MINUTES OF MEETING, October 8, 2010

Members Present: Bill Abbott, Jessica Davis, Joel Goldfield, Angela Harkins (Chair), Mary Frances Malone, Aaron Perkus, Emily Smith, Vishnu Vinekar, Meredith Wallace-Kazer.

Guests Present: Beth Boquet (Dean of Academic Engagement), Tracy Immerso (IDEA On-Campus Coordinator), Kathryn Nantz (Center for Academic Excellence), Roben Torosyan (Center for Academic Excellence).

The meeting was called to order by Chair Harkins at 3:35.

1. Minutes from September 8 Meeting

MOVED by Bill Abbott and seconded by Mary Frances Malone, that these minutes be approved as submitted. After brief discussion the motion PASSED unanimously.

2. Student Representatives

Chair Harkins reported that she has been in touch with Caitlin Liguori of FUSA, and that Ms. Liguori told her that a FUSA representative would attend this meeting. That student has not shown up.

In accordance with our September decision to include a graduate student as an FDEC guest for the entire year, Chair Harkins announced that Brittany Child has been nominated by Meredith Wallace-Kazer for this position. The FDEC accepted her as the graduate representative on FDEC for 2010-2011.

3. IDEA Training and Workshops

Chair Harkins reported that, in accordance with Aaron Perkus’ earlier request that part-time faculty be given IDEA training, she has urged departments who have requested to have workshops at their department meetings that they extend an invitation to their part-time faculty (See IDEA Implementation Schedule). Chair Harkins also suggested that there be an evening workshop in November that part-timers can attend; this is when faculty will receive the forms and they will be thinking about IDEA. Aaron Perkus stated that part-timers aren’t always on the radar, and that it is essential to reach out to them. The video link is not enough; they need the face-to-face instruction.

Mary Frances Malone stated that this matter is of great importance for the blended classes, where you might have 20 University College students and ten day-undergraduates in the same class. Before, you got two sets of forms; now you get just one.

This led into discussion of ASAP courses, which only have a seven-week semester. Not only do these instructors need workshops; but they apparently need forms right away; fall ASAP courses are finishing at the end of October. Fortunately however, according to Aaron Perkus, there are ten ASAP I courses offered this semester; nine of which are online. Vishnu made the recommendation that the online courses automatically receive an online IDEA form.
agreed that this was a good idea and that she will ask the C&NS people if this is possible. It was then agreed that Aaron would contact the sole land-based instructor to also administer the IDEA form online. Aaron will contact this instructor (Burlinson).

Mary Frances Malone, however, asked whether there are other ASAP courses, perhaps in the Business School? Vishnu Vinekar will find out.

WEBPAGE

Chair Harkins recommended that we create an IDEA website to centralize all of the IDEA information, including the training video, and other helpful links. Harkins had already asked Jay Rozgonyi and Brian Remigio to identify a logical website for this type of information. Jay replied that there is the “website” option (which needs to be cleared first with the website people); or there is the xythos folder option. Harkins recommended a website option; Aaron agreed. Kathy Nantz stated that CAE has posted some information about IDEA in the CAE website. Roben said that he would forward the link to the FDEC. Kathy reminded the FDEC that the CAE, while certainly a part of the IDEA implementation effort, has limits to its role; there are only so many IDEA workshops that it can schedule.

**MOVED by Bill Abbott, that a central IDEA website be created.**  **PASSED, tacitly.** We’ll go ahead and request a webpage to be situated in a logical site. Harkins will ask Jay Rozgonyi to proceed with finding a webpage.

Aaron Perkus asked where the site is to be housed, and suggested that, considering the need for easy access, there be a call-out button on the homepage. Kathy Nantz stated that, in the interim, CAE will move its IDEA button out, to make it more accessible.

Joel Goldfield brought up the problem of courses that have a combination of graduates and undergraduates. Do they receive two sets of forms? One can assume that instructors may have different teaching goals for the undergraduate and graduate cohorts, and therefore would want to have two Faculty Information Forms, and mark items 1-12 differently. Jessica Davis stated that any cross-listed courses will have this problem; she gets very different evaluations from different cohorts (biology majors and chemistry majors) in the same course, and would not want to group them together. We should stick to the same procedure. Emily pointed out that in combined graduate/undergraduate courses, there is a different label for each: 300 and 400. The ability to demonstrate distinct and separate learning goals for the different student populations is critical for GSEAP accreditation. Jessica stated that it would be nice in certain circumstances to be able to have both options. Chair Harkins and Mary Frances Malone replied that smooshing them together would have a lot of logistical problems, but inquiry into this may be something to follow up with CNS. Tracy Immerso recommended that we stick to the two-set, separate format for now.

