

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

January 8, 2025, 2-3 p.m.

Minutes

Present: M. Bridges (Chair), E. Arroyo, B. Falcione, L. Delale O'Connor, L. Fennimore, C. Gates, J. Hart, P. Harper, K. Heffernan, Z. Horvath, B. Keown, J. Martinson, M. Norman, J. Radzilowicz, A. Tuttle, E. Votruba-Drzal

Not present: C. Bonneau and T. Klinbubpa-Neff

Mike Bridges called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. and welcomed the members. Marie Norman formally moved to approve the January minutes, which Zsuzsa Horvath seconded.

Zsuzsa expressed concerns about Read.AI, primarily because the meeting was recorded, and minutes were already being taken. Please note that the [University's policy on Read.AI](#). Pitt IT has not endorsed using this app and has asked all campus community members to comply with the [University's Acceptable Computing Access and Use Policies](#).

Mike introduced three staff members from the Teaching Center: John Radzilowicz, Erik Arroyo, and Chris Gates. They attended the meeting to contribute to the discussion on enhancing the center's visibility. Mike reviewed the timeline for the Innovation in Education Award. If you have any questions, please remember that we will provide more details in February. Zsuzsa asked to confirm the review committee meeting on March 25.

UCTL Visibility and Impact

The discussion focused on enhancing the visibility and impact of the University Center for Teaching and Learning (UCTL) by expanding its audience outreach. It began with a review of survey results, during which participants examined intentional partnerships with key stakeholders, including the School of Education, the University Library System, the Learning Research and Development Center, AI initiatives, regional campuses, and Health Sciences. Mike highlighted efforts to create a consortium of teaching and learning centers to share best practices, while Zsuzsa added that Pitt's Health Sciences Library System has learning designers.

Attendance Challenges & Engagement

A significant concern was declining attendance and engagement due to post-pandemic burnout, a challenge also faced by the Teaching Center. Marie suggested using the Teaching Center as a central hub for communication and co-hosting events. Lori noted that the School of Education's policy requiring event attendance significantly boosted participation, while Laura shared that the School of Nursing implemented a monthly virtual faculty forum. Elizabeth added that the Department of Psychology emphasized the importance of leveraging technology to enhance engagement, and Paul pointed out that asynchronous content continues to attract strong participation. Marie stressed the need to ensure asynchronous offerings remain valuable, and Elizabeth suggested using CGS's expertise in asynchronous courses, potentially by inviting outside speakers. Mike mentioned budget constraints and asked for recommendations for the provost. Jeremy proposed coordinating efforts with the new Digital Center for Digital Education.

Discussion on Collaboration

John G. Radzilowicz reported that ID Partners meets quarterly with 15 to 20 participants. The discussion centers on reconnecting teams involved in this initiative. [Lex Drozd](#) is the contact person for more information.

Supporting Research and Innovation

The committee discussed showcasing classroom innovations and the effective use of digital tools through speaker series and other initiatives to support research and innovation in teaching. Marie proposed creating a student innovation lab, recognizing that Gen Z students prefer interactive, visually engaging, and tech-driven learning experiences.

Next Steps

The group should continue sharing updates on student projects and collaboration opportunities and exploring discussions about AI applications in education. The meeting concluded with a reminder about the Innovation in Education Award Review Process, scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 3:01 p.m.