in terms of staff time and processing costs, but finds that, at the moment, the disadvantages greatly outweigh these monetary benefits. Specifically, the well-documented lower return rates of electronic versus in-class, paper evaluations poses a serious risk to junior faculty members and anyone seeking promotion on the basis of teaching. Although the low return rate could be addressed through some sort of mandatory requirement imposed on our students, the Committee feels that this would present an ethical dilemma and could well bias the results. In summary, The Teaching and Advising Committee could not, at this time, support a movement to “on-line” course evaluations. Furthermore, any move to allow for voluntary use of electronic course evaluations should be carefully considered in light of the likely impact of poor return rates on the career paths of our faculty.

New Oncourse challenges –In October, the committee took up the cause of what to do about problems with the new edition of Oncourse, which involved a meeting with Learning Technologies Dean Stacy Morrone. Jennifer Cochrane and Monroe Little joined us for this meeting as two instructors that offer all on-line courses. Dean Morrone heard our concerns and promised to work on facilitating better interaction between UITS and faculty regarding Oncourse and teaching support for the use of technology. A summary of issues raised in that meeting can be found in an excerpt from the minutes for October 29, 2007, which appears as Appendix A at the end of this report.

Trustee Teaching Award – Starting in September, the committee took up the issue of the paucity of applicants. We discussed the possibility that individuals could declare themselves a candidate for the award by checking a new box on the Faculty Annual Review due in early January, which would bring this to the attention of their department's primary committee or chair. We asked the Agenda Council to consider this move, but were told that the FAR is campus-wide and can't be

added onto. The committee came up with a plan for encouraging more applicants, which involved getting the word out sooner about the award and encouraging faculty to apply. We decided that it might help if all faculty were invited to submit applications for the award (rather than wait to be nominated). Appendix B includes the announcement that went out to all faculty and school guidelines as well as the text of letters sent out to recipients and others.

In January, a due date was chosen for submission of applications for the TTA (March 17), and a subcommittee was selected for choosing award winners (which left out anyone who might have a conflict of interest, including those applying for the award or with partners applying). Ursula Niklas was recruited to the selection committee by the Agenda Council. We decided to keep the same application requirements as AO, except we wanted applicants to provide their entire FAR, not just the “summary” which AO guidelines mention.

The selection committee met on March 20. The number of applicants was up, especially among the lecturers. When the subcommittee met and deliberated, six tenure-track faculty and three lecturers were chosen for the award. Tenure track recipients included Enrica J. Ardemagni, Linda Haas, Jason M. Kelly, Scott Pegg, Kristine Horn Sheeler, and Martin C. Spechler; lecturer recipients included Archana Dube, Victoria Rogers and Anne Williams. In general, the committee recommends that individuals not receive awards in back-to-back years, so the next year’s committee should keep these names in mind.

Course release for intensive contact teaching - In September we began discussion of a proposal for offering faculty release time for teaching intensive contact courses; for example, internships and readings and research. This proposal went through several revisions, and at the end was restricted to undergraduate teaching by Dean White, who approved the proposal on April 20, 2008 (see Appendix C).

Undergraduate advising – Starting in September, the committee discussed the challenges involved in student advising. Students might benefit if there were more full-time academic advisors in the school, at the school and/or department level, so that advisors could be in continuous contact with students. Although no decisions were made, we discussed whether the school should move toward student *advising* being a function at the level of the school and student *mentoring* being a function at the level of the department. Faculty who serve as academic advisors for students find this work difficult, and it takes away from their research activities. During the academic year, one SLA advisor was assigned to do career counseling full-time, while a new advisor was hired for general advising.

Enhancing student success at IUPUI – We discussed how most faculty are unfamiliar with the statistics regarding one and two year retention and graduation rates for majors in the school (available from IMIR). We became better informed, thanks to Rick Ward, how existing campus policies may reduce student success. These include readmission policies that don’t provide all students with special support for academic work; bursar policies where students who fail to attend classes at IUPUI run up huge bursar bills preventing future enrollment; and financial aid policies that cut off aid after students have attempted up to 150% of credit hours, typically trapping students who have a pattern of course withdrawal.

Graduating Student Surveys – Each year the school sends out a survey to students who have graduating, asking them to recognize teaching and mentoring. Typically, the results of these surveys were compiled and distributed to individual faculty in time for primary committee deliberations. This year these surveys were handled by Dean Wokeck's office and the results were not completed before the end of the academic year. Appendix D includes the letters that have been sent in the past by this committee.

