

R. Michael Range

From: "Bruce Szelest" <BSzelest@uamail.albany.edu>
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Cc: "Susan D Phillips" <SDPhil@uamail.albany.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 05, 2009 8:41 AM
Subject: Course and Instructor Evaluation Policy Committee

Dear Michael, Eric, and John;

I am writing on behalf of Provost Phillips to request Senate consultation to revisit University policies and procedures regarding student evaluations of courses and instructors, and to provide advice on how to best leverage efforts by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (IRPE) in moving the paper-based SIRF system to a web-based platform. IRPE is moving the SIRF administration to the web this semester, and myriad opportunities exist for improving both the instrument and how faculty and chairs across campus might use SIRF results going forward.

As important as the cost efficiencies (in time and money) to be gained, as well as the enhanced support a new system would offer for the work of CPCA, the CAA, the ongoing interests of UPPC, and faculty development opportunities, it has been at least fifteen years since the University formally revisited policies on student evaluations of courses and instructors, as well as the instrument itself. Research and scholarship in this area, as well as the technology, have evolved considerably over the past fifteen years, and parallel our own interests in enhancing teaching and learning (e.g., the work of the CAA, ITLAL, Writing Panel, FYE Taskforce, Going Forward Plan, etc.). In addition to revamping the SIRF system to better support faculty development, we also recognize the importance of SIRF to the ongoing work of CPCA and the CAA. Therefore, rather than have SIRF reviewed exclusively by a committee of UPPC, as it was in the past under the then named EPC, we are proposing that representatives from a cross-section of Senate Councils with interests in the SIRF program join together with the deans and faculty to revisit these issues.

A sensible committee construction might include those noted below, and we look forward to any suggestions the University Senate might have as well. We would like to bring the committee together in the next couple of weeks.

Regards,
 Bruce

Initial membership proposal for the 2009-10 Course and Instructor Evaluation Policy Committee:

Chair: UPPC chair, John Delano or designee

Members:

CPCA chair (Rodriguez) or designee

CAA chair (Andrade) or designee

Szelest ex officio

Roberson ex officio

2 undergrads designated by SA

1 grad student designated by GSO

2 Deans, or designees [and designee, if necessary, should be a well-respected member of the Teaching Faculty]

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Elga Wulfert or designee

Bob Bangert-Drowns or designee (reflecting School of Education expertise, perhaps Sean Walmsley)

1 Professional – Laura Benson-Marotta, current SIRF administrator, and intimately in-tune with the SIRF process.

2-3 additional members of the teaching faculty to be nominated by the Governance Council, including one or two Assistant Professors. We would like 4 – 6 nominees to choose from. Eric would also be an ideal nominee for this category, especially given his role as past chair of CPCA.

Szelest and Benson-Marotta, in addition to being members, would also handle/coordinate any needed staffing functions.

Regards,
Bruce

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