

TO: George T. Matthews
Chairman, University Senate Steering Committee

FROM: Lewis N. Pino
Director, Research and Instructional Services
and Richard P. Tucker
Chairman, University Teaching and Learning Committee

SUBJECT: Report on Teaching & Learning Committee Activities, 1976-77

The University Teaching and Learning Committee had a very busy year. It took a number of new initiatives (enumerated and briefly described below). Perhaps more importantly, it began to define more precisely its goals and objectives.

I. During the fall, the Senate approved a test of the validity of a limited set of student perception of teaching effectiveness items and asked for a report from the T/L Committee in the fall of 1977. Mr. Lilliston has conducted the study, is currently evaluating the results, and will prepare a report for presentation to the Committee and then to the Senate.

II. The T/L Committee withdrew its request for Senate approval of a procedure for peer evaluation of teaching effectiveness. It was agreed within the Committee that any effort designed to increase the effectiveness of review processes concerning retention, tenure, and promotion should properly be the function of some group other than the T/L Committee, with our Committee involved in an advising role, if at all. Our charge, as we interpret it, should be limited to the stimulation and support of good teaching and the enhancement of student learning. Thus, we see ourselves as dealers in carrots rather than wielders of sticks.

III. Early in the fall the Committee approved a call for departmental study proposals, offering travel grants (not to exceed \$1000 each) in support of departmental plans for instructional improvement. An announcement, distributed on October 6, 1976, produced nine proposals by the January 14, 1977 deadline.

Three awards were announced in February, 1977. These grants, to the Library, the Political Science Department, and the Chemistry Department, support important new initiatives for these academic units. One of the conditions of award is that each group will give a public report at a Teaching & Learning workshop next fall on the insights gained by visits to three to five exemplary academic programs around the country. We are pleased to report that the Committee, acting for the first time as a review panel, came to agreement with great unanimity on the proposals to be funded. Obviously, the task of evaluation of proposals of this sort is not easy.

IV. During the year, the T/L Committee prepared and dispatched proposals to thirteen private foundations in Michigan, seeking \$2000 to \$3000 gifts in support of an Educational Development Fund. To date, this drive has produced a series of interesting denial letters but no dollars. We will continue the effort over the summer and into next year.

V. The subcommittee on workshops, chaired by Ms. Andreas, designed and presented a day-long workshop on March 18, led by Professors Lawrence Alexander and Leroy Olson, of Learning Services, Michigan State University. In spite of a good bit of snow, some 30 faculty and staff members showed up. Messrs. Alexander and Olson gave a detailed presentation on principles of learning and evaluation and on student feedback. Then in April Ms. Johnson, representing the Committee, attended a day-long workshop on curricular innovation, at the University of Toledo, conducted by Professor Louis B. Mayhew of Stanford. A report of Ms. Johnson's observations was made available to members of the Committee and selected others.

VI. An important new beginning for the Committee evolved from conversations between Mr. Lindemann and Ms. Hitchingham of the Library. It is Mr. Lindemann's belief (which the Committee has endorsed) that all too often we attempt modifications in teaching and learning without sufficient recourse to reports on similar experiments at other sites. We are beginning to develop, through liaison with the Library, a service for faculty and for the Committee which will give us a better sense of the recorded history of efforts to improve teaching and learning.

VII. As you may recall, the Committee began last year to look at the impact of Oakland on its graduates and its current students. That effort is now embodied in two projects. The first of these, under the direction of Mr. Brill, is a pilot study of the impact of Oakland on its current students. The second project, under Mr. Warren, concerns itself with career pathways of Oakland graduates. During the year, Mr. Pino and Mr. Warren called on the National Institute of Education and were encouraged to submit a proposal to that agency. The NIE interest is in employer perception of recent graduates. Preliminary work on this project and preparation of an NIE proposal are underway.

VIII. The Committee is currently working on an announcement offering small grants in support of course and curricular improvement proposals. If the Educational Development Fund is given the resources requested for next year, the announcement will be released in late summer or early fall. The plan calls for grants (perhaps \$1500 to \$2000 each) for support of faculty working on specific course and curricular improvement projects. A typical grant might include support for a faculty member or two for four weeks during the spring or summer term plus associated expenses involved with development, initial offering, and evaluation of individual courses or groups of related courses.

IX. The Committee has been in touch with Mr. Brieger representing the Executive Committee of the AAUP. AAUP is proposing to fund an annual award for teaching excellence, and the Committee is preparing a plan for the processes of selection and recognition of winners.

X. During the year we have been in touch with several other institutions in Michigan which are in the initial stages of programs to stimulate and support improvement in teaching and learning. It appears that our Departmental Study program is unique and that most institutions in Michigan, with the exceptions of MSU and U-M, are perhaps three to five years behind the thinking going on in our own T/L Committee.

All in all, we believe this has been a good year for the T/L Committee. We would like to express our appreciation to Mr. Robert Stern who served as Chairman of the Committee during the fall semester and to the following faculty, staff, and students who served on the Committee during the year:

Max Brill
Dorsey Hammond (winter semester)
Margaret Kurzman
Larry Lilliston
Charles Lindemann
Jim Schmidt (fall semester)
Richard Tucker
Donald Warren
Rosalind Andreas
Carol Johnson
Andre Perkins
Mary Williams
Penny Zielinski

It may be of interest to you as well that Mary Otto and Robert Williamson, who have been appointed to the Committee for next year, have already begun meeting with us during our spring-term sessions.

LNP/ak
6/6/77