Gender-bias in course evaluations – Nancy Robertson in History asked the committee during the last academic year to explore the issue during the 2007-08 academic year. Due to other pressing business and uncertainty how to proceed with this, the committee did not pursue this, with the understanding that David Bivin, who handles student evaluations for the school, needs to be consulted.

Suggested issues for the 2008-09 committee:

1. Disseminate the new SLA policy on offering faculty release time for intensive contact undergraduate teaching (see Appendix C). In a memo from May 9, 2008, Dean Robert White suggested that this be put on the agenda of committee reports in the fall for the first faculty assembly.
2. Examine the issue of intensive contact teaching of **graduate students**: Should faculty receive release time for this work or should this be considered a normal part of the faculty's course load.
3. Consider new strategies to increase in the number of tenure-line faculty members who apply for the Trustee Teaching Awards. At the April meeting we discussed the following:
 - Create a sample dossier and application to be used by prospective applicants.
 - Establish a web site about the award.
 - Announce the availability of the award earlier.
4. Research with David Bivin if there is a gender-bias in student evaluations.
5. Assess the quality of advising in the school and consider ways to provide students with more contact with advisors. Related issues concern:
 - How to assess advising and recognize good advising.
 - Should student retention rate be used as an indicator of effective advising?
 - There is a distinction between "mentoring" and "advising". This difference should be recognized.
 - Should there be "professional" advisors fully dedicated to student advising?
 - There needs to be more recognition of advisors.
 - There could be One-Start site for assigning advisors to students. The site could provide a course plan; new tools for interface with students; encourage students and advisors to use "advisor notes".

- The committee considered seeking the input of Ron Sandwina of the Department of Communications in addressing the issues relating to advising.
6. Acquaint faculty with the statistics regarding one- and two -ear retention and graduation rates for majors in the school (available from IMIR), as background for discussion about what we can do to enhance retention and graduation rates. How existing dismissal policies contribute to student success needs to be explored further; e.g., if students are admitted or re-admitted under probation they are supposed to take advantage of one of the several support programs for students, but there are usually too few slots in these programs.
 7. Keep in good contact with the SLA representatives to Oncourse Priorities Committee, finding a way to continually transmit faculty concerns to campus administrators.
 8. Sort out who is responsible for assembling the results of the graduating student surveys and make sure that results are in the hands of faculty before the FAR is due.
 9. Review and revise graduating senior survey so it can be moved to an “online” version with data collected and compiled automatically.

Appendix A
October 29, 2007
Excerpt from Minutes of TAC Meeting on the New Oncourse

Present: Linda Haas, Liz Monroe, Ian Sheeler, Shah Towfighi, Rick Ward, Scott Weeden. **Also present:** Anastasia Morrone, Jennifer Cochrane and Monroe Little

The following issues regarding Oncourse CL were brought up by the committee members and guests.

- Faculty feel they are being "dictated to" by the tech people, when it comes to design features and other issues around Oncourse, and we want more input into decision making (It turns out that SLA reps on the campus committee are not tenure-line which probably reduces their influence). Dean Morrone promised to develop new ways of getting us more in the decision making loop.
- Faculty feel that they are obligated to take on much more work figuring out the new design features and finding the bugs in Oncourse for the tech people, work they didn't know was coming; this often involves multiple contacts with UITs people who seem slow to respond; those teaching all on-line courses are particularly hard hit (We wondered how much tech people are paid vs what we are paid.) Dean Morrone indicated that her staff is working hard on eliminating bugs, that her staff are not paid more than faculty, that they are young. She indicated that the fastest way to get help with Oncourse design features (maybe even bugs) is to go right to "tier II" level of help (the help line is bottom line, Tier I, bypass that), which involves Randy, Tom or Lori at the Center for Teaching and Learning who can be contacted at 4-1300. You should also feel welcome to contact Dean Morrone directly at amorrone@iupui.edu. Professor Cochrane also stated that she is knowledgeable about Oncourse and would be happy to help. Bill Stucky is another source.
- Many Oncourse problems have come about because of browsers. It turns out that the browsers that are the best supported are Internet Explorer 7 and Firefox. However even these can have problems that are generated when the browser software itself is tweaked/updated by those companies, which requires tweaking and updating at IUPUI. This is not seen as a problem IUPUI can do anything about, except to warn people what browser to use (which has been done lately).
- Many Oncourse problems are generated by the complexity of this new Sakai system, that turns out to have been developed by multiple universities, each specializing in a "tool," (IU's was Assignments - note that this is the feature with the most problems). The tools also don't talk well with one another for this reason. Currently Assignments is the tool getting the most attention and is the tool that works least well.
- Faculty wish they could have the old system back - It turns out that it is still operating and a person can get permission to stay on the old system (contact Dean Morrone). However, this system is not being updated at all and a person would use it without any real support. Also the old system will be discontinued in August 2008.

