

Meeting Minutes – Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE)

Tuesday, May 6, 2-3 p.m.

<https://pitt.zoom.us/j/97903916729>

Passcode: ACIE2425

Present: M. Bridges (Chair), B. Falcione, L. Delale O'Connor, L. Fennimore, P. Harper, J. Hart, Heffernan, Z. Horvath, J. Martinson, M. Norman, E. Votruba-Drzal

Not present: C. Bonneau, B. Keown, N. Klinbubpa-Neff, A. Tuttle

Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mike Bridges called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m., welcomed members, and provided an overview of the agenda.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

At Bonnie Falcione's recommendations, the first section of the minutes was modified to clarify that the discussion on intellectual property was in the context of the Innovation in Education Awards. Marie Norman moved to approve the February meeting minutes, and Zsuzsa Horvath seconded the motion.

The March meeting minutes (the three-hour proposal review meeting), the first to be drafted and shared, will include only a summary of the review process. The revised minutes were sent out via email. Kayla Heffernan moved to approve the revised minutes, and Jeremy Martinson seconded the motion.

Membership Updates

Five members will leave the council: Chris Bonneau, Lori Delale-O'Connor, Laura Fennimore, Paul Harper, and Noon Klinbubpa-Neff. Six new members will join in the fall.

Innovation In Education Awards

All eight proposals recommended by the council were approved and funded, totaling nearly \$100,000. Applicants not selected will receive feedback. Reviewers will consolidate comments into a summary (1-2 paragraphs).

Fall Charge and Future Focus Areas

The provost will issue a new charge in the fall term, including oversight of the Innovation in Education Awards and potentially new focus areas.

Members discussed several potential focus areas for the council to consider or recommend:

- Supporting and integrating school- and department-level faculty development initiatives, especially teaching-related ones.
- Promoting information and digital literacy, including combating misinformation and the role of generative AI in teaching.
- Advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning, emphasizing planning IRB-approved research alongside instructional innovation.

- Strengthening partnerships across UCTL, LRDC, and other units to support research on pedagogy.
- Enhancing OMET and exploring classroom observation tools aligned with best practices.
- Exploring whether clearer standards or expectations for course design and communication should be developed to improve the student experience.
- Discussing the feasibility of a “student bill of rights” or similar guiding document and how it aligns with existing policies and modules like **Teach@Pitt**.
- Developing professional development leave opportunities for faculty to engage in reflective experiences to inform teaching.

Teaching Center Updates

The **Teach@Pitt** module is expected to launch in the fall term. Additional tracks in development include:

- Teaching Online
- Teaching with AI
- Experiential Learning
- Community-Engaged Teaching

Leadership Transition

Mike Bridges will step down as chair in June. The new chair will be the incoming Teaching Center director. Mike thanked the council for their work, and members appreciated his leadership.

Next Steps

1. Revise and approve the March meeting minutes to include a general summary of the proposal review process without identifying applicants or specific feedback. Circulate for final approval.
2. Primary reviewers will receive all comments and are asked to consolidate them into a 1-2 paragraph summary for applicants. This is the first time feedback will be provided to those not selected.
3. Recommend focus areas for the Fall Charge.
4. Review current student rights and course expectations language to explore ways to promote clarity and alignment in course design.
5. Consider a report documenting the Innovation in Education Awards' history, impact, and process. This report can serve as a model for other institutions and highlight the University's commitment to innovation.

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.