Faculty Development and Evaluation Committee
Minutes of Meeting, September 9, 2011

Members present: William Abbott, Mike Andreychik, Jessica Davis, Joel Goldfield, Meredith Kazer (Chair), Mary Frances Malone, Valeria Martinez, Aaron Perkus, .
Guests Present: Tracy Immerso, Larry Miners, Roben Torosyan

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kazer at 8:17 a.m.

Minutes of Previous Meeting
The Minutes of the FDEC meeting of August 31 were read and approved as submitted.

Development Days
Bill handed out the results of the assessment questionnaire for the May 5 Development Day “Plagiarism and Student Engagement: Making Productive Connections” by Dr. Rebecca Moore Howard. The results were quite positive; see attached.

Bill stated that last year’s FDEC decided that the December 2011 and May 2012 Development Days would be reports on the CAE Peer Review projects being undertaken by GSEAP, Nursing, VAPA, Religious Studies, and History. This year’s FDEC is at liberty to change that if it wishes.

Mary Frances suggested that we seek out other groups with whom we might want to collaborate in Development Days. There are other groups involved with peer review. We could send the date, time, and subject of our Development Days to faculty chairs and centers, to see if they would be interested in collaborating.

Larry suggested that we send emails to department chairs, deans, and the University Assessment Committee, explaining the grass roots peer review effort being organized by the CAE.

IDEA
Tracy passed out the agenda of the IDEA Subcommittee’s recent meeting. Overall, we are light-years ahead of where we were last fall. Summer project updates:
- Creation of Banner Attribute for “IDEA Evaluate.” With this we can much more easily identify which courses should be evaluated and which not.
- Determine Group Reports. We’ll work with deans to use local codes for aggregate level information.
- Website for accessing IDEA results. This will enable faculty members to get reports anytime. It should be implemented by January.
- URL for Online Evaluations – technical design. This gives instructors more control over when the students fill out the forms. Right now we send the email to the students regularly, and we will continue to do this. Now, however, the instructor can say “Today’s the day: use this URL.”
- Consistent Banner extract created for IDEA database upload. Uploads done in the same way every time; far fewer errors. There are remaining problems for summer courses, though.
Projects for the Fall Semester:

- Campaign for New Hires/Adjuncts: distribute instructions on how to set up Fairfield account and automatically transfer to an external e-mail address. We need to make sure that adjuncts and new hires know how to access their Fairfield University emails. Some adjuncts do not know the start and end dates for IDEA.
- Implement course URLs for online evaluations.
- Implement Website for accessing IDEA results.
- Fall 2011 IDEA timeline to be confirmed by 9/15.

Tracy summarized: we’re on the right track.
Mary Frances reported that IDEA was discussed at the New Faculty Orientation, and new faculty were encouraged to attend CAE workshops.

Joel asked (1) where are we with policy on Independent Studies?, and (2) How are we doing with the U.S. Post Office? Tracy answered, re (2): we are taping and quadruple taping and getting insurance; also, fewer paper forms means less chance of trouble. Re (1), this is going to be addressed by the IDEA evaluation indicator. The deans will sit down and say yes or no on all courses. Some independent studies will be assessed; most not.

Meredith asked whether this dean yes/no process will occur every year and semester. Tracy replied that we’ve entered it at the course level (“This is what you selected last time”), so that every semester the previous decisions will continue by default unless they are changed. If new courses are added, Tracy will contact the dean about them.

Meredith asked whether there are going to be new IDEA workshops. Larry replied yes, in cooperation with the FDEC. CAE will send people to the IDEA Train-the-Trainer Workshop in Florida, and these people will include FDEC members and maybe also Rank and Tenure Committee members. We still need workshops on both how-to-use and on how-to-interpret. Ideally we will have both this fall. Last year the penetration of IDEA knowledge into the faculty was less than 50%.

Mary Frances stated that we will need to report to the Academic Council in May. So, let’s workshop on how to do better on learning goals. Can we determine easily whether, say, four of the twelve learning goals are consistently chosen across the faculty? If so, then we could have workshops on those four.

Larry stated that the CAE is thinking about a series of “getting back to basics” workshops (course design, group work, etc.). These workshops should be separate from the IDEA workshops.

Larry stated that last spring the CAE developed an excellent worksheet showing the relationship of the pathways to the IDEA goals.

Aaron stated that at Fairfield the missing level in IDEA is the department level, in between the individual faculty member and the University administration. Let’s get the department chairs involved. Faculty will be doubly devoted to developing courses and course goals. Building on that, Mary Frances stated that many departments, as they do their departmental reviews, look at the curriculum so as to shift goals to match the pathways: one or two objectives that run across the entire department. “These two of the twelve IDEA goals define our departmental goals.”
Meredith asked whether we should promote department-level workshops or simply send a communication to the departments. Aaron suggested that we do both. Larry said that he can contact deans and ask for fifteen minutes of their chairs’ meetings.

