

## **ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE**

**Laurie Kirsch, Chair**

**December 8, 2015**

### **Minutes**

Present: L. Kirsch (Chair), A. Duggan, B. Falcione, C. Golden, A. Infanti, C. Lance-Jones, G. Mitchell, J. O'Donnell, C. Perfetti, S. Puri, J. Ramirez, O. Singh

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Laurie Kirsch welcomed the committee to the first meeting of the year. The council members introduced themselves as there are several new members.

### **Council Charge**

Laurie began giving the charge to the Council on the Provost's behalf, as the Provost was unable to attend the meeting. She noted that former Provost Jim Maher established the Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE) in 1998. He chaired the Council during the 1998-99 academic year; Vice Provost Andrew Blair assumed the chair the following year. Vice Provost Juan Manfredi then chaired the committee for one year followed by Vice Provost Laurie Kirsch, who began her tenure as chair in the 2013-2014 academic year. ACIE "advises the Provost on the means to encourage instructional development and teaching excellence at the University of Pittsburgh."

The Council had several achievements during the past year. For the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the instructional grants program ("Innovation in Education Awards") was implemented, which was available to all faculty members throughout the University. Recent award history has been as follows: In Spring 2015, 6 awards were funded in the total amount of \$83,660, out of 11 proposals submitted. In Spring 2014, 10 awards were funded in the total amount of \$147,036, out of 32 proposals submitted. In Spring 2013, 7 awards were funded in the total amount of \$106,689, out of 30 proposals submitted. Over the 16-year period, 517 proposals have been submitted, and 165 have been funded. Submissions and funded projects have come from academic units across the entire University. Laurie noted that the 2014-2015 funded projects are listed on the Advisory Council's website.

For the past few years the Council has been asked to monitor progress on the move from paper-based to online student opinion of teaching surveys. The 2014-2015 academic year was the second full year in which the surveys were administered fully online. Recommendations from the ACIE Task Force sub-committee were implemented this year to enhance communication and outreach about the online evaluations. A 56% student response rate to the surveys was achieved, (as compared to an average of 75% when they were administered on paper,) and were down 1% from the previous year. This response rate continues to be above national norms. There has also been a 24% increase in the number of courses being evaluated since online surveys became optional in fall 2012. During the past year, ACIE also provided guidance to CIDDE, not only for the online Student Opinion of Teaching Surveys but also for CIDDE's diversity programming and other faculty development activities.

This academic year the Council will engage in the following activities. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Innovation in Education Awards has been distributed to all University faculty members via Read Green. Laurie reminded that Council that they will play a critical role in reviewing the proposals. She asked that the Council evaluate the proposals in the same balanced fashion as in prior years and make recommendations to the Provost concerning which proposals should receive support under this awards program. Laurie noted that she appreciates the time and effort that goes into the review process, and thanked the Council in advance for the thoughtful and constructive way in which they will approach this responsibility.

Laurie reminded the Council that they will act as an advisory board to CIDDE by providing oversight and recommendations with respect to CIDDE's faculty development programs and events as well as other initiatives and services in support of teaching and learning.

Laurie noted two items will be on the Council's agenda this year, and possible subcommittees will be formed to gather input. First, there will be continuing emphasis on developing faculty programming to support diversity in the curriculum and inclusion in the classroom. One of the primary approaches is the Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development. Plans for the 2016 Institute will be reviewed with Council members for their suggestions and input. In 2015, 186 faculty attended the events that were a part of the Provost's Diversity Institute, with an additional 56 faculty on the waiting lists for the events (due to event capacity limits). Faculty from all across campus and across the regional campuses attended the events, which were rated highly by attendees. The Diversity Institute also sponsored several small grants to promote the incorporation of diversity principles in the classroom. Five grants were given out of six applications, for a total of \$2,885.

Second, the Council will also be asked to provide input on a proposal for funding for discipline-based research in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

Laurie asked for a motion from council members to approve the May 6, 2015, meeting minutes. The motion was offered, seconded, and approved. The minutes will be posted on the ACIE website.

### **CIDDE Updates**

Cynthia Golden presented a PowerPoint to the Council outlining CIDDE's major activities and updates. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

### **Innovation in Education Awards**

Laurie encouraged the Council to remind their departments and colleagues about the awards program, and noted that reminders will be sent to the department chairs and Council members. Council members noted that advertising and announcements should be increased for the awards as well as other events in order to better promote them and increase participation.

Upcoming ACIE meetings will be focused on the Innovation in Education Awards process. The meeting in January will discuss the process in detail and the timing of the process. The meeting in March will be a long meeting to review the proposals and come to a consensus on which to recommend to the Provost for funding. Below is the schedule of meetings:

- a. Friday, January 22, 10:00 – 11:30, 826 COL (*Review and discuss the process for reviewing the Innovation in Education proposals*)
- b. Tuesday, March 15, 4:00 – 7:00; and, if needed, Wednesday, March 16, 8:30 – 10:00, Alumni Hall, room TBD (*Make recommendations for the Innovation in Education awards*)
- c. Monday, April 11, 3:00 – 4:00, 826 COL
- d. May meeting, date & location TBD

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.