**Online Issues**

Chair Harkins reminded everyone that October 15 is the deadline for online registration. Thus far only five people have registered. Add the ten from UC and some likely others, and we’ll have a critical mass of about 20-25. Tracy Immerso will add the five FUSA questions to the online form. Faculty members will select whether to opt out of the FUSA questions when they fill out their FIF online in mid-Nov. IDEA online can be done easily through Blackboard or by
having the students get a link via email. Vishnu announced that all online IDEA courses automatically receive an email.

Chair Harkins recommended that we offer to the online IDEA registrants the option of having a workshop on how to do IDEA online if they so desire. At this workshop we will walk through the process and outline strategies for capturing as many respondents as possible. Such strategies include, first, taking one’s class to a laptop-computer accessible room, and second, sending students lots of reminders via email. With regard to the first strategy, Kathy Nantz pointed out that it is very difficult logistically to move one’s class to a computer-fitted classroom. It disrupts the learning process at an important time of the semester, when instructors are trying to finish up and summarize. We cannot sacrifice learning for evaluations. Chair Harkins agreed. Mary Frances Malone suggested that instructors do IDEA the week before Thanksgiving rather than at the very end of the semester; doing the evaluation at this point in the semester is suggested by the IDEA Center itself as a good way to evaluate. Mary Frances suggested that, in the spring, we send out the forms right after spring break, rather than waiting for April.

MOVED and PASSED, tacitly, that the Spring timetable for IDEA will be an agenda item for the December FDEC meeting.

Chair Harkins will send out an email on October 15 to all online-registered faculty, asking them what the best times and days are for attendance at an Online IDEA Workshop. This email will also contain a scheduler which asks registrants for their optimal times, should they desire a workshop. Harkins will do this and reserve a computer lab, perhaps the one in the first floor of DMH through the registrar.

Vishnu suggested that all faculty currently teaching online courses be automatically registered for IDEA online. This was welcomed as a good idea by the Committee, although Tracy Immerse stated that we need to talk to C&NS about that; Harkins will email CNS to see if this can be set up automatically.

Chair Harkins asked whether anyone on the FDEC would be willing to pilot IDEA via Blackboard. Meredith volunteered. Chair Harkins will send out the Blackboard online IDEA instructions to the FDEC that Jay Rozgonyi has prepared.

Educating Students on IDEA

Chair Harkins reported that a student reporter/essayist will do a write-up on IDEA and ask the Mirror editor to include space in a November issue. Angela also said that we need to work with FUSA on how to change the student culture/raise awareness. Any suggestions as to how to get IDEA onto the students’ radar?

Emily Smith asserted that the faculty must take a central role. The Mirror is only campus news; IDEA needs to be presented in an academic format. Hopefully, if students hear about IDEA in all five of their courses, they’ll understand IDEA’s nature and importance.

Kathy Nantz suggested that we have an IDEA table at the Core Unmasked event. The entire FDEC approved. If a student has seen the questions in advance, the learning process will be improved [AFTER THE MEETING, MARY FRANCES SUGGESTED TO ANGELA THAT
WE PUT THE STUDENT EVALUATION FORM ON FACEBOOK—this may be something to do in Nov. to heighten awareness]. Angela urged FDEC members to tell their colleagues to talk openly in their courses about the IDEA form. The IDEA form does not need to be a mysterious secret that students hear/see only on the evaluation day.

Diagnostic Report Form and IDEA Administrators’ Form

Chair Harkins stated that, for the sake of time, we will postpone our discussion of the Diagnostic Report Form and related items, which were listed under the final agenda (this includes discussion of the two proposed ideas for motions). This part of the faculty education in IDEA will take place during the spring semester and planning of workshops. Other future efforts include the coaching of department in formulating additional questions. We will discuss this at our next meeting in November.