Meredith asked what the role of the FDEC should be in planning the workshops? One answer: we are a resource for the CAE. Mary Frances stated that a positive step would be for the FDEC to draw up a statement defining its partnership with the CAE; a partnership along the lines of development, not evaluation. The FDEC should formally endorse the relevant CAE workshops. Bill stated that last year the FDEC was in the process of passing the mechanics of IDEA administration off to the CAE, but that there are still gray areas. Roben stated that it is all about effectiveness; the FDEC helps with buy-in. For the time being FDEC members should be trained in IDEA.

Aaron commented that, if the FDEC is to report to the Academic Council next spring, then this fall is our last shot at showing faculty the value of IDEA. If we are only able to show faculty how to use IDEA, we miss the opportunity to show its value. The FDEC can show faculty how IDEA can benefit their teaching.

Bill told the Committee that the decision facing the Academic Council in May is not whether to continue IDEA or not, but simply whether we should continue to use the yellow forms and whether we should continue to offer the paper and online options, switch to just paper, or switch to just online. Reminding Bill of his earlier statement that any committee can reverse the decisions of its predecessors, Mary Frances stated that there is an undercurrent of people opposed to the IDEA form. This opposition is partly based on its expense, and also, as we move to three-year review, on the notion that it is repetitious and a waste of time.

Joel suggested that departments discuss what IDEA shows them as departments. Departments, as well as individuals, have to see the advantages.

Meredith stated that we should continue the same strong relationship with the CAE. Roben stated that the FDEC must have a vision. The first twenty IDEA questions are broken into five clusters. An individual department could focus on one of these, and the FDEC could help. The FDEC could also make clear recommendations on how often courses should be assessed.

Joel suggested that the FDEC look into a online survey-monkey giving immediate feedback, anonymous feedback, on how a course is progressing. Some of us need training in how and what questions to ask. If faculty had a survey, everyone could share. Mary Frances replied that there is a concern over over-surveying of students: MATS, plus IDEA, plus Joel’s surveys, might be too much. Joel replied that, in the semester or years when the course is skipping IDEA, we could do this more frequently.

Mike expressed worry about people coming up with their own survey questions; it would turn out to be a hodgepodge.

Roben said that we need to decide what day the Faculty Development will be. December 14 is the Faculty Learning Communities day. Tuesday the 13th for our Development Day?
Meredith asked whether there should be an FDEC role in the local codes. Tracy replied that we have eight digits. The University has all that it needs in the first four digits. The last four are up to groups, to design more particular reports. Angela Harkins sent a report last spring to the Assessment Committee on the digits. If the FDEC so chooses, it could come up with a plan for the other four digits. Mary Frances suggested that there also be a discussion with the deans, as to what they want; they may have concerns.

Addressing Joel’s earlier statement, Jessica said that, with regard to midterm assessment, it is not so important to have cross-campus uniformity. A reason why faculty are not going to workshops may be that things are getting complicated, really fast: these extra codes, etc. Perhaps we should back up, before complicating it more. Meredith replied that faculty do not have to worry about the codes. It is a department decision on the other four codes; the FDEC might not have the right perspective. Joel rejoined that it was very helpful to have the codes pre-printed; one fewer thing to worry about.

**Departmental Aggregates and Accessability**

Meredith reported that the Academic Council had approved allowing all faculty to see all departmental information in aggregate. However, all faculty members may not know that they can get at it. Should we make a communication to the faculty? Announce it? Valerie said no. Mary Frances said that it would be appropriate for Meredith to send a communication to the deans, in the FDEC’s name, to share this information with their departments. The chairs could then bring it to their faculty members. Meredith stated that untenured faculty can compare their own data to that of their whole department. Valerie said that the Rank and Tenure deadline is next week.

Aaron stated that at the last meeting of the IDEA Subcommittee they discussed faculty access. The dissemination of information is haphazard. Let’s partner with Computing and Network Services and try to get an IDEA webpage, for faculty to have access to group and well as individual data. Tracy: this is an indicator-technical issue: not ready for Rank and Tenure this fall – a larger issue. Tracy will talk to Jay Rozgonyi about this.

Roben reported that Linda Henkel has come up with ways to analyze IDEA data statistically. A website should allow faculty members to pull out analyses and long-range patterns. We can tell the faculty: “Not just more complicated, but more useful.” Jessica reported that her letter from the dean mentioned comparisons between her data and her department’s data: the dean had the department report. Jessica continued: we should be careful as to how the data is presented from smaller departments; with such small departments it can be easy to identify individuals. Meredith replied that this involves the local codes.

Larry stated that these data are also available in Axiom-Mentor, but that this is not widely known. Aaron replied that this data ends in 2009.

Mary Frances suggested that we look at the possibility of using the IDEA short forms. This will be on the FDEC Xythos site.
Development Day Date

After discussion, the FDEC decided to have the fall Development Day on December 13th. It will be from 12:00 to 2:00. Mary Frances’ office will provide lunch, though with no potato chips. Mary Frances will book the Library Multimedia room and three breakout rooms.

Meredith stated that we will be putting together the University Assessment ----.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25.

Bill Abbott