- Students are probably the ones that are suffering the most from this transition, which admittedly was extremely difficult from the beginning. Students can have each course using different technology, as some faculty abandon Oncourse and use something else. (Dean Morrone indicated that the level of "activity" for using Oncourse was high, but that she can't know how many people have given up on it.) Reports of high drop out rates in on-line courses have been made. Since students pay a hefty tech fee, this situation is highly undesirable.
- Offer faculty members some incentive (financial, or otherwise) to contribute to problem solving efforts. (For example, develop a faculty fellowship on Oncourse development which can be done in the summer.). Dean Morrone suggested faculty representative can participate as consultants in program development in a series of "Fridays in February" meetings.
- There is the need for research on or a survey of how Oncourse has affected the faculty and students. Study the extent and nature of faculty/student complaints. How many students have dropped out because of Oncourse related issues. There should be pedagogical angle to the survey. How do the tools meet your needs? If not, how could it be improved. It was suggested that Dean Morrone prepare a set of survey questions to bring before the TAC.
- Find out who the faculty representatives are on the Oncourse Priorities Committee. Scott will do this and will report to TAC.

Appendix B

Trustees Teaching Award: 2007-2008 SLA Guidelines

The award. Each award will be \$2,500 (supplemental pay). There will be 6 awards for tenure line faculty and 3 for lecturers.

Eligibility. Tenure line faculty and lecturers who have served for at least three full years in a non-visiting position are eligible to be considered for these awards. Individuals may apply annually, and there is no limit on the number of awards an individual may receive in successive years. However, preference will be given to applicants who have not received a Trustees Teaching Award the year before.

Deadline. March 17, 2008. The SLA Teaching and Advising Committee will review all applications. Award recipients will be notified by the end of March.

Selection criteria. Recipients will be selected on the basis of documented teaching excellence with the focus on accomplishments during the previous calendar year. The assessment will be guided by the categories listed below. No single individual is required to meet all the criteria, and applicants may document activities that do not fit these categories.

- Classroom performance
- Curriculum development
- Teaching Awards
- Innovative pedagogy
- Support of students' research
- Mentoring
- Academic advising
- Scholarship of teaching
- Professional development

Documentation guidelines. Individuals who would like to be considered for these awards must provide documentation that demonstrates their teaching excellence. A copy of the teaching section of the most recent FAR and the school produced summary sheets of student evaluations are both required. In addition, applicants may submit up to three pages to document their specific teaching accomplishments. The three supplementary pages should include a personal statement and may include other forms of documenting teaching excellence, such as peer reviews of teaching or external letters. No more than three pages of supplementary materials will be considered. **Six copies** of the application package are required. Submit to canlsmit@iupui.edu, CA 441 by **4.30 p.m. March 17, 2008.**

Please direct any questions to Scott Weeden (sweeden@iupui.edu) of the SLA Teaching and Advising.

To: **Name**

From: **Committee Chair Name**, Chair, Teaching and Advising Committee

Date: **Date**

Subject: Trustees Teaching Awards

Dear **Name**,

We regret to inform you that you were not selected this year to receive a Trustees Teaching Award. The Committee on Teaching and Advising was impressed with your teaching record but, given the ~~large~~ **significant** number of excellent applications, we had to make difficult choices.

We appreciate that this is a disappointment but the Committee believes that you will continue to strive for excellence in teaching and we encourage you to apply again in the future.

Thank you for submitting your application.

Sincerely,

Co-Chair

Committee on Teaching and Advising

Co-Chair

Committee on Teaching and Advising

Cc: **<Chair Name>, Chair, Department of <Department name>**

Robert White, Dean

Marianne Wokeck, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

To: Name

From: Co-Chair, Teaching and Advising Committee
 Co-Chair, Teaching and Advising Committee

Date: Date

Subject: Trustees Teaching Awards

Dear First Name,

We are very pleased to inform you that you were selected this year to receive a Trustees Teaching Award. The Committee on Teaching and Advising was impressed with your excellent teaching record and we commend your dedication to teaching. Your award is \$2,500.00. You will receive the money as a supplemental paycheck later this summer.