Chair Harkins passed around the IDEA Administrators’ folder, and asked for volunteers for a subcommittee to work on this. This would get moving next spring for use at the end of Spring 2011. Meredith Wallace-Kazer, Aaron Perkus, Mary Frances Malone, and Chair Angela Harkins volunteered for this subcommittee.

4. Peer Review of Teaching

Chair Harkins called for volunteers for a subcommittee to work on putting together a template for peer review. This would include finding out what comparable/peer institution practices are. Bill Pallett of IDEA has told us that student evaluations should only constitute 30% of an instructor’s overall teaching evaluation. The subcommittee will collect samples of templates from other peer institutions. Harkins passed around a set of “exhibits” of forms that she had herself collected. Bill Abbott volunteered for this subcommittee, emphasizing the need to create a peer review evaluation that can have the same numerical precision, and hence the same weight with the Rank and Tenure Committee, as the student evaluation currently does. Vishnu also volunteered for this subcommittee. The subcommittee will report on December 1st.

Mary Frances reported that the print shop has 6000 old evaluation envelopes. In the interest of conservation, can we not use them with IDEA? Chair Harkins replied yes; we need to write a new set of instructions, including the script that IDEA recommends, and this can be glued to the top of each envelope. We can use these envelopes until they run out.

5. Faculty Development Day

Chair Harkins announced that this semester’s Faculty Development Day will take place on December 10, from 12:30 to 3:00. The SVPAA’s office has graciously offered to provide lunch. Under the general title of “Student (Academic) Engagement”, we are looking for sub-topics for the breakout sessions. Chair Harkins welcomed Dean of Student Engagement Beth Boquet, asked if she would be our plenary speaker, and asked for suggestions from Dean Boquet for breakout session topics.
Dean Boquet expressed her willingness to be the plenary speaker, and outlined a number of possible topics:

1. **Academic Integrity.** Recently Fairfield has become a member of the Center for Academic Integrity, a consortium of schools with its base at Clemson University. The Center provides resources and opportunities to exchange information on academic integrity. For Fairfield, the question is: How do we work with entering first-years, other students, faculty, and staff to create a campus environment that promotes academic integrity?

2. **Advising and Academic Planning.** We now have a Director of Academic Planning, Suzanne Solensky. She will coordinate academic planning across departments and develop resources, including a website. She could be part of this Development Day. Other work being done in this area is a Peer Advising pilot, and FYI mentors. We are attempting to get students to initiate contact more proactively with their advisors, and to prepare faculty for the onset of more students resulting from this greater initiative.

3. **Residential Opportunities.** These include first-year communities, sophomore Living-and-Learning, engagement at the junior-senior level, and Build-a-House program.

Chair Harkins commented that we would like to offer a special breakout for graduate students. Kathy Nantz suggested the engagement of students in research as a possible breakout topic. This could be undergraduate-graduate research, or faculty working with students on research. Dean Boquet suggested a fourth topic:

4. **Writing Assistance to Graduate Students.** What do we know about the writing skills of our graduate students? What assistance are we providing? What are the long-term faculty needs?

Mary Frances Malone suggested that we also consider the level of quantitative skills required for graduate students: data manipulation, factor analysis, etc. Dean Boquet suggested “Foundational Skills for Graduate Students” as a breakout session that would include all of these skills. Emily Smith stated that there is a lot of interest in the GSEAP for this.

Meredith Wallace-Kazer stated that students for whom English is a second language have special difficulties, and many faculty cannot direct them to the proper resources.

The discussion turned to the overarching Development Day title, under which might co-exist the sub-topics: (1) Academic Integrity; (2) Advising; (3) Research; (4) Graduate Writing Assistance; (5) Residence Opportunities. Emily Smith stated that “engagement” can imply classroom engagement, as opposed to engagement outside the classroom. In order to produce a “Save the Date” flier right now, we need to come up with a title that can accurately encompass the subtopics.

The Committee considered various ways in which some of these five topics could be folded into one another (advising as teaching and learning; advising and mentoring as topics for graduate conversation). After discussion, we decided on the title “Supporting Student Engagement”, with three breakout topics: 1. Advising and Mentoring; 2. Academic
Integrity, and 3. Academic Writing and Research (we’ll mention the graduate student angle in the descriptive blurb). Chair Harkins will prepare a rough draft to circulate for fine tuning.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05.

Bill Abbott