

**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE**  
**Vice Provost Laurie J. Kirsch, Chair**  
**December 5, 2016**

**Minutes**

Present: L. Kirsch (Chair), S. Corrall, B. Falcione, C. Golden, G. Mitchell, J. O'Donnell, W. Pamerleau, C. Perfetti, J. Ramirez, L. Roberts, T. Seybolt, 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. 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 17<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 2016, 8 awards were funded in the total amount of \$88,347, out of 20 proposals submitted. 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. Over the 17-year period, 537 proposals have been submitted, and 173 have been funded. Submissions and funded projects have come from academic units across the entire University.

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 2015-2016 academic year was the third 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 58% student response rate to the surveys was achieved (as compared to an average of 75% when they were administered on paper). This response rate continues to be above national norm. There has also been a 31% increase in the number of courses being evaluated since online surveys became optional in fall 2012.

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 noted that, consistent with the Plan for Pitt, CIDDE has been renamed the University Center for Teaching and Learning, and has been refocusing its efforts to align with the strategic goal of advancing educational excellence. Laurie reminded the Council that they will act as an advisory board to the University Center Teaching and Learning by providing oversight, suggestions and recommendations with respect to Center's activities, including assessment of teaching, diversity programming and other faculty development programs, and other initiatives and services in support of teaching and learning.

### **University Center for Teaching and Learning Updates**

Cynthia Golden presented a PowerPoint to the Council outlining the University Center for Teaching and Learning's major activities and updates. During the presentation, she emphasized the progress in diversity programming. Specifically, Cynthia noted that in 2016, 288 faculty attended events that were a part of the Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development, which increased from 197 from the events held in 2015. Faculty from all across campus and across the regional campuses attended the events, which were rated highly by attendees. The Diversity Institute continued with an extended experience for a smaller group of faculty, who are working with learning designers and librarians throughout this term to incorporate changes into their courses. A copy of the entire presentation is attached to the minutes.

### **Innovation in Education Awards & Future Meetings**

Upcoming ACIE meetings will be focused on the Innovation in Education Awards process. During the meeting in January, the process for reviewing the proposals will be summarized and discussed. The March meeting will be devoted to reviewing the proposals and determining which to recommend to the Provost for funding. Below is the schedule of future meetings:

- a. Thursday, January 26, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., 815 Alumni Hall (*Review and discuss the process for reviewing the Innovation in Education proposals*)
- b. Wednesday, March 15, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., B26 Alumni Hall (*Make recommendations for the Innovation in Education awards*)
- c. Tuesday, April 18, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m., 815 Alumni Hall

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.