We will be honoring the Trustees Teaching Award recipients at the School of Liberal Arts Faculty Assembly on April 18, 2008. We hope you will be there.

Again, congratulations on your award.

Sincerely,

Co-Chair	Co-Chair
Committee on Teaching and Advising	Committee on Teaching and Advising

Cc: Chair Name, Chair, Department of Department Name

Robert White, Dean

Marianne Wokeck, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Richard Hanson, Assistant Dean for Finance & Administration

Sharon Peterman, Associate Director of Finance & Administration

Appendix C

MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING RELEASE TIME FOR TEACHING "INTENSIVE CONTACT" COURSES TO UNDERGRADUATES

Jointly developed by the SLA Teaching and Advising Committee and SLA Dean
April 20, 2008

As departments have expanded undergraduate research opportunities, internships, and capstone courses, more and more teaching is done by individual faculty supervising individual students for which they receive no release time. Such teaching is an extremely important part of our academic mission. Moreover, the campus is embarking on an ambitious campaign (called "**RISE**") to insure that every IUPUI graduate has had at least one credit for guided research (**R**), international study (**I**), service learning (**S**), or experiential learning (**E**) on their transcript. Clearly, this initiative demands even more one-on-one instructional efforts from Liberal Arts faculty.

To meet the demand for intensive contact teaching, and to show recognition for this important form of teaching, the following policy of release time for intensive contact teaching is hereby instituted: Starting in fall 2008, after an individual faculty member has accumulated 30 credit hours of intensive contact teaching (e.g., 10 students at 3 credits each; 30 students at 1 credit each), where they have been the main supervisor of a student pursuing an internship, individual readings/research course, or capstone, they are entitled to receive one course release time from teaching, subject to the approval of the Department Chair.

It is the faculty member's responsibility to apply for such release time from the department chair, with appropriate documentation of intensive contact teaching. Faculty members must give one year's notice for when they would want to use the release time. The timing of the release would be at the discretion of the chair and subject to other departmental programming and instructional needs. A faculty member may only receive one course release for such teaching during an academic year. The SLA Associate Dean for Academic Affairs must be notified that a faculty member is being released from one course as compensation for intensive contact courses.

This policy is supported by the School of Liberal Arts, but its continuation is subject to budgetary considerations. When appropriate, and at the Dean's discretion, the School will provide funds for departments and programs to hire associate faculty members to cover courses released. Because intensive teaching does provide credit hour income, this policy should not be a drain on department or school resources.

Some departments assign responsibility for particular intensive contact courses to particular faculty (e.g., internships); such supervision may be considered part of their regular course or service load. This policy is designed to cover situations where faculty members supervise students in addition to their regular work load, where such supervision is **not** a defined part of their job or course load. (continued next page)

The School of Liberal Arts Teaching and Advising Committee will review implementation of this policy after the second year of implementation, in 2010-11, to make sure that the credit hours involved indeed involve students having close contact with faculty.

Appendix D

Sample Letter to Faculty Regarding Graduating Student Survey

To: ***

From: , Chair
2008-2008 Liberal Arts Committee on Teaching & Advising

Subject: Indications of the impact of particular faculty on students filing for graduation in 2007

Date:

As part of its effort to determine the overall quality of teaching in the School of Liberal Arts and to identify faculty whom students judge retrospectively to have had particular impact on them, the School of Liberal Arts Committee on Teaching and Advising sent Graduating Student Surveys to all those students filing for graduation in 2007. This year there were *** respondents to the survey.

Having completed its analysis of the results of the survey, the members of the committee are pleased to inform you that you were identified as a “remarkable and positive influence” by *** student(s).

As the responses to the Graduating Student Survey document record the impact of your teaching from a different perspective than that of the student evaluations gathered at the end of each semester’s teaching, you may wish to make a copy of this memorandum for your departmental file.

In addition, “Individual Faculty Mentoring Survey” forms were sent to the graduating seniors mentioned above. If any such survey singles you out for having been an outstanding mentor in the student’s academic life, you will find a copy of that form with this memo. Please note that we are sending you the only copy of any such forms and that the Committee on Teaching and Advising does not keep